

The Hard-hearted Blindness of Legalism

John 5:1-18

Legalism leads to hard-hearted blindness to the glory Christ.

1. Jesus Initiates Confrontation (1-9)

- Jesus chose the setting, a festival
- Jesus chose the location, Jerusalem
- Jesus chose the man, this particular invalid
- Jesus chose the violation, take up your bed
- Jesus chose the timing, the Sabbath
“The Rabbis of Jesus’ day solemnly argued that a man was sinning if he carried a needle in his robe on the Sabbath. They even argued as to whether he could wear his artificial teeth or his wooden leg.” (Barclay) from David Guzik commentary, accessed through BlueLetterBible.org

2. The Jews Investigate the Violation (10-12)

3. The Healed Man Identifies the Culprit (13-15)

4. The Jews Expose their Hard-Hearted Blindness (16-18)

- Lacking compassion, the Jews persecute Jesus

- Lacking understanding, the Jews seek to kill Jesus

What can we learn from this account?

1. In John, persecution by the Jews toward Jesus will increase, pressing on toward the cross. Understand the Jews desire to kill Jesus is rooted in the love for themselves and their laws rather than a love for God.

2. Ask God, by the power of His Spirit and through His Word to help us examine our hearts for places where we have made rules and work to follow those instead of loving Christ.
 - a. Do you have rules that insulate you from worshiping God, making you feel religious even while your heart is far from God?

 - b. Do you have rules that allow you to feel righteous even while you entertain sin in your life or walk as close to it as you can?

 - c. Do you ever hold others to your standards rather than loving God and loving others, trusting that God's Word alone is able to equip us to live rightly before God?