

Protecting Joy From Legalism

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 2:1-10

*If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more ...
Philippians 3:4 —*

Resumes, references, and work awards all serve to market personal success. Of course, intentional effort that results in achievement is rightfully celebrated. But when it comes to eternal joy, human effort and achievement do not factor into the equation.

One of the greatest joy killers is the legalistic idea that salvation must be partially earned through good works. But who and what are good enough? Do you know anyone who has never had a bad thought or has never given in to temptation?

The truth is that the harder we try to be good enough for God, the more frustrated we become. We are as conflicted as Paul, who wrote, “I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing” (Romans 7:18-19). Then, like him, we realize how wretched we are (7:24).

So who is good enough?

Only Jesus! His perfect sacrifice alone allows the believer to be filled with joy and gladness. The attitude, actions, and achievement of legalism will only frustrate the pursuit of his joy.

Protect your joy from legalism. Remind yourself that you cannot achieve joy for yourself. Instead, trust the One who achieved it for you!

Prayer

Dear Lord, forgive me when I try to be good enough to be counted worthy of your love. Resist my legalism, humble me, and teach me to feast on the joy of grace alone. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Emotions](#), [Joy](#), [Christian Life](#), [Seeking God](#)

Written by Calvin Hoogendoorn — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/calvin-hoogendoorn>

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/protecting-joy-from-legalism-2008-09-20>

Printed on October 13, 2019

