

LAW & LIBERTY: A Biblical Look at Legalism

Study Guide

"Run, run the law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands;
Tis better news the gospel brings:
It bids me fly; it gives me wings."
John Bunyan

Chapter 1

Introduction: What Legalism Is, What Legalism Does

Don Kistler

1. Describe some ways in which the “spiritual climate today is reminiscent of that tragic statement in the Bible describing the time of Judges when ‘everyone did what was right in his own eyes’” especially as it pertains to the church.
2. What is the definition of legalism given by Dr. Kistler?
3. What is a terrible insult to the finished work of Christ that is far too often even made by those who rightly understand that salvation is a gift of God’s free grace?
4. If a person thinks something is wrong for him to do, then he cannot go against his conscience (James 4:17). However when does this become problematic? Give an example.
5. In Luke 17 what are the implication of Jesus’ words “After you have done everything I have commanded you, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have only done our duty.’”
6. “Legalism says to Christ, ‘You got it started, but I’ll take it from here.’” Summarize how the gospel message is different from legalism as expressed in the following lines of Ralph Erskine’s poem:

The law supposing I have all,

Does ever for perfection call.
The gospel suits my total want,
And all the law can seek does grant.

The law could promise life to me,
If my obedience perfect be;
But grace does promise life upon
My Lord's obedience alone.

The law says, "Do, and life you'll win";
But grace says, "Live, for all is done."
The former cannot ease my grief;
The latter yields me full relief.

Chapter 2

Truth Vs. Tradition

Steven J. Lawson

1. The core issue of the Reformation in a nutshell is the clash between truth and tradition. Dr. Lawson gives a description of truth and tradition. Summarize some important points from each.
2. In the definition of tradition given, this tradition fosters legalism. What harmful effects are caused?
3. Why does a person "held captive in man's empty, religious tradition that is devoid of biblical truth," fight to hold on to this legalism?
4. Charles Spurgeon gives the following wise counsel: "To confess you were wrong yesterday, is only to acknowledge that you are a little wiser today; and instead of being a reflection on yourself, it is an honour to your judgment, and shows that you are improving in the knowledge of the truth. Do not be ashamed to learn, and to cast aside your old doctrines and views, but to take up that which

you may more plainly see to be in the Word of God. But if you do not see it to be here in the Bible, whatever I may say, or whatever authorities I may plead, I beseech you, as you love your souls, reject it; and if from this pulpit you ever hear things contrary to this Sacred Word, remember that the Bible must be the first, and God's minister must lie underneath it." (Election, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon) Can you think of an instance when you have followed these wise words?

5. What was the crisis that occurred in Mark 7 and what did it reveal?

Dr. Lawson now considers the clash between Jesus and the Pharisees in Mark 7:1-13 that continues even today under the headings of:

- I. The Investigation,
- II. The Explanation
- III. The Confrontation
- IV. The Condemnation
- V. The Illustration
- VI. The Application

6. Under the first heading, The Investigation, though the Pharisees believed in "the divine inspiration of Scripture, the sovereignty of God, his supernatural activity in the world, and the coming kingdom of God to earth", what was their problem? Give some examples of these problems found in some churches today.

7. What are the six reasons given why the Pharisees and Scribes despised Jesus?

8. How do those entangled in legalism often defend it and what will they not do?

9. Under the second heading, The Explanation, when such extra-biblical books as the Talmud and the Mishnah were used by the Jews, what flawed belief was revealed?

10. "The religious leaders of Israel believed that exposure to tax collectors and notorious sinners would cause one to become morally contaminated. In their minds, Jesus was defiling himself because he ate with known sinners." However, Jesus explained "he came into this world... to seek the lost. Therefore, he must

spend time with sinners in order to rescue them.” How does this explanation show the fallacy of the “holy huddle” mentality? Give an example.

11. After Jesus told about a cup that is clean on the outside and dirty on the inside, Dr. Lawson states in regard to legalism “man-made rules that go beyond the Scripture can only regulate external matters of behavior.” What can legalism never do? What does it do?

12. The third heading is The Confrontation. The Pharisees and Scribes stepped forward confident they had a case that would indict the disciples and discredit Jesus by asking, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders?” What did their code of conduct found in their traditions reveal about them? How does legalism give an appearance of godliness?

13. This third heading ends with a description of true godliness. What are some of its features?

14. In the fourth heading, The Condemnation, Jesus directly condemned their dead religion. Sometimes Jesus played “hardball” in his response and sometimes he spoke with kindness and compassion. Why?

15. What does legalism produce and what does it eventually do?

16. When Jesus called them “these pious sounding experts,” what did he mean?

17. What happens when divine truth is replaced by human tradition?

18. In the fifth heading, the illustration, how did Jesus affirm the dual authorship of Scripture?

19. How did Jesus, as a master teacher, leave no room for misunderstanding when addressing the Pharisees and Scribe about the Scriptural teaching on the honoring of father and mother by every child?

20. As Jesus confronted the Jews with their man-made traditions, what was the crux of the matter? (p. 28)

21. In the final heading, The Application, four actions are given. Summarize the first action. Give an example of a church that has not accepted this principle.
22. In the second action, how does Dr. Lawson advise we resist the hypocrisy of Phariseeism?
23. What is the third action? What are some practical ways we can do this?
24. The necessity of the new birth is emphasized in the fourth action. List what external religion is unable to do. Who alone is able to bestow a new heart?

Chapter 3

Love and God's Law

Richard D. Phillips

1. What is the driving force behind the "situational ethics" approach that dominates contemporary society?
2. Two major problems are given with this approach. Why can we not trust our feelings as a guide to love? How is the question "Has God provided us with an objective guide to love" answered?
3. The second problem with the "new morality" of love is "it utterly excludes the value of love for God." How is this shown to be not in fact an ethics of love?
4. In discussing an antinomianism of another kind "among Bible-believing Christians, between law and grace in such a way that Christians are no longer to obey God's law", what are some problems that arise with this Christian antinomianism? (pp. 35, 36)
5. Three important points are made about Christian obedience in John 14:15. Name the three points and comment on their importance.

6. What will a love for Christ instill in us regarding our view of the Old and New Testaments?
7. What does a struggle with sin imply?
8. Jesus' special emphasis on our love for one another taught in John 13:34 is "that you love one another just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another." This love for Jesus is certain to yield obedience to Him in the form of service to others. What two other types of obedience will it produce? Give an example.
9. The chapter concludes by considering the relationship between love, obedience, and our assurance of salvation. 1 John 2:3, 5: "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His Commandments... Whoever keeps His word, in Him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in Him." This verse makes two vital statements concerning our assurance of salvation. What are they and what does each imply?
10. We are encouraged to press on in new obedience, and enter into the joy of yielding more and more fully in loving embrace of Christ's commands. What will this prove?

Chapter 4

The Cross Is Enough

Bruce Bickel

1. What subtle attitude lurks behind the phrase "WWJD - What Would Jesus Do?" What unbiblical emphasis does it convey?
2. "Providing an act of mercy can be a legalistic deed or a God-pleasing act of worship." Where does the difference lie?

3. How does legalism refute the suffering of what Christ has done?
4. Name aspects of the person and work of Christ that are imputed to the newest believer who has been justified by grace through faith in Christ.
5. How does the legalist regard obedience? How should Christians regard obedience?
6. List the ways God equips us to show the world that He is holy.
7. What does focusing on what Jesus has done for us at the cross produce?
8. How do many abuse grace?
9. What is the remedy for legalism?
10. How has Christ guaranteed the terms of the new arrangement?

Chapter 5

The Danger of Legalism

Steven J. Lawson

1. What are the two main strands of legalism and what are the results of each?
2. In order to achieve acceptance with God legalism adds false requirements for salvation to faith alone in Christ alone. Describe this religion of “and.”
3. In Galatians 4:8-11 a “legalism that attacks sanctification and spiritual growth into Christ-likeness” is addressed. What does this legalism state?

Paul confronts the legalists with the dangers of their legalism in Galatians 4:8-11 in three main headings.

I. Their Past Bondage in Sin

4. Dr. Lawson explains about a degree of knowledge that every unconverted person has as follows: General knowledge from creation and divine knowledge from law of conscience yet all unbelievers are ignorant of God. Why? Explain.

5. Describe the “no gods” of the unbeliever and explain how they are “enslaved” to them.

6. “All people are a slave, either of Christ or of sin.” Give an explanation of this statement.

II. Their powerful Conversion to Christ

7. The Greek word *ginokso* means more than just intellectual knowledge. What further meaning does it have?

8. What “important theological distinction about knowing God” does Paul make in the Galatians text?

9. “This saving was by God’s initiative, not by Paul’s seeking. God was active, Paul was passive.” Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

10. How is foreknowledge defined?

11. How does the meaning of the word “knows” in Nahum 1:7 differ from the meaning of the word “knew” in Matthew 7:23?

12. In Romans 8:29 Paul identifies these elect ones. What does this text not say about foreknowledge? What does it say about foreknowledge?

13. The section ends with the statement “This truth is important in combating legalism.” What is “this truth” that is being referred to?

III. Their Present Drift Towards Legalism

14. Paul asserts “You have exchanged one prison cell for another” referring to the dark cell of legalism. List some of the specific examples of legalism given and the true meaning they foreshadowed.

15. What did Paul fear would be the result of the Galatians dabbling in this legalism?

16. In conclusion, what is suggested that every believer do in order to avoid legalism?

Chapter 6

Obedience: Love or Legalism?

John MacArthur

1. “Our obedience does not merit salvation ...obedience is never a condition for salvation.” Then why does MacArthur think it is essential?

2. How does MacArthur explain that “duty and love are not incompatible motives”?

3. In his book *The Bruised Reed* Puritan Richard Sibbes has said: “If we had liberty to choose under whose government we would live, out of a delight in the inner man to Christ's government, making choice of him only to rule us before any other. This argues that we are like minded to Christ, *a free and a willing people, and not compelled to Christ's service otherwise than by the sweet constraint of*

love.” However, in our progressive sanctification, we are not always “*compelled to Christ's service otherwise than by the sweet constraint of love.*” What sometimes has been the reaction of the church in our generation to obedience being hard at times and a duty?

4. There are dire theological consequences of setting grace against law as antinomianism does. What does grace do and what does it not do?

5. There are two ways in which Scripture teaches we are not under law. What is the first way?

6. Why was it necessary to include a ban on fornication when the dispute that prompted the Jerusalem Council had to do only the ceremonial aspects of Moses' law?

7. Peter and Paul had a very public conflict over the question of obedience to the ceremonial law. Why was this conflict so important?

8. The second way we are not under law is “We are not under the law for justification.” What are the two obstacles that exist with regard to justifying sinners?

9. In Paul's terminology what is meant by “to be under the law”? When Paul says we are not under the law but under grace in Romans 6, what is he not doing?

10. How did Christ overcome the two great obstacles to our justification?

11. Why must our righteousness be an “imputed” righteousness”?

12. The good news of the gospel is “for everyone who believes Christ's blood counts as payment for all our sins, and His fulfillment of the law counts as all the merit we need.” From this truth, what did Paul realize?

13. Why is obedience for the Christian motivated by gratitude and love?

Chapter 7

Zealous But Not Legalistic

Joel Beeke

1. Dr. Beeke writes: “Legalistic zeal is like the Rosary Pea: aggressive, attractive, and deadly.” John Flavel warned that an “abundance of precious souls perish in the Christianized and professing world” through “formal hypocrisy in religion, and zeal about the externals of worship.” A description is given between legalistic zeal and true godly zeal. What is the difference between these two types of zeal?
2. In Romans 10:1-4, Paul describes people who have a legalistic zeal. How did their zeal set them against both God and Christ?
3. Paul’s statement gives two sources of this legalistic zeal. The first is “The Legalistic Pursuit of Self-Righteousness.” After a description of this, two questions are asked: “How do we put off this innate and pervasive passion for our own righteousness?” and “How can we be zealous for the Lord without falling into this natural legalism?” What answers are given?
4. The second source of legalistic zeal is “The Legalistic Rejection of Divine Righteousness.” What does the righteousness of God in Romans 10:2 refer to?
5. “Inward resistance to the gospel of justification is not limited to unbelievers.” How do believers slip into denying the gospel in practical ways?
6. What harsh mistake will guilt produce? How can we dig up and cut off “resistance against God’s gift of righteousness in Christ”?
7. The poisonous fruit of legalistic zeal is shown in Paul’s pre-conversion legalistic zeal. How is true Christian zeal described in the quote given by Plumer on pages 94, 95?
8. Horrifying works of the flesh can be produced by legalistic zeal. In order to guard our hearts against such, what advise is given on page 96?

9. Another “fruit of legalistic zeal is: an entrenched commitment to human tradition.” How can human tradition serve our great passion of self-righteousness?
10. How can tradition as stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6 be a blessing to the church?
11. Keeping ourselves on the central matter of “the law of loving God with all our hearts and loving our neighbor as ourselves, and the gospel that God saves sinners through Christ by a spirit-worked faith” will protect us from the ugliness of legalism that is manifest in a mistaken separation from other believers. What is the opposite error we must beware of?
12. Describe the “gracious zeal, indeed a fervent zeal that God commands.”
13. The godly man is zealous for Christ Himself. Alexander Whyte has described it this way: “ If we had it all absolutely secured to us that this world is still promising to its salad dupes, it would not come within a thousand miles of satisfying our hearts. Whether the hopes of our hearts are to be fulfilled within the veil or no, that remains to be seen; but all the things without the veil taken together do not any longer even pretend to promise a hope to hearts like ours. Our Forerunner [Christ] has carried away our hearts with Him. We have no heart left for any one but Him, or for anything without or within the veil that He is not and is not in.” What makes such a person differ from a zealous “Pharisee”?

Chapter 8

The Plague of Free-Will Moralism

Kenneth Talbot

1. The term legalism in a soteriological context is usually identified in two specific dogmas. They are “Justification and sanctification. Justification deals with the question of ‘How does one receive acceptance from God in salvation?’ Sanctification deals with the question ‘How does an individual, having received

acceptance from God, then maintain their salvific status with him?” From this perspective when the allegation of legalism is made, what definition is given to it?

2. Summarize the definition of autosoterism that has been historically known as Pelagianism given on page 104.
3. How did Augustine differ from the monk Pelagius in his soteriological teaching?
4. Ephesians 1:3-14 has been referred to as the Covenant of Redemption because “it reveals the will of God among the three persons of the Godhead thereby expressing purpose and intent of God prior to the creation of anything that exists.” It is also an expression of the economy of salvation. Thomas Shepard has expressed it thus: “The Father is glorious in his great work of election; the Son is glorious in his great work of redemption; the Holy Ghost is glorious in his work of application: the Father is glorious in choosing the house, the Son is glorious in buying the house, the Spirit is glorious in dwelling in the house.” What symbolism is there of the Father’s approval that Christ’s work had provided all the necessary means of salvation in his death, burial, and resurrection”?
5. Is our salvation bilateral or unilateral? Give reasons for your answer.
6. “The Father’s purpose of predestinating us is ‘to adoption as sons.’ This means that God legally places us in the family of God as His children.” What is the reason for this being necessary in salvation and its implication to Adam?
7. “Salvation is a covenantal promise that God has sworn to Himself that He will provide all things necessary to ensure the salvation of His chosen people, a salvation that can never be lost! Salvation was granted ‘in Christ’ based on the promise of God Himself.” Why can this promise not be broken?
8. Why is the substitutionary atonement for our salvation called an “alien righteousness”? What is double imputation?
9. Our full salvation is said to be “in Christ” by His work of redemption alone. It is pointed out that “the substance is Christ and not our faith.” As Charles Spurgeon has said: “Remember, sinner, it is not thy hold of Christ that saves thee-it is Christ;

it is not thy joy in Christ that saves thee-it is Christ; it is not even faith in Christ, though that is the instrument-it is Christ's blood and merits; therefore, look not to thy hope, but to Christ, the source of thy hope; look not to thy faith, but to Christ, the author and finisher of thy faith; and if thou doest that, ten thousand devils cannot throw thee down."

Thus from Romans 5:19 with what assurance does Paul conclude? (p. 116)

10. "Pelagious, however, rejected Augustine's concept of original sin (a doctrine that had been taught prior to Augustine by early church fathers also) and asserted that 'free will' had not been affected by Adam's original sin in the garden. Therefore, Adam's sin did not affect man's ability to do righteousness through his own initiative. He believed that if man was guilty of anything before God it was based on his own actual sins and not a result of the sin of Adam." How does this teaching contradict Romans 5:12-17?

11. Who is the second Adam and what did he do?

12. What is eternal security based on and why therefore is it impossible for believers to lose their salvation?

13. Pelagius and his student Caelestius were charged with heresy. What did the Council of Carthage in 418 declare about their teachings?

14. Define semi-Pelagianism. When and where was it condemned?

15. Define Arminianism. What is the twofold problem that arises from this teaching?

16. How is the grace of God not alone in the Arminian scheme of salvation and how does it clearly contradict the clear teaching of Scripture?

17. How is an unbeliever described?

18. Since no man can contribute to his salvation, how does Ephesians 2:4, 5 say this problem is solved?

19. Faith “is not a work or act made by man.” What is faith then?

20. What is it doubtful we will be able to do if “we do not recognize the first most rudimentary form of legalism in theology”? What are we called to do about free-will moralism?

Chapter 9

Judging Vs. Biblical Discernment

John MacArthur

1. What reasons are given why Matthew 7:1 cannot be used as an “all-purpose retort to any hint of Biblical reproof or correction”?

2. Throughout Scripture it is abundantly clear we are to judge by comparing any teaching to the Biblical standard as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11). What judgments are we encouraged to make? (p. 128)

3. “The Greek verb translated ‘discern’ in the New Testament is *diakrino*, meaning, literally, ‘to separate; to make a distinction.’...The Biblical word for discernment speaks of the ability to make keen and careful distinctions.” However “the prevailing opinion today is that stark clarity is not only impossible; it is undesirable as well.” This relativism has invaded the church. What has this done to the evangelical movement?

4. How is one able to distinguish true discernment from mere judgmentalism?

In these postmodern times the church is in need of “sober, discerning hearts and distinct authoritative voices to call the people of God back to the clarity and

authority of His Word.” A three-part strategy for discernment is given by the Apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22.

5. The first from this text is “Examine Everything Carefully.” To whom was this command given and how was it to be done?
6. The second is “Hold Fast to Whatever Is Good.” Paul is stating that “authentic discernment calls for a thoughtful, cautious, but active twofold response” Describe this “active twofold response.”
7. With what post-modern notion would Paul have had no sympathy and why?
8. What explanation is given for the meaning of the Greek word translated “good” on page 140?
9. The third strategy for discernment is “Shun Every Form of Evil.” In the context at the end of 1 Thessalonians, Paul is specifically addressing the problem of false doctrine. How does Paul say Christians are to react to false teaching?
10. What advise is given for those who attempt to “examine everything carefully” on page 146?
11. What clarification is given of the often misapplied phrase “abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thessalonians. 5:22)?
12. What warnings does Scripture give about the subtlety of Satan?
13. What difference does biblical discernment make?

1. While some Christians think the idea of liberty is at odds with what the Christian life is all about, in stark contrast Scripture defines the Christian life as a life of complete and total liberty. What was the situation with the Galatians that Paul was addressing?

In order to stand firm in Christian liberty, there is now a discussion of liberty, legalism, and licentiousness.

2. “The average worldling thinks of religion as a confining, restrictive regimen of meritorious duties.” How does Scripture portray Christianity?

3. Two important aspects of Christian liberty must be kept in constant focus and in careful balance. Freedom from the bondage of sin is the first aspect explained. How does an antinomian understand this “freedom”? How is it explained that they are incorrect?

4. Why were the moral principles delineated in the Ten Commandments binding long before God wrote them on stone tablets?

5. People who have never heard the gospel are nevertheless guilty. Why?

6. What is the essential starting point for understanding what Christian liberty is all about?

7. What two aspects of Christian liberty are stated in Romans 6:14?

8. The second aspect of Christian liberty that must be kept in constant focus and careful balance is “freedom from the yoke of the law.” Why is the law not a burden to believers?

9. Paul explains we have been given status of full-grown sons and are no longer under the tutelage of the law since Christ’s coming. This gives us two benefits “one of whose advantages are mainly temporal, the other whose value is vast and eternal.” The first one explained is “we’re free from the law’s complex ceremonies.” What are some key elements of this temporal benefit?

10. What is the implication of “if our justification hinges in any degree on a righteousness we gain from our own obedience”?
11. What is the eternal benefit of Christian liberty that is “not under law” stated on page 156?
12. Even in the Old Covenant era how were people justified?
13. What was the whole point of the Law?
14. Legalism was the central error of the Galatians Judaizers. Describe the similar error that Roman Catholicism makes.
15. How is “faith that works by love” explained?
16. Licentiousness is the error of abandoning our liberty in Christ in order to return to the bondage of sin. What is Paul’s antidote to licentiousness?
17. Because the moral demands of the law are eternal and can never be nullified, how then are people wrong in believing that “the moral precepts of the Old Testament have all been eliminated and replaced with a single, much simpler, new commandment: love”?
18. What one simple commandment does “the core and the anchor of all the moral precepts of God’s law boil down to? What is the key to fulfilling this?

Chapter 11
Real Love and Real Liberty
Phil Johnson

1. How does the legalist turn the law on its head?

2. Some give a narrow definition of legalism as “the brand of false teaching Paul condemned in Galatians 1 - the error of making some prerequisite work or religious ceremony a condition of justification....A legalist is someone who believes in salvation by works.” What better definition is given of legalism? What two flavors of legalism are condemned in Scripture?
3. What was the Pharisees’ sin? Give an example.
4. What was the reasoning of Jesus in his response to the Pharisees?
5. What were some problems of the Fundamentalist Movement of the 20th century?
6. What is a good guideline for how we should exercise our Christian liberty?
7. What does Paul say about how to use our Christian liberty in love and responsibly in the context of food offered to idols?
8. What distinction is crucial in Paul’s statement “all things are lawful”?
9. Three principles are given to correct people who are prone to use their liberty for selfishness. The first principle is our liberty is for the good of others. In regard to eating meals offered to idols, how is this principle explained?
10. What is Paul not suggesting the more mature Christian do with those who have a weak conscience? What are mature Christian to do?
11. The second “way to get the maximum spiritual benefit from our liberty in Christ is to use it for the advancement of the gospel.” When Paul says in I Corinthians 10:33 “I try to please everyone in everything I do” and in I Corinthians 9:23 “I do it all for the sake of the gospel”, how do these verses not promote “contextualization”? What is Paul’s point then?
12. The third principle for Christian liberty “is for the glory of God.” What is the “sweeping extent” of “do all to the glory of God”?

13. Explain the paradox associated with true liberty in Christ.
14. How is Christian liberty not like moral autonomy?

Chapter 12

What Freedom from the Law Accomplishes for the Local Church

Jim Elliff

1. Why was the blending of the Jewish and Greek cultures within the church an urgent problem confronting Christ's apostles?
2. What was the "mystery" now revealed that Paul wrote to the Ephesians about in Ephesians 3:1-6?
3. What do the words "carried out" signify in Ephesians 3:11?
4. How did God address this oneness in Christ idea in the New Testament as pointed out in Colossians 3:11?
5. What is said to be "the ideological energy source of the new evangelism"?
6. What threatened the unity won by the cross that Paul was committed to battling?
7. Within Christianity what was entirely incongruous in each American and why?
(p. 182)
8. What Scriptural principle is it against when a denomination does demographic research in order to plant a church?

9. When it is stated “But I am saying that the gospel demands better solutions than dividing ourselves”, what are some better solution? Where should our focus be?

Chapter 13

Biblical Sanctification: The Antidote to Legalism

Richard D. Phillips

1. How does the explanation of the answer to the first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism shift the emphasis from a self-centered motive in defining sanctification? (p. 187)
2. In defining sanctification, it is stated that it is “the process by which believers in Christ are made holy.” Explain the negative and positive aspects of sanctification.
3. While holiness is rooted in our hearts, it is “always expressed in our actions.” Describe how this concept is to be expressed by Christians.

On page 189 the Biblical introduction that has been given is summarized. Sanctification’s “goal is to take pleasure in pleasing God, its method is to be separate from impurity and sin, its attitude is both negative towards sin and positive towards godliness, and its expression is concrete and bodily.” Now in the question “If God is sovereign and has chosen me to salvation, then why should I bother living a holy life?” a look is taken at the link between sanctification and sovereignty of God from 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.

4. The first response to this question is “God has ordained our sanctification and Christians therefore know that we will be holy.” When the objection is made that sovereign grace inhibits a motivation for the difficult work of sanctification, how does Paul answer this objection?

5. The second response has to do with God's sovereignty not as God's ultimate control of all things, but rather as His sovereign reign. God is sovereign over His kingdom, so that to be saved is to become His willing subject and to submit to His rule (God's Word) in everything." How should this view cause us to consider our sin as not a strictly personal issue?

6. When we realize that Christ is sovereign, and that we are humble servants of His glorious kingdom, how will we reason if obedience to God's Word is the standard for our lives?

7. The final response we find from 1 Thessalonians 4:8 is sanctification is empowered by the Holy Spirit. What does counterfeit, man-made holiness look like? (p. 194) What does Christian holiness look like when it is empowered by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit?

8. What makes us believe that we can display the fruit of the Spirit in ever-increasing measure?

9. Another mark of man-centered sanctification is reliance on techniques for personal growth. How can even the means of grace (prayer, God's Word, worship) be abused?

10. From the section on Calvinism's Record in History, what is James Boice's conclusion about what will happen "wherever and whenever these doctrines [belief in God's sovereignty] have come under assault"?

11. What should we expect to happen if these Biblical doctrines are held?

12. In 16th century Geneva, what proof is given from John Calvin's time of sound exposition?

13. Another proof from history is given in the 17th century Puritan's biblical teaching. Describe how their beliefs that God was sovereign over all of life, not just religious work, was shown in their lives.

14. Explain how this Jonathan Edwards' quote could be of help to "the church [that] is stained by sin, shattered by division, and so weak that, far from shaping society, the church is instead being strongly reshaped by the world" in our day.

"The more you have of a rational knowledge of divine things, the more opportunity will there be, when the Spirit shall be breathed into your heart, to see the excellency of these things, and to taste the sweetness of them."