

# the Venues

Deeper Journey Sermon Notes

## It's a Race

"Go for the Goal" Series

Galatians 5:7-12

January 26, 2014

*How do you feel and react when others cut in on you while driving, shopping, speaking etc.?"*

Take a look at Philippians 3:2-9

*Why is Paul so concerned about "those dogs"?*

*How does the description, "those mutilators of the flesh" help us to identify the dogs?*

*What two ways does Paul mention that people take to reach the goal of Christlikeness?*

The legalism formula is **To follow God, you have to do "X," because that's in God's law. Otherwise, you won't be righteous.**

Growing up, the "X" for Phillip was early morning Bible reading and prayer, no secular music, no music with a strong drum beat, short hair for guys (to name a few) :)

*What "X" have you observed or experienced?*

**"Legalism is nailing a sign to the cross that says, 'necessary but not enough.'"**

*What do you think of this definition of legalism given by Dr. Jack MacGorman?*

In Galatians 5:1-6 Paul slams legalism.

In Galatians 5:7-12 Paul slams the legalistic teachers.

### **1. Keep running. Take a look at Galatians 5:7**

Mary Decker, the darling of American track and reigning world champ in the 3000 meters was heavily favored to win a gold medal in front of home fans in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Zola Budd, racing barefoot, trailed Decker for the first half of the race. She decided to pass Decker. As she cut in front, Decker got tangled up in Budd's left foot and fell to the infield. It was ruled unintentional but the tangle cost them both the chance for an Olympic medal. One of the most famous sports pictures ever to appear in "Sports Illustrated" was the one where Decker is seen holding her thigh and staring toward the finish line with disappointment and anger because Zola Budd had cut into her.

Zola Budd is a picture of legalism. If you don't avoid it, legalism can trip you up. And you'll end up with the same expression Mary Decker had!

Legalistic teachers "kept them" and they keep us, "from obeying the truth." Legalistic teachers distort the truth of who God is and the truth of the Gospel (good news). They give us a "fake God" - like Fruit Loops or Mr. Pibb.

*What is the image of God typically drawn by legalism?*

## **2. Reject any and all expressions of legalism. Galatians 5:2, 8-10**

*Do you think Paul is overstating the danger of legalism with his "yeast" analogy?*

*What areas in your life are you currently submitting to legalism?*

## **3. Freedom is worth protecting. Galatians 5:11-12**

*What do you think of Paul's "wish" in 5:12?*

*Why do legalistic people and teachers have a problem with the message of grace?*

*What do you think of this statement by Eugene Peterson (the guy who translated the Bible into The Message)?*

*"There are people who do not want us to be free. They don't want us to be free before God, accepted just as we are by grace. They don't want us to be free to express our faith originally and creatively in the world. They insist that we all look alike, talk alike and act alike, thus validating one another's worth. Without being aware of it, we become anxious about what others will say about us and we'll become obsessively concerned with what others think what we should do. We no longer live the Good News but anxiously try to memorize and recite the script that someone else has assigned to us. We may be secure, but we will NOT BE FREE."*

*Why is legalism contrary to the message of the cross? Take a look at Galatians 5:11b*

*Take an evening and watch "Saving Private Ryan" again. Powerful movie!!*

*Contrast Captain Miller's last words - "Earn this." with Jesus' last words "It is finished."*

*How will you live differently knowing that you don't have to earn God's love? Does it motivate you to want to follow Him? Or does it open the door for you to abuse His love?*