1 – A WRONG UNDERSTANDING

I. Three Common Approaches

A. Legalism

- Many believers fall into the trap of legalism.
- "As long as I am doing the right things, I am okay!"
- This approach places the essence of the Christian Life solely on human effort.
- Legalism binds believers to extra-biblical, external regulations (such as strict dress codes or dietary rules).
- Legalism elevates personal opinions to the level of scriptural commandments.
- Legalism results in developing a judgmental, rigid, or self-righteous attitude toward others.
- The problem with Legalism is that no one is able to do everything right.

Scripture Acts 15:10-11 (ESV)
[10] Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? [11] But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."

- Legalism often leads to hypocrisy because individuals tend to judge others by standards, they do not personally uphold.

B. Spiritual Experience

- Many believers fall into the trap of having spiritual experiences.
- "As long as I am experiencing a manifestation of the Spirit, I am okay!"
- Those who do not have the same experiences feel defeated.
- Experience-orientation seeks the next new experience.
- Experience-orientation eventually leads to error.

Scripture 1 Corinthians 12:2-3 (ESV)
[2] You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.
[3] Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

C. Antinomianism

- Antinomianism is the belief that moral laws, social norms, or religious commandments no longer apply.

- It believes that Christians are freed from moral law because of God's grace and faith.

- It rests in a past time event (prayer, baptism, etc.) rather than the ongoing relationship with Christ.

II. Two Common Attitudes

A. An Incorrect Mindset

- My acceptance with God is based upon my devotional life and actions.

- This mindset will result in two outcomes in your life: legalism or defeat.

B. An Ignorant Mindset

- I am saved and that is all that really matters.

- I am forgiven, so I can do whatever I want to.

Scripture Romans 6:1-2 (ESV)
[1] What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? [2] By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

- This mindset results in false assurance.

Scripture John 14:23-24 (ESV)
[23] Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. [24] Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.