

# Which Side Are You On?

(Matthew 12:30 and Luke 11:23)

## “Slacker Christianity”

1. The Slacker’s Side: “Some people feel that they must attend church legalistically, being at church virtually every time there is any kind of service or meeting. Some people experience a feeling of guilt whenever they miss a Sunday morning service. Sadly, some churches encourage this guilt by laying excessive pressure on people to attend regularly. When thinking about church attendance and when it is appropriate to miss church, the most crucial thing to understand is that the quality of a person’s relationship with God is not determined by how many church services are attended, nor are God’s love and acceptance for a Christian based on how many times he/she attends church... What then are appropriate reasons for missing church? Is it acceptable to miss church to attend a sporting event? Yes. Is it acceptable to miss church while on vacation? Yes. Is it acceptable to miss church when you are sick / ill? Yes. Is it acceptable to miss church because you are tired from a difficult week? Yes. Is it acceptable to miss church simply because you do not feel like attending? Yes. Like so many other issues in the Christian life, church attendance can become legalistic instead of a matter of grace” (<http://www.gotquestions.org/missing-church.html>).

2. The Slacker’s Side: “Do I Have To Give Up My Sins To Be Saved? The answer is No! You do NOT have to stop sinning to be saved. No one can stop sinning (Romans 3:23)! No one can live above sin—no one (Isaiah 64:6). Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners ([http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/Basics/do\\_i\\_have\\_to\\_give\\_up\\_sin\\_to\\_be\\_saved.htm](http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/Basics/do_i_have_to_give_up_sin_to_be_saved.htm)).

1. The Side of Truth:

- Legalism is: “strict, literal, or excessive conformity to the law or to a religious or moral code” (Webster). So, are we legalists? I sure hope so (**John 14:23**).
- **Hebrews 10:25; 3:13, Acts 20:7, Ephesians 4:16, and I Thessalonians 5:11.**
- Guilty if forsaking, yes you should feel so (**James 2:10**).
- Deciding to sleep in, take a break, etc. is a measuring stick of one’s faith (**Luke 14:17-33**).

2. The Side of Truth: (**John 5:10-14; 8:1-11, Romans 6:1-2; 15-18, Galatians 2:17, II Timothy 2:19, and I Peter 4:1-2**).

- Romans 3:23 (past tense)
- Isaiah 64:6 read through v. 12. They were presently in sin!
- Jesus saves sinners AFTER repentance (**Luke 13:3; 5**).

3. The Slacker's Side: "I have left the Church of Christ in pursuit for a grace filled church. In reading some of your material I am reminded that this was a good decision. You have urged people to read the Bible every day. You are trying to force people to read the bible. They didn't even have bible's in Paul's day to study them every day. You are going to find others leaving your Church if you keep trying to force them to read something that they don't want to read every day. I am part of a group of people who have left the Church of Christ. The website is here, <http://ex-churchofchrist.com/> if you share it with your Church members they will leave also" (Email; Brenda Harrison; 12/04/2008).

4. The Slacker's Side: "We don't care if you are carrying around some heavy burdens or extra baggage. You may have problems. That's okay. You may have skeletons in the closet that you don't want anyone to know about. That's okay. You may not have any friends. That's okay. We will accept you how you are and we will grow together in Christ" (<http://www.oakridgechurchofchrist.com/>).

5. The Slackers Side: "As far as I'm concerned, enjoy that last cigarette five minutes before you go to heaven, because they probably don't sell them up there!

Fact is: If you don't smoke, don't start! If you are stupid like I was and started smoking when you were 17 years old, if you can quit, DO IT! There's no benefit in it. (and they are about six bucks a pack!) But absolutely don't let any preacher or well meaning Christian weigh you down with guilt that keeps you out of church over it" (<http://poweroffaith.com/smoking.htm>)!

3. The Side of Truth:

- Grace filled church, translates into "what I want to do is okay church". This is error (**Titus 2:11-14**).
- Forced to read the Bible? Should any Christian have to be forced to read the Bible (**Psalms 1:1-2; 119:16; 97**, and **II Thessalonians 2:10**).
- They had Scriptures (**John 5:39**, **Acts 17:10-11**, and **Colossians 4:16**).
- No preacher should ever have a church (**Matthew 16:18**).

4. The Side of Truth:

- Who will the Lord accept, though? See # 2
- To be in Christ, you have to purge those skeletons (**II Corinthians 5:17** and **Colossians 3:1-17**).

5. The Side of Truth:

- Are cigarettes of the spirit or flesh (**Matthew 26:41**, **Romans 8:4-8**, **Romans 13:14**, **I Corinthians 6:20**, and **I Peter 2:11**)?
- "As far as I'm concerned" (**Proverbs 3:7; 20:24**, **Isaiah 5:21**, and **I Corinthians 4:6**).

<p>6. The Slackers Side: “Brian, Thank you for responding and answering my questions about the congregation in El Paso. We will be moving to El Paso in the fall of 08. Two things troubled me. The word of God does not tell us that we have to answer questions to be considered a member of the church. The Lord takes care of adding me to his church. Nor does God accept those who have set themselves up to be the judge and jury of brethren. We will be looking for a congregation that is non-institutional but also not legalistic. It sounds like the church in El Paso cares more about the letter of the law than of the feelings of the heart” (Email; A soldier named Thomas; 7/15/2008).</p>	<p>6. The Side of Truth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note: He had questions about our stand on I.M., “one cup”, etc. But, we cannot have questions???</li> <li>• Don’t have to answer questions (<b>I Peter 3:15</b>)?</li> <li>• Don’t ask questions (<b>I John 4:1</b>)?</li> <li>• Congregations who do not try those seeking to be members end up in error (<b>Revelation 2:14-16</b>).</li> <li>• In light of warnings, who’d argue with questions (<b>Acts 20:28-31</b> and <b>Jude 3-4</b>)?</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Common Mindsets of the Slacker:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “I’ll get to it tomorrow.”</li> <li>2. “I’m doing the best I can.”</li> <li>3. “You’re not trying to teach me, you’re attacking me.”</li> <li>4. “I see it differently than you do.”</li> <li>5. “I talked to a preacher and he disagrees with you.”</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Side of Truth: <b>Psalms 78:39, Proverbs 27:1, and James 4:13-14.</b></li> <li>2. The Side of Truth: <b>Matthew 24:45-46, Matthew 28:20, and I John 2:17.</b></li> <li>3. The Side of Truth: Those who want to learn will hear (<b>Proverbs 3:11; 15:10; cf. Galatians 4:16</b>).</li> <li>4. The Side of Truth: <b>Job 32:8, Matthew 4:4, Acts 4:32, I Corinthians 1:10; 4:17; Ephesians 5:17, Philippians 3:16, and II Timothy 3:16-17.</b></li> <li>5. The Side of Truth: <b>I Corinthians 4:6 and II Timothy 1:13.</b></li> </ol>

<p>6. “As long as He / she / they will study this issue; I’ll remain in fellowship with them.”</p> <p>7. “If someone else wants to do my duty, I’ll let them.”</p> <p>8. “If it (sin / error / etc.) doesn’t personally affect me, I won’t worry about it.”</p>	<p>6. The Side of Truth: <b>I John 1:3-7, Acts 15,</b> and <b>II John 9-11.</b></p> <p>7. The Side of Truth: <b>Matthew 25:14-30</b> and <b>I Peter 4:11,</b> cf. <b>James 2:14-26.</b></p> <p>8. The Side of Truth: <b>Galatians 6:1-2!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brother or sister in sin / error / etc. affects the whole body (<b>I Corinthians 5</b>).</li> <li>• Once you know about sin among the brethren, how can you worship without resolving it (<b>Matthew 5:23-24</b>)?</li> <li>• How can you let anyone be lost and say nothing (<b>Ezekiel 3:18; 20</b>)?</li> </ul>
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