

Exodus 20:1-17, John 2:13-22 Pastor Jordan Gades 3.7.21

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

What's your favorite commandment? What's your favorite rule to follow? I bet that's a weird thing to think about? Which imposed boundary is my favorite to not cross? Which one of these starch invisible fences do I love to stay away from? It's strange when we think about rules because some part of us, maybe deep deep down, just says to us they don't really apply to us. We were created free, we have this free will that is driving us day to day, to try new things, to live the life we want to lead, to be the people who we want to be. And that's great isn't it. All gumdrops and roses, right?

I'm sure that you've turned out exactly how you want to be. I'm sure everything in your life has gone just the way that you planned it. And I am sure that every decision that you make moving forward will be the right one.

So, let's just throughout a hypothetical for you to ponder. What if all these choices that you've made haven't been the best. Not even all, just a few. Maybe, what it no matter how hard you try and figure something out you just can't? And what if, just what if, you or I or anyone else here today, what if we are the smartest cleverest people to have all the answers.

These are big what ifs I'm sure. But they point us in the right direction when it comes to God and God's loving rules. We may have free will but darned if we know how to use it. And I know that you are trying. Your trying hard, I'm trying hard, we are all trying hard, but trying aint cutting it. Not when it comes to the life and world that God has planned for us.

We have to start this whole process by knowing, way down deep that we need God to show us the way, that God needs to Guide us. And from there we start to see the ten commandments and all the grand policies and laws that God has given us in a new light.

We are trying to do life all by our lonesome we tend to see all these provisions as some 10-foot chain link fence with razor wire at the top, probably electrified as well, and we think we are in some sort of prison and all we see is all the stuff outside and think how much we want it.

When what God has presented us is something completely differently.

We've all heard of Chernobyl. Nuclear reactor blows up. Bad news all around. What do they do now? Radiation spilling out everywhere. They decide to cover in in metal and concrete from every side. 523,000 yards of concrete, 7,300 tons of metal. This gigantic sarcophagus entombs all of this death.

That is a better analogy to the word of God. There is this stuff out there that is trying to kill us, piece by piece, and these commandments surround them, entomb them, and keep us safe and in a better world for everyone. That is life giving. That takes a weight off my chest. That makes

me lift up my head and look around and wonder how I can make today a better day for myself and the people around me.

And that's what Jesus is advocating when he is whipping those money changers and sellers out of the temple. They were making people think that God's word was that 10-foot fence rather than the life giving and saving thing it is.

There are people today who keep yelling at the top of their lungs that we should be tearing down that fence has put around us, and there's still that voice in each of us, whispering sinisterly, about how we know so much better; but the wisdom and love of our God still outreaches them all.

It is a wisdom that the world rejects and yet we can see the truth in it as clear as a sunny June day. In that wisdom our God was destroyed but was raised again, whole, 3 days later.

In that wisdom we are to follow in the footsteps of our God.

In that wisdom we are supposed to care for the weak and hungry.

In that wisdom we are supposed to comfort the grieving.

In that wisdom we are supposed to do all in our power to heal the sick.

In that wisdom we are supposed to steward creation for all people and all generations to have a home.

The wisdom of the world says those all cost too much and are much too inconvenient.

In the wisdom of our God, Jesus Christ died for you so that you may know what true love looks like, what sacrificial love looks like, and that you might know how far we are going to go to live out our new lives, made truly free in Christ.

And it is by that wisdom that we will live today. And it is by that wisdom that we will see a brighter and better tomorrow. Amen.