

Family Devotional

From October 15, 2017

Read: If you have a copy of *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, read: "Get Ready" on page 170

Reflect: Do you ever feel like there are just too many rules to try and obey?

When you think of rules God wants us to obey, what comes to mind first?

Have you ever wondered what the Great Commandment is? A teacher in the Bible asked Jesus the same question; read Matthew 22:36-40 to find out what Jesus said.

What do you think Jesus meant when he said in verse 40 that, "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."? (Allow family members to share their thoughts before continuing) The Law and the Prophets would be referring to what we know as the Old Testament, and it has long lists of rules. Have you ever stopped to think why does God give us rules?

God does not love us when we follow all his rules. It is because he loves us that he gives us rules and guidelines to follow. He designed us and wants us to live the kind of life that he knows is best for us. He wants to protect us and help us make wise choices. The Law also shows us that we need to be rescued because we can't keep all these rules on our own.

All of these rules can be summarized by saying we are called to Love God and Love People. That sounds simple enough, but even at its most basic level none of us can obey this Great Commandment perfectly all the time. That is why it is such Good News that Jesus was sent into the world to take our punishment on himself: so that we could be saved.

So what saves us; following all the rules or believing in Jesus? Have someone read Ephesians 2:8-10.

We are saved when we put our trust in Jesus and accept his gift of grace. So why all the rules? Why is it important to still do our best to love God and love people? We do these things not as a way to earn our salvation, but as a response of thankfulness for the work that God has done in us and to reflect his character and love to the world.

When we are following God's commands, we are operating in the ways and purposes he designed us for and we are better able to accomplish the wonderful things he has prepared for us to do! He does not expect us to do all of this in our own strength, but he gives us his Holy Spirit to teach us and guide us along the way.

Remember: Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on Ephesians 2:8-9 this week.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:8-10

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

Respond: "Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to save us. Help us to trust you fully and live in obedience to your will. Thank you for your mercy and grace when we mess up. Help us show that same mercy and grace to everyone we meet. Amen!"