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AT LAST Charting
Our Course
for Eternity
WITH MIKE TUCKER

Laws for Lovers



Review

A lasting relationship without boundaries is an impossibility. Boundaries suggest respect, and mutual respect must exist for a relationship to last and for it to be mutually fulfilling.

Marriage counselors know that there are no successful “open relationships.” Without boundaries, relationships have more potential for pain than for joy.

God understands that the same thing is true in our relationship with Him. The needs and expectations of both parties must be clearly outlined. That is why God gave us the Law. These are no more a set of legalistic requirements than are the legitimate needs of a husband or wife. They are rules designed to govern a healthy, lasting relationship.

Digging Deeper

Just as a wife loves to do the things she knows will bring her husband joy, so God tells us that when we fall in love with Him, we will love to keep His law.

Faith
for Today

Hebrews 10:16 *This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds. Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.*

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two broad areas: love for God and love for others. The first four Commandments deal with our love for God.

Exodus 20:3 *You shall have no other gods before me.*

Exodus 20:4-5 *You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them;*

Exodus 20:7 *You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.*

Exodus 20:8 *Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.*

What healthy principles of relationship do you find in each of these four Commandments?

The next six commandments deal with our love for others. Isn't it interesting that when God shared His boundaries for healthy relationship, He spent more time talking about how we relate to each other than how we relate to Him?

Exodus 20:12 *Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live for a long time in the land the Lord your God is giving you.*

Exodus 20:13 *Never murder.*

Exodus 20:14 *Never commit adultery.*

Exodus 20:15 *Never steal.*

Exodus 20:16 *Never lie when you testify about your neighbor.*

Exodus 20:17 *Never desire to take your neighbor's household away from him. Never desire to take your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey, or anything else that belongs to him.*

Why do you think God cares so much about how we treat each other?

King David had high praise for God's Law. He found great fulfillment in the precepts God has handed down to His followers.

Psalm 19:7-11 *The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

What does it take for us to come to the place where we view God's Law the same way David saw it?

Another benefit of the Law is that it makes us aware of how we have hurt God and others. This is what we refer to as sin. Sin is any attitude or action that is unloving towards God or other human beings. Sin is ultimately an act of selfishness. The Law of God helps us see that we have behaved in an unloving, or sinful, manner.

Psalm 19:12-14 *Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

Jesus saw the Law of God as two great principles: love for God and love for man. His insights help us understand the Ten Commandments as “laws for lovers.”

Matthew 22:35-40 *One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”*

The Law of God is an invaluable aid in our quest for intimacy with God. As we meditate on the love and wisdom contained in these precepts, we gain insight into the great heart of God. Keeping the law is not a legalistic requirement for heaven, but a loving response to our Savior. Jesus said that if we loved him, we would keep His commandments.

Is it your desire to express your love for Jesus through obedience to His commandments of love?