

Getting to the root of the problem

Sometimes laws/rules can be a substitute for wisdom: doing the right thing, at the right time and in the right way. Karl Weick, psychologist, reports that for many years firefighters followed 4 rules in fighting wilderness fires:

- 1) Build a back fire, if you have time.
- 2) Get to the top of a ridge where fuel is thin, lots of rock/shade & wind change
- 3) Turn into the fire and work through it.
- 4) You pick the spot where you fight the fire, it doesn't pick you.

But in the early 1950's experts started saying – well, you know, the world is complex, changing, there is more sophisticated equipment now, so lets revamp these 4 rules, which became 48 complex and lengthened rules – fatalities ensued.

Sermon on the Mount: Jesus is the new Moses/lawgiver. Does not add to the 10 commandments but deepens them, and helps us to apply this wisdom to our lives. Christ has come not to abolish the law but to fulfill. Jesus speaks in the Divine Name revealed to Moses “I am” – *“you have heard it said, but I am says to you”*

- You shall not murder – but I say to you, do not get angry, insult or slander your brother or sister. Root of taking a person's life begins with words.
- You shall not commit adultery – uproot lust in your mind and heart.
- You shall not swear – do not swear at all!

Jesus is trying to set us free! Following the rules of the commandments is a good start, but we cannot end there. True freedom in the Christian faith is not just having a wide of choices and the ability to choose but to be able to choose the good – that is true freedom, not to be able to do whatever I want. **In heaven we are truly free** – but there is no sin/temptation there – so are we free? Yes to choose the good!

To whom do we compare ourselves to?

It is interesting that in the business world we would always compare our business to a better one, in sports, music, etc. But in morality we always tend to compare ourselves with those who are living more immorally! Well, I am doing well, I haven't broken any commandments, but I may be gossiping, leaving negative feedback on social media, treating my neighbor harshly, etc. Compare ourselves to Jesus is what is necessary! He gives us the grace of His Spirit to fulfill the meaning of the ten commandments and to live them out!

This week: take a few minutes to memorize the ten commandments and to read Matthew chapter 5. Remember that we have the Holy Spirit's gift of wisdom to help us apply the inner meaning of the commandments to every situation in life.