



**Let the Children Come - When Rules Get in the Way  
Sermon Discussion Questions - May 16, 2021**

***Scripture Passages:***

**Mark 3:1-6 (NLT)** Jesus went into the synagogue again and noticed a man with a deformed hand. Since it was the Sabbath, Jesus' enemies watched him closely. If he healed the man's hand, they planned to accuse him of working on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the deformed hand, "Come and stand in front of everyone." Then he turned to his critics and asked, "Does the law permit good deeds on the Sabbath, or is it a day for doing evil? Is this a day to save life or to destroy it?" But they wouldn't answer him. He looked around at them angrily and was deeply saddened by their hard hearts. Then he said to the man, "Hold out your hand." So the man held out his hand, and it was restored! At once the Pharisees went away and met with the supporters of Herod to plot how to kill Jesus.

**Luke 6:11 (NLT)** At this, the enemies of Jesus were wild with rage and began to discuss what to do with him.

**Luke 19:10 (NLT)** "For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."

**Galatians 6:14 (NLT)** As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

***Warm Up:***

This message talked about when rules get in the way. Just for fun, do you tend to be someone who follows all the rules or someone who breaks all the rules?

***Discussion:***

1) In the beginning of his message, Pastor Tom described the two extremes in response to rules:

*Rebellion—these folks have trouble trusting God or anybody for that matter.*

*Self-righteousness—these folks have no need for the nuisance of a relationship, just keep the rules and this is something I can do for myself.*

What might cause people to respond in one of these extremes or the other? How might these two responses impact the way someone relates to Jesus and why?

2) In his message, Pastor Tom shared an example from Andy Stanley where he describes his relationship with Jesus like playing a game of Simon Says. *Jesus says, “Stand up.” Jesus says, “Read your Bible.” Jesus says, “Pray.” “Sit down.”*

How might following Jesus, feel like a game of Simon Says? Have you ever found yourself feeling this way or have you had conversations with anyone who shares or shared this perspective? What might cause us to see our relationship with Jesus more like a list of rules?

3) Read Mark 2:27-28.

What stands out most to you? How does Jesus speak to the the spirit of the law versus the letter of the law?

4) Look at Mark 2:23-28.

How does Jesus’ perspective contrast with that of the Pharisees? What can might we learn about our approach to rules from Jesus’ example here?

5) Excerpt from Pastor Tom’s message: *The religious leaders, the self-righteous, stop seeing people and only see rules. Everyone is judged, not according to who they are as people, but according to whether or not they keep the rules. Worth is attached to how well or how poorly they keep the rules.*

What are some ways that we might be tempted to stop seeing people and only see rules?

What might cause us to slip into attaching someone’s worth to how well they keep rules?

How might we guard ourselves from this temptation to attach worth to rules and keep seeing value in all people?

6) Read Mark 3:1-6.

Who are Jesus’ enemies in this passage? What separates Jesus’ law from the Pharisee’s law? Based on what you see in these verses, what might Jesus have been up to? How do his actions challenge or affirm our views of religious rules today?

7) In his message, Pastor Tom posed the question, *“I wonder what Jesus would get kicked out of today?”*

What things come to your mind? Why?

8) Excerpt from Pastor Tom:

*Rebellious hearts need to... discover their trust in God.*

*Self-righteous hearts need to... discover their need of God.*

Which path do you think might be more difficult and why? Whether you have been rebellious or self-righteous, how have you seen God change your heart?

***Next Steps:***

Pastor Tom said, *“It is impossible to follow Jesus and not end up around lost and broken people.”*

In what ways has following Jesus led you to places with lost and broken people? If it hasn't, why might that be? What practical steps can you take to begin engaging more with lost and broken people?

What would it look like to join Jesus on his mission to seek and save those who are lost?