



## Once Upon a Time

*The Story God is Telling and How You Fit*

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Week 5- October 15, 2017

# First the Rescue, then the Rules

Introduction: How can we bridge the gap between us and God?

Religion promises "Just follow the rules & you can fix things with God!"

But what if the way back to God's heart is NOT through His rules?

### The Rules... (Exodus 20:1-17)

...came AFTER the relationship (20:2a).

...came AFTER the rescue (20:2b).

So... have you cried out to God for rescue? (Romans 10:13)

Or are you following rules to win God's approval?

### Then why have Rules at all? (Exodus 19:3-6)

- God wanted Israel to live like a kingdom of priests, to help facilitate relationship between God and the world!
- Following the rules would show what God is like.
- Following the rules would show the world what life was always intended to be like.

So... have you embraced the calling to live according to God's rules so you can invite people to be restored to God? (1 Peter 2:9)

Or are you just living to take care of yourself?



Debrief Plan: 10/15/2017

### Icebreakers:

1. What is a rule you had to live by that you REALLY hated?
2. Suppose you had a daughter and a young man wanted to date her – what would he need to do to win you over?

Sermon Summary: Religion tells us that if we just follow God's rules, we can repair our broken relationship with Him. The Story tells us something different: before God gives us rules, He wants to rescue us from our sin. After rescuing us, God gives us His rules so that we can show the world what God is like and what He intends life to look like.

### Discussion Questions:

\* **The Rules...** (Read Exodus 20:1-3)

1. It's easy to criticize other religions, but isn't Christianity a religion? How do we conservative Baptist-types act religious?
2. Why is the idea that we can fix things with God so appealing to us?
3. Why do we have a tendency to want to convince God to help us by keeping His rules instead of just crying out to Him for help?  
(Read Exodus 14:30-15:3 together.)
4. How did the Israelites respond to God's rescue? Which response is easiest for you? Which one is the hardest and why?

\* **Then Why Have Rules at All?**

(Read Exodus 19:1-6 and 1 Peter 2:9-10.)

5. Is it strange to think of yourself as a priest for God? Why?
6. What might it look like to be a "priest" for the people around us who are far from God? We aren't offering animal sacrifices anymore, so how can we facilitate people reconnecting to God?
7. Why does living a holy life according to God's standards get the world's attention? Does that ever actually happen?
8. Share one thing about God that the world needs to see in us. Why did you pick that one? How can you show that with your actions?