

HEAVEN

WHO GOES THERE?

PART 3: THE ROLE OF RULES

Over the past two weeks, we've looked at how most people believe in heaven and believe that if they are good enough, they'll get there. But just how good is good enough? The truth is, good people don't go to heaven; forgiven people do. Forgiven through a relationship with Jesus who paid the price for us to be restored to God. But if rule-keeping won't get you into heaven, then why the rules?

CONNECT

How do you usually respond to rules in your life? Do you tend to keep them or break them?

LEARN

You will watch a shortened version of a message from this series to set up your group discussion. Watch the full message sometime this week as a reminder of what you talked about today.

APPLY

After sharing what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Have you ever thought that God's love for you was contingent on your obedience to his rules? If so, how did that impact the way you interacted with him? If not, how would that change your relationship with him?
2. In the video Andy says, "Relationship always precedes the rules. God did not give Israel the law as a means of establishing a relationship with him. God gave Israel the law because they were already in relationship with him. It wasn't a condition. It was a confirmation that they were in the family." How does this change the way you view the rules that God gave to Israel? How does this change the way you view the rules in the New Testament?
3. How would your relationship with God change if you were to fully embrace the truth that you are loved by God and have been given rules to live by because you are his child?



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WRAP UP

If rules don't have anything to do with getting to heaven or coming into a restored relationship with God, then why the rules? Because good parents give rules to keep their family safe. God offers us mercy, grace, forgiveness, and shows us how to live and treat others because he loves us.

In **Matthew 22:36–37**, a man asked Jesus what the greatest rule was. “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.’”

We follow God's rules not because we have to, but because we want to out of gratitude and wanting to be close to him. These rules are never for our harm. They are given because God loves us, and he wants us to know him. His desire is to show us what he wants for our lives.

PRAY

If you don't have a personal relationship with Jesus and want to, speak to him from your heart. Prayer is a way of telling God you are transferring your trust to him and you can use this prayer as a guide:

Heavenly Father,
I have mistreated people you love.
I have sinned.
I don't need to do better.
I need forgiveness.
I need a Savior.
I accept Jesus as my Savior.
I'm no longer trusting in my goodness.
I'm trusting in your undeserved goodness to me.
I accept Jesus's death as the once and for all payment for my sin.
Amen

For those who already have a relationship with Jesus, pray and ask God to further etch the truth into your heart and mind that you are a loved child of God. Thank him for sending his Son to provide the way back to the Father

