

# STARTING POINT

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- Starting Point is going great! Many of you are making real progress and we are enjoying it!
- Week 1– Everything has a starting point. Although our faith may have started as a child, it may need a new start now that we are adults. The place to begin is asking “Who is Jesus?”
- Week 2– The problem is we are more than serial mistakers. What if the problem with me is deeper than not being perfect?
- Week 3– Seth asked us a probing question, “On what grounds, if any, will God find us acceptable?” Trust was the answer. But what about all the rules?

# THE ROLE OF RULES

CHAPTER FOUR | *STARTING POINT*

# RULES & THE RULEMAKER

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- Every religion has its set of rules, and somebody gets to be the rule maker (and it never gets to be us does it?!)
  - Islam has 5 Pillars, Judaism has 10 Commandments and Buddhism has its 8 fold path. Even Christianity has its rules too.
  - Catholics and Protestants both seem to have their rules and they are different!
- Adding to it is the fact we are all different when it comes to rules – rules keepers, rules breakers and rules benders.

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*FOR MANY OF US, THIS IS WHY WE LEFT THE FAITH OF OUR CHILDHOOD. WE DIDN'T LIKE ALL THE RULES, OR WE FELT WE COULDN'T KEEP THEM ALL, OR THEY JUST DIDN'T MAKE SENSE TO US AS ADULTS.*

# RULES & RELIGION

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- Q. What is the role of rules in religion? A. Rules always assume some kind of relationship.
  - We vote and pay taxes because of our relationship to the USA.
  - We submit new exterior paint colors to the HOA because of our relationship to our neighbors. In Talega you don't park on the street overnight!

# RULES & RELIGION

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- Let's examine 2 models of rules within relationship- The Family Model and The Club Model.

## THE FAMILY MODEL

1. The relationship comes first. Because you are part of this family here are the rules. If you break the rules you are not out of this family, but here are the consequences.
2. The relationship is the grounds for the rules. You don't tell the neighbor kid what to do when he is at home.

# RULES & RELIGION

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## THE CLUB MODEL

1. The rules are given to you first. If you agree to keep them you are in... but if you choose to violate them and then you are out!
2. Your participation in the club is contingent upon your behavior. You are in line, or you are out of the club.



# RULES & RELIGION

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Which one is it when it comes to God. Is it that you are in with God and here are some rules to live by in this family. OR, is it that you need to behave your way in and if you stay good and do all the right things you stay in, but if you blow it, you are out! Does God operate by a family model or a club model?

- We all will wrestle with this: “How does my behavior line up with God? What does God expect of me? am I IN or am I OUT and how in the world am I supposed to know that answer?!”



# THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

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## Exodus Chapter 20

- Let's connect the dots from Abraham last week
  - Abraham had a son Ishmael through a servant girl. But later he had a son Isaac through Sarah.
  - Isaac had two sons Esau and Jacob and the younger one snatched the blessing away.
  - Jacob had 12 sons and the nation Israel picked up some steam! Joseph ended up in Egypt, as did all the rest of them eventually.
  - The nation Israel grew like rabbits in Egypt but as slaves for 400 years. Then God called MOSES to tell Pharaoh something...

# THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

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- The Passover was a major point of trust for Israel. They were rescued from judgment by placing the blood of a lamb over their doors.

*“I am the LORD your God who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. You must not have any other god but me.”*

**EXODUS 20:1-2**

- From there you can read on and see the other ones

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*Let's take note of that! What was Abraham asked to do to get in with God? He was asked to believe in, to trust in God. What was Israel asked to do to get in? They were asked to trust in the work of God through a lamb's blood. The rules came after the relationship was established! The rules were a confirmation of, not a condition to, the relationship.*

# WHAT ABOUT US?

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- Abraham received a 3-fold promise and the last part was, “All the families of the earth will be blessed through you.”
- Should it surprise us that a descendant of Abraham named Jesus shows up 1500 years after Moses saying He is bringing the promise to fulfillment? Does it surprise us that He is called The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world?

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*John was Jesus' closest friend and disciple and he said this about Jesus, "But to all who believed Him and accepted Him, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12)*

- Notice it doesn't say to those who behaved he gave the limited right to become club members, as long as...

# SOME TAKEAWAYS

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1. God's people have always got in with God by trusting in God's work for them. We get in with God when we trust in the person and work of Jesus for us.
2. We don't come in or stay in as Club Members, we come in as and stay in as children of God. We are in the family when we come in by faith, by trust in Jesus. Which also means you can't get out by not keeping the rules- you will get disciplined but even that is God's love NOT to pay you back but to bring you back!
3. Anything God requires of us is evidence of His love for us. Anything God asks of us is because we are His children when we have come by faith in Jesus. There is a pre-established relationship by God that is ours.



# A FINAL QUESTION

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As you were growing up and expressing your faith, was it more of a club model- rules to try to get in and rules to try to stay in— or was it more a family model- I am part of God's family and I want to do what pleases my Father?

- Read chapter 4 and fill in the questions and come ready to discuss you thoughts and questions.
- Will those serving Communion please get ready!