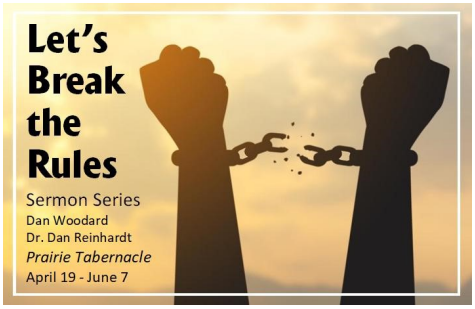
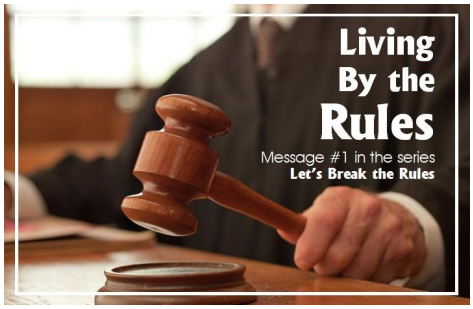


MESSAGE OUTLINE

Dan Woodard
Dan Reinhardt



This is the first message in the series: *Let's Break the Rules.* The other messages will be *Let's Talk, Let's Feel, Let's Trust, Let's Think, Let's Choose, Let's Change,* and *Living by Grace.*

OBJECTIVE
To introduce the series by showing a biblical context for the difference between rules-based Christianity and relationship-based faith.

THEME
Living out a rules-based faith is inadequate in our quest to be devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

CONTEXT
Since this is a topical series, we will try to survey the topic of each message using the narrative of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation.

GARDEN OF EDEN • Genesis 2:16
The first rule: "Don't eat of this tree or you will die." The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a symbol of God's lordship over Adam. Adam and Eve bit into death.

MT SINAI • Exodus 20:3-17
These are God's ten foundational rules. They list out the ten things God wanted His people to view as sacred: *His being, His worship, His name, His day, family, life, marriage, property rights, truth* and *thoughts.* Hundreds of other civil and social rules follow in Exodus and Leviticus. God knew the people wouldn't obey His rules, so He gave them the Tabernacle and system of sacrifices, a symbolic picture of the salvation Jesus provides through the cross.

PRE-CANAAN • Deuteronomy 5, 6:4-9
Moses declares the rule to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and strength, to pass this rule on to their children, and to tie God's rules on to their hands and foreheads. We can track the digression of phases of how rules shift from life-giving to death-giving.

- Over time what was intended *for* the heart was no longer true *in* the heart.
- Rules become distorted and added to make faith more measurable, visible, and to prove to others we really are holy.
- Rules have a way of becoming a standard by which we compare ourselves to others and measure others.
- Rules become a stick by which we judge, solidifying our spiritual arrogance.

PROPHETS • Isaiah 29:13, Hosea 6:6
God says I want relationship with you, not compliance to rules. It can be easy to mistake the picture for the person with whom we're supposed to be relating with. We can mistake the rules for the relationship, living the list instead of the life, the transformed life God wants for us.

JESUS • Matthew 5, 22:36-40, 23
One of the takeaways from the Sermon on the Mount was that we can keep all God's rules on the outside and still be breaking His rules in our hearts. One of the Pharisees ask Jesus a trick question: What's the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus replied, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. Then Jesus takes on the Pharisees for their religious fashion show.

APOSTLE PAUL • Acts 9, Galatians 1-6
Paul radically changed from the severe abuse of persecuting the church to planting churches, one of which was the church in Galatia. He was furious with the old guard for intimidating the believers into giving up their freedom in Christ and backsliding back into living under man-made rules.

SUMMARY
This series is about how to break man's rules that need to be broken to better living in relationship with God and others. Ground Zero is just two rules: *Love God and love your neighbour as yourself.*