



No Cuts

It is Saturday morning; OK late morning, and I am waiting in line at the local pancake house for my turn at a leisurely breakfast and a much needed 3rd cup of coffee. The restaurant is busy, the staff is a little overwhelmed and the group in front of me says they have a "small" party of 10. The waitresses eyes go blank for a minute as she tries to decide how to handle the group... then it happens. The people who were behind me a moment ago in line are now starting to ease ahead of me, they look around as though confused but they aren't; they are crashing the line.

Now if there is one thing that really frosts my shorts it is people who can't follow such basic rules of common courtesy; after all, everyone knows that there are "no cuts"! Or do they? Who made up the rule that there are no cuts? Are there "Cuts Police" to enforce the law (and what is an appropriate punishment for third and fourth time offenders)? The truth is, the idea of waiting your turn in line is a "moral law" and our lives are filled with them.

Essentially, these laws are nothing more than the things that we, as individuals, instinctively believe to be right and wrong. These are personal laws that we expect others to follow as well; things just like cutting in line.

All that being said I find it intriguing that virtually no one is capable of keeping their own moral law! Now follow me on this... I am not talking about the things God said was right and wrong, I am talking about what you as an individual believe to be right and wrong in your own mind. Each of us has a line that we profess not to cross and we don't like others crossing it either. Some people are offended when someone cuts in line; others are offended with your elbows on the dinner table. Some people are offended by gossips and others with liars. My point is this: even when we hate that other people do these things to us, we still do them to others! If you hate when people cut in line and you are at a movie and see a friend you know at the front of the line, do you join them? If you hate when people talk about you behind your back, do you join in a conversation that is at someone else's expense?

Pick whatever example works well for you. Personally, the cuts thing still gets to me; yet (and I hate to admit this) I am also guilty of cutting. I hate people talking about me behind my back, but again, guilty. The fact is none of us can keep our own law.

This is what Paul was talking about in Romans when he said:

*You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?
~Romans 2:21-22*

My question to you is this... if you clearly can't keep your own moral law how do you expect to pass the test of God's perfect law? If you get to choose what is right and wrong and still fail, how will you possibly stand up under a law you didn't choose?

Yet, we continue to justify our actions. I can't tell you how often I talk with people who feel, in general, that they are basically good people. They haven't killed anyone; they have helped people in need, etc. The long and short of their argument is this: I don't need a Savior because I haven't done anything wrong. (Coming home the other day I found myself behind a car with a bumper sticker that read: "Born Right the First Time".) This summarizes the ideals of much of mankind; we are still under the impression that there are degrees of sin... it was only a little white lie... I only borrowed that CD... I probably shouldn't have said anything, but after the way she treated me.....

The Bible is quite clear on this subject; "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". Since we know there will be no sinners in Heaven why is it so hard for people to understand that they either need a Savior or they won't be going? The first big step on the road to finding the Savior is coming to the realization that you are a sinner. How can a person be saved from something he is not guilty of? Or more to the point, why would someone look for a Savior when there is no perceived need. This is the grand purpose of the moral law (and of course God's perfect law); to show us that we are sinners and have need of a Savior.

*...So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.
~Galatians 3:24*

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