

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Look

Lots of parenting books make the claim that rules are good for kids – that kids thrive when given strong boundaries.

1. Describe a time when have you been in a situation when rules and boundaries were helpful to you and the people around you. What made the rules helpful? Why were things better because there were rules to follow?
2. Have you ever experienced rules to be oppressive or confining? How did the rules hinder you?

Book Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20

Moses found himself in the desert with a group of barbarians – people who couldn't even manage “an eye for an eye” – they were more like “a head for an eye”. There was not much peace and harmony in the wilderness. The 10 commandments that God gives to the Israelites are the basic rules for living in community together.

1. How do you feel about Rev Lisa's assertion that rules make us more free? How might that have been true for the Israelites with the introduction of the 10 commandments?
2. How is that true for us today?
3. How do the 10 commandments distill down to the greatest commandment: you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and your whole soul, and your whole mind and you shall love your neighbor as yourself?

Took

Lisa claims that Christian freedom is not about self-indulgence but is about the corporate good. Christian freedom might mean limiting ourselves for the greater good of the whole community.

1. In what ways do you currently limit yourself (your own interests or personal freedom) in order to ensure the good of the community around you – which might be your family, your work, your church, your city?
2. In what ways do other people limit themselves so that you can thrive?
3. Have you ever thought of these actions as ways that you love others?