

It's a Matter of Ethics...

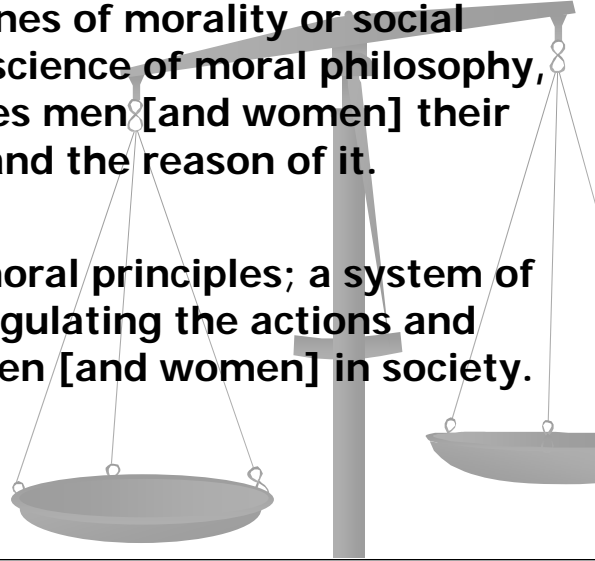
...or do ethics really matter?



This is the question I hope we can answer together – but in order to do that we really need to define the term “ethics.”

Ethics Defined:

- 1. The doctrines of morality or social manners; the science of moral philosophy, which teaches men [and women] their duty and the reason of it.**
- 2. A system of moral principles; a system of rules for regulating the actions and manners of men [and women] in society.**



Taken from Webster's original dictionary published in 1828...there are basically two definitions...

**So, in the matter of your
“personal” ethics...**

...do ethics really matter?

**...do your personal ethics have any effect on your
ability to do your job as a public safety
professional?**

Tell me what you think?



Gather several responses before moving to answer on next slide...

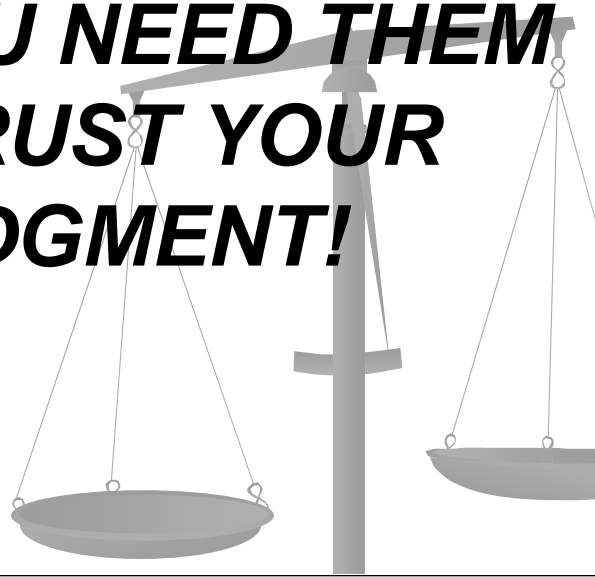
Your personal ethics matter because...

**Public Safety Professionals are often
required to make "life or death" decisions
affecting other people:**

- **Co-workers – partners & supervisors**
- **Companions – family & friends**
- **Community – schools & neighborhoods**
- **Complete strangers**



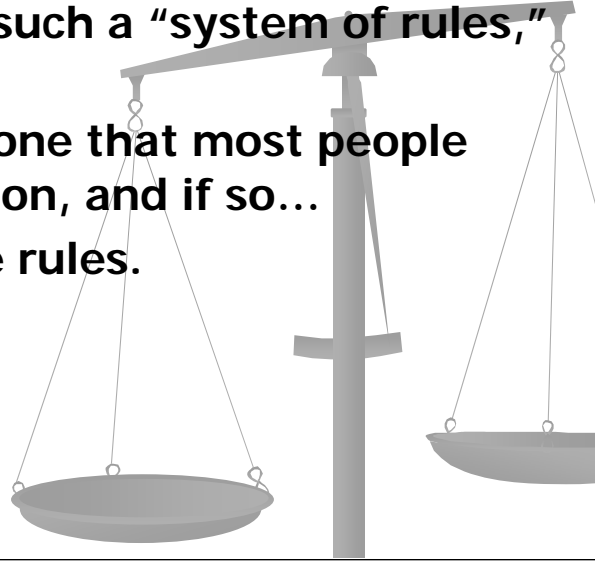
***AND YOU NEED THEM
TO TRUST YOUR
JUDGMENT!***



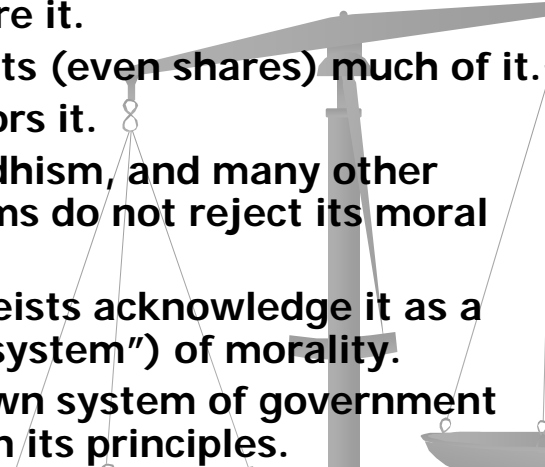
So, recalling that ethics really involve a system of “rules” for behavior – the next question is...

Where are “The Rules?”

1. Can we find such a “system of rules,” and if so...
2. Can we find one that most people can agree upon, and if so...
3. What are the rules.



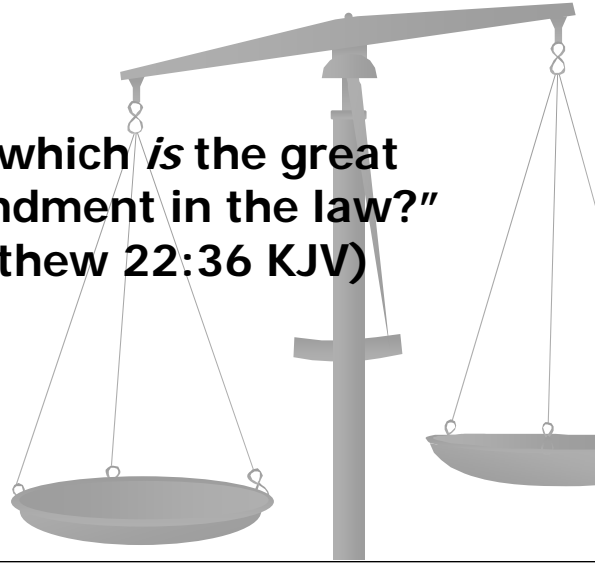
The Bible is such a “system.”

- 1. Christians revere it.**
 - 2. Judaism respects (even shares) much of it.**
 - 3. The Koran honors it.**
 - 4. Hinduism, Buddhism, and many other religious systems do not reject its moral precepts.**
 - 5. Even many atheists acknowledge it as a standard (or “system”) of morality.**
 - 6. And our very own system of government was based upon its principles.**
- 

If we can accept the Bible as a guidebook regarding rules of morality or rules of ethical behavior, then we can ask the next obvious question...

What are “The Rules?”

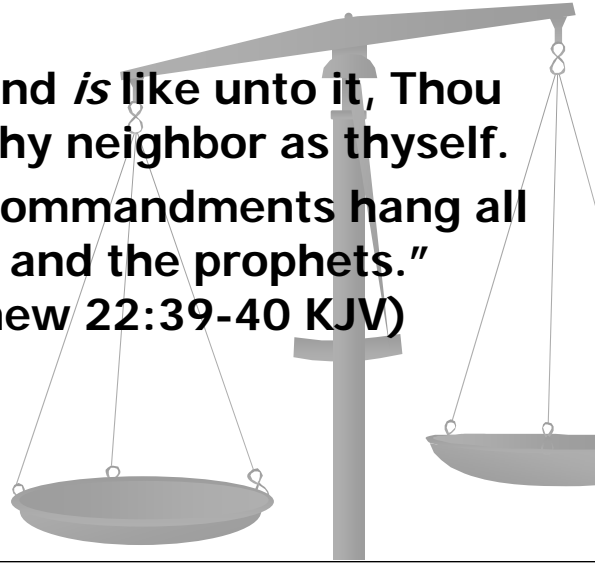
**“Master, which *is* the great
commandment in the law?”
(Matthew 22:36 KJV)**



A professing expert in the law tried to trip Jesus up one day and asked Him [read slide]...Jesus responded that the first and greatest commandment was to love God with heart, mind, soul, and strength...

The Rules:

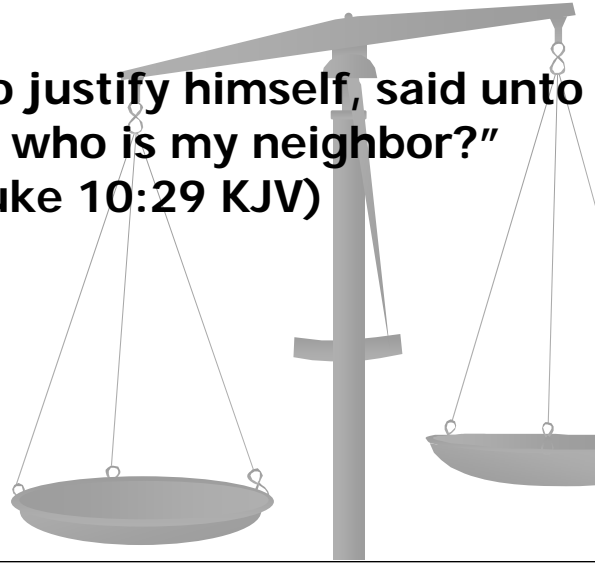
**“And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”
(Matthew 22:39-40 KJV)**



So what does it mean to love your neighbor as you love yourself...any ideas? (take a few suggestions) Have you ever thought about how you “love yourself?” C.S. Lewis had a great take on these verses – he said people get the wrong notion that Jesus was telling us we should always feel warm and fuzzy about our neighbor – but Lewis said “wait a minute – I don’t always feel warm and fuzzy about myself – in fact I rarely feel that way about myself – in fact when I look into my own heart and see what nastiness I am capable of – at those moments I don’t even like myself – but even in such moments, when I am not happy with myself, when I don’t feel warm and fuzzy about myself, when I am frankly disgusted with myself – I still always act in my own best interest – and that’s what we are required to do in order to “love” our neighbors as ourselves – to always act in their best interests – even when we don’t feel all warm and fuzzy about them – even when we don’t like them very much – even when we might be disgusted by something they’ve done or said – we still act in their best interests –make sense? We’re about to get a little more clarification...

The Rules, continued:

**“But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?”
(Luke 10:29 KJV)**



In Luke's account, which could've been another incident altogether...the guy who asked the question was a real smarty-pants...[read verse]...Jesus answered by telling the story we call “the good Samaritan.” [Tell abbreviated version of the story and emphasize that the two people-groups really hated each other.] [Before next slide say – “To make the point even stronger, we find this...”]

The Rules, continued:

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

**But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”
(Matthew 5:43-44 KJV)**

Anybody ever cursed you over the phone? Anybody out there hate you? Ever feel “used” by anyone...maybe a supervisor...and patrolman or two? Ever felt persecuted? How did you handle it? Could you have handled it any differently? [before next slide say “Here’s another great way to summarize the point – and I’m sure we all remember this one...”]

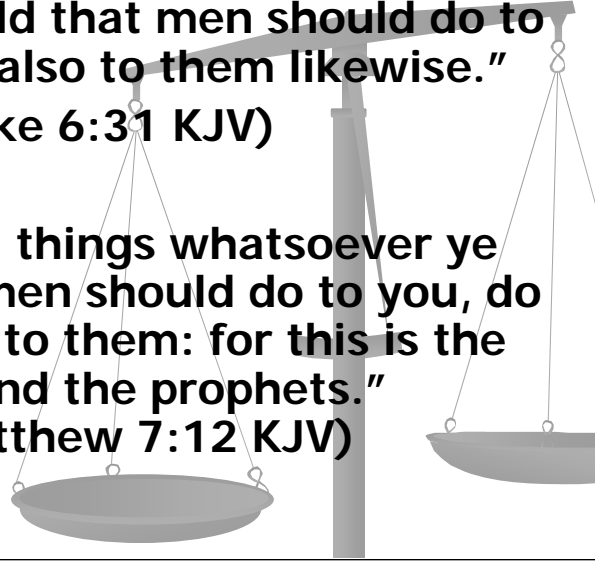
The “Golden” Rule:

“And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”

(Luke 6:31 KJV)

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

(Matthew 7:12 KJV)

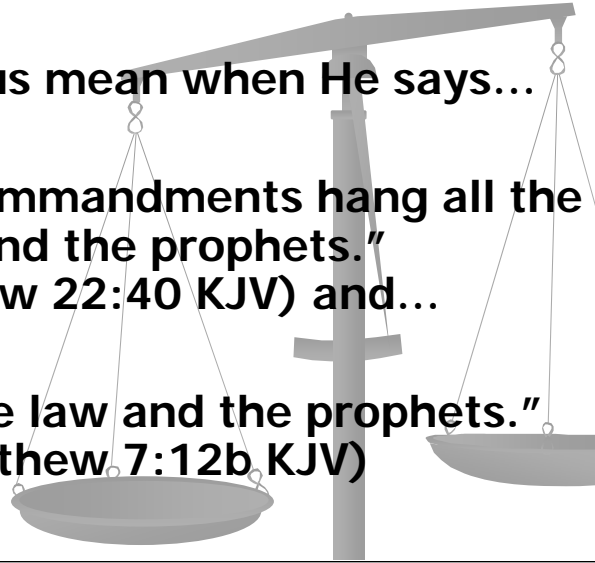


The Rules:

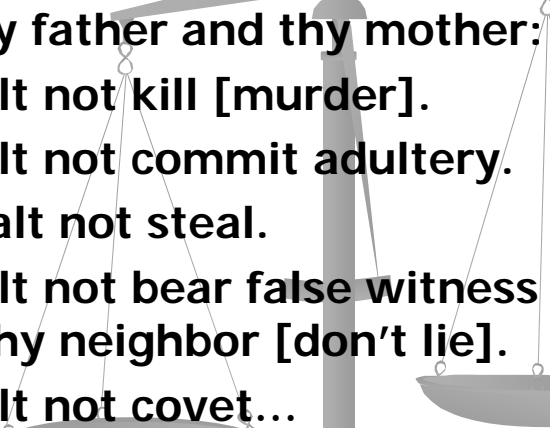
What does Jesus mean when He says...

**"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
(Matthew 22:40 KJV) and...**

**"...for this is the law and the prophets."
(Matthew 7:12b KJV)**



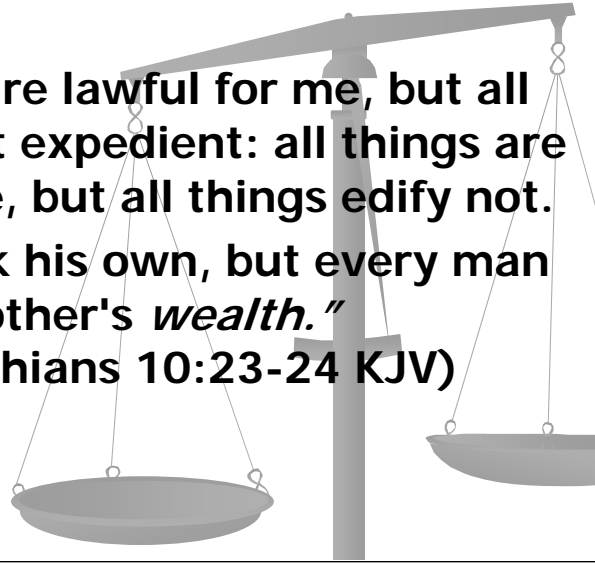
The Law:

- 
- V – Honor thy father and thy mother:**
 - VI – Thou shalt not kill [murder].**
 - VII – Thou shalt not commit adultery.**
 - VIII – Thou shalt not steal.**
 - IX – Thou shalt not bear false witness
against thy neighbor [don't lie].**
 - X – Thou shalt not covet...**

Let's turn up the heat just a little bit...

The Rules:

**"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*."
(1 Corinthians 10:23-24 KJV)**

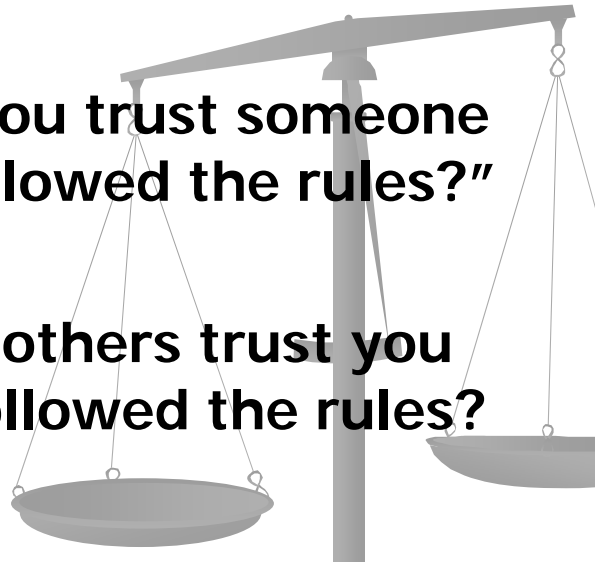


Paul's meddling now! [Explain what he is saying.]

The Question:

**Would you trust someone
who "followed the rules?"**

**Would others trust you
if you followed the rules?**

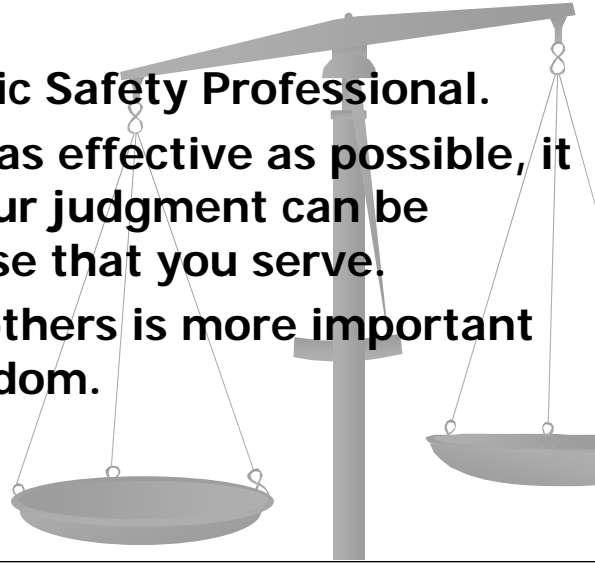


The Bottom Line:

You are a Public Safety Professional.

In order to be as effective as possible, it is vital that your judgment can be trusted by those that you serve.

The safety of others is more important than your freedom.

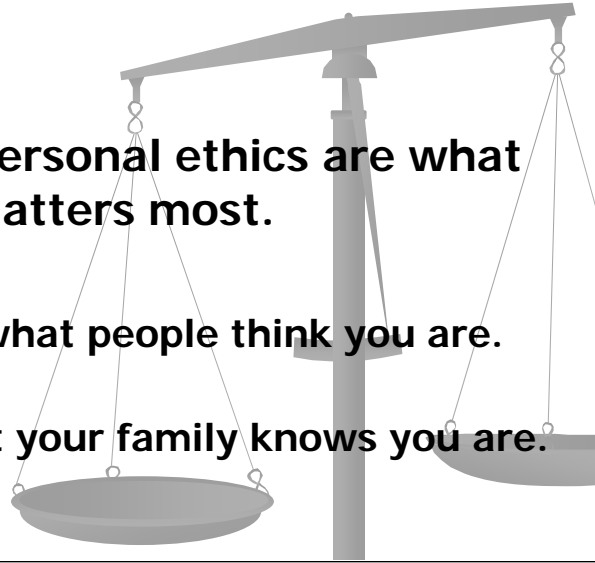


It's a Matter of Ethics...

...and your personal ethics are what matters most.

"Reputation" is what people think you are.

"Character" is what your family knows you are.



Perfect Law Ministries

1905 Norman Trail NW
Brookhaven, MS 39601-9412
601.757.0929

tommy@perfectlaw.org

www.perfectlaw.org

