



REFLECTIONS

June 9, 2019 Refreshed from the Archives of September 23, 2007

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to."

Matthew 23:13

Passing Through School Zones

Recently I passed through a school zone. I obeyed the signal that warned of the 20 mile an hour speed limit. Often, one finds a patrolman on the other end enforcing the limit as if the purpose of the law was to punish the disobedient and collect a fine. But school zones are but one place where speed limits are imposed. Officers are on duty in other places too enforcing speeding violations.

Wherever I am, I usually find myself driving at the top permissible speed. But I must also confess, sometimes I drive above the allowable limit just enough to stay under the tolerance that most officers enforce. Focus on evading the enforcers is to lose sight that speed limits are not about obedience or assessing fines. School zones are marked as a caution to protect the safety of someone's beloved child—maybe yours or mine. And when we go speeding through a neighborhood or make haste down a busy highway, the chief concern should be the wellbeing of those around us, not evading a law enforcer.

It is the spirit of the law that should be our concern; and the spirit behind speed limits, when expressed in the simplest form, is really about loving our neighbor. It is about one of the two great commands that Jesus recalled for us. Remember, He said, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*" (Matthew 22:37-40)

Someone has explained that God gave us the Ten Commandments to reveal sin, not to *establish* it. Speed limits are not written to establish love for our fellow man. However, the violation of them does reveal when we don't care. If we are to love our neighbor, we must slow down to do it.

Now that principle carries a life message too. When we live our lives beyond "the suggested speed," we may have lost focus on what life is all about. The greatest command is to love the Lord our God. There may not be a patrolman waiting to enforce it,

But we must live within the rules to do it.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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