

October 28 to November 3

Emk World Missions

**But forgiveness is with you – that's why you are honoured.
(Psalm 130:4)**

Breaking the rule as the norm?

I recently read the devastating verdict on automated driving by road traffic experts. Traffic would come to a standstill because the computer would observe every road traffic regulation there was! If we were to be booked for every infringement of the rules, we would be paying 1000 euros a day for the privilege.

So then: „Breaking the rules so that everything functions“ as the norm for the day-to-day running of things? One could say that it's good that God forgives us. But this verse also speaks of honour. The original Hebrew actually speaks of real fear rather than just a little respect. How does that fit in? In the context of the Old Testament, that means that if you get caught once you experience God's grace. Better not let it happen twice because you never know what the outcome will be next time. In Malawi it's actually

possible to get a ticket a second time and still be let off. That doesn't really encourage people to obey the rules.

In the New Testament, however, there is clearly a very different approach: when God's rules for our lives with him and with each other are broken, everyone suffers – God, the other person and me too. Forgiveness is possible when love overcomes the injury. God is love, and we can receive that love when we open ourselves to the spirit of God (Romans 5:5). And not just that – love drives out fear (1 John 4:18), because it changes us and helps us so that our lives with God and with each other succeed.

Olav Schmidt

Contact: olav.schmidt@emk.de
Translation: Chris Woodhead

I GIVE THANKS

- For people who forgive each other and make reconciliation possible.
- For those efforts to bring about peace in our world.

I GIVE THANKS

- For the reconciliation process, which the church in Malawi has begun, after many years of conflict between two separate camps:
 - that forgiveness is authentic
 - that a common vision ensues
 - that no false compromises are made, to the detriment of the church's growth

EmK World Missions

EmK World Missions is the division of the EmK in Germany responsible for mission and international cooperation with partner churches worldwide. It works closely together with Methodist overseas missions in Europe and the USA.

Pastor Olav Schmidt is training layworkers and pastors in Malawi, thereby helping with the strategic development of the church there.

Contact:

EmK World Missions
Pastor Frank Aichele
Holländische Heide 13
42113 Wuppertal

Telephone: 0202 7670190
E-Mail: weltmission@emk.de
Web: www.emkweltmission.de