



THE PASTOR'S PEN

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Laws and Grace

Some states take their religious services very seriously. Breaking these laws could send you straight from the chapel to the cooler for something as simple as a sneeze. Though these appear to all still be on the books, a lawyer probably wouldn't have a prayer of successfully prosecuting anyone arrested for doing most of these things in a church. At least, I hope not...

Alabama

It is [illegal](#) to wear a fake mustache that causes laughter in church.

Delaware

In Rehoboth it is [illegal](#) to whisper in church.

Maine/Selected Counties in Georgia

Guns [must be](#) taken to church in the event of a Native American attack.

Massachusetts

In Boston, it is [against the law](#) to eat peanuts while in church.

Mississippi

Private Citizens may [arrest](#) anyone who disturbs a church service.

Nebraska

In Omaha, it's [illegal](#) to sneeze or burp during a church service.

New York

In New York City, it is [illegal](#) to pass gas in church with the intention of causing a disturbance.

North Carolina

It is [illegal](#) to have sex in a churchyard.

Ohio

It is [against the law](#) to kill a housefly within 160 feet of a church without a license.

Texas

It is [illegal](#) to go to church in disguise.

West Virginia

In Nicholas County, no clergy members [may tell](#) jokes or humorous stories from the pulpit during church services.

So there you have it, a short sampling of a few of the hundreds of laws from across the country that at one time were important, but now seem downright odd in today's society. That is what happens to written laws. They get updated by amendments, annotated by interpretations or sometimes just ignored as being out of touch with reality. Perhaps that is why Paul tells us that even the Laws of the Old Covenant, the ones written on stone and parchment almost 3,500 years ago, were intended to be temporary until Christ came and rewrote His new laws on our hearts.

Today we live, not according to the Old Law, but according to Grace. God is not looking a list of laws of what not to do to measure us by. Instead He is looking at measuring us by what we do and how hard we try. He is looking at what we do with His Son Jesus in our words and in our actions. He is looking for us to do our best to follow and obey His commands and then, Grace fills in the rest to make us righteous in His sight.

I for one am glad of that, because if it were all just up to me, I'd never make it alone. So how are you doing on your pilgrimage of service and Grace? If you need help or if you want to simply continue following after Him, we'll see you this Sunday as we gather around His table at worship.

Living under grace,

James

P.S.

In Florida there are still laws for:

Prohibiting unmarried women from parachuting on Sunday or risking arrest, fine, and/or jailing.

The state constitution allows for freedom of speech, a trial by jury, and that pregnant pigs are not to be confined in cages.

It is illegal to sell your children.

You are not allowed to break more than three dishes per day, or chip the edges of more than four cups and/or saucers.

Women may be fined for falling asleep under a hair dryer, as can the salon owner.

If an elephant is left tied to a parking meter, the parking fee has to be paid just as it would for a vehicle.

Penalty for horse theft is death by hanging.

It is illegal to sing in a public place while attired in a swimsuit.

Men may not be seen publicly in any kind of strapless gown.

It is illegal to skateboard without a license.

Etc., etc., etc....