

## Study of Matthew

January 15, 2022

**Discussion Question:** How does your attitude towards others reflect your treatment of them?

Jesus moves from our relationship to God (ask, seek, knock) to our relationship with our fellow man. Not just our relationship to others in the household of God, but to other people

Matthew 7:12

This is the so-called "Golden Rule," one of the most misunderstood statements in the Bible. This statement is not the sum of Christian truth, nor is it God's plan of redemption. We should no more build our theology on the Golden Rule than we should build our astronomy on "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

This great truth is a principle that ought to govern our attitudes toward others. It only applies to believers, and it must be practiced in every area of life. The person who practices the Golden Rule refuses to say or do anything that would harm himself or others. If our judging of others is not governed by this principle, we will become proud and critical, and our own spiritual character will degenerate.

Practicing the Golden Rule releases the love of God in our lives and enables us to help others, even those who want to hurt us.

But remember that practicing the Golden Rule means paying a price. If we want God's best for ourselves and others, but others resist God's will, then they will oppose us. We are salt, and salt stings the open wound. We are light, and light exposes dirt. (From The Bible Exposition Commentary)

### 1. Gamut of the Principle – Whatsoever

Whatsoever is defined as of any kind or amount at all

This is used as a legal term in many documents; as a rule, excludes limitation or qualification

Luke 6:31-36 "Do to others as you would have them do to you. <sup>32</sup> "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. <sup>34</sup> And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. <sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

## 2. Guiding Principle – do to others as you want them to do

The negative way of stating this command was known long before Jesus. Five hundred years before the birth of Christ, Confucius was asked, "Is there one word that may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?" He answered, "Reciprocity. What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others." However, Jesus changed the statement into a positive statement; to say that we should do unto others what we want them to do unto us.

It is the difference between not breaking traffic laws and in doing something positive like helping a stranded motorist. (Enduring Word Bible Commentary)

Luke 10:25-37

## 3. Guardrails of the Principle – this is the law and prophets

The guardrails of this saying: "this is the law and prophets"

The Golden Rule is often misused. People want to use it as an excuse for sin or to be able to do whatever they want. "Well, I just feel like stealing this today. So, if you are going to do to me what I want done to me then you'll just turn a blind eye." NO!! The Golden Rule must be lived under the word of God.

James 4:17 "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."

"Guided by justice and mercy, do unto all men as you would have them to do to you, were your circumstances and theirs reversed." Yet this saying may be misunderstood. "If the prisoner should ask the judge, 'whether he would be content to be hanged, were he in his case,' he would answer, 'No.' Then, says the prisoner, do as you would be done to. Neither of them must do as private men; but the judge must do by him as they have publicly agreed: that is, both judge and prisoner have consented to a law, that if either of them steal he shall be hanged."- John Selden

As Christians we have consented to be under God's law. Therefore, the Golden Rule will not lead you into sin, but rather into love for others to show God's mercy.

We do not live out the Golden Rule by the desires and wants of others rather we live it out under the light of God's word.

""Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them. Add up God's Law and Prophets and this is what you get." Matthew 7:12 MSG