

Morning Sermon August 16, 2020

“The Golden Rule” Matthew 7:12

It is a rule that is often spoken, but much more often broken!

- I. *The Golden Rule, Matthew 7:12, follows on the heels of Matthew 7:7-11, Jesus’ teaching on prayer, because right praying leads to right living –*

¹² Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Matthew 7:12 (NKJV)

Long, long ago I was taught this precept of Bible study, “whenever you see a ‘therefore’ ask yourself what the ‘therefore’ is there for?”

1. *Here, it is clear to me, that it is teaching us that the Father’s graciousness in giving us “good things” in answer to prayer, should result in our doing “good things” for others ...*
2. *Here though in Matthew 7:12, the all encompassing phrase “good things” is replaced by all-encompassing word – “whatever” and an all- encompassing phrase – “whatever you want men to do for you” and ultimately an all-encompassing command –*

... whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Matthew 7:12 (NKJV)

My main point here is, just as “good things” included a great and wonderful variety of things we could pray for and expect God to answer, when we prayed. So, also the word “whatever” in Matthew 7:12 has in mind a great variety of good, God-glorifying, neighbor encouraging or edifying, loving actions. Actions that are outlined, guided or ruled by the Law and the Prophets. Matthew 7:12 (NKJV)

- II. *This means that the Golden Rule is only for born again, godly, Bible –*

reading, praying, Christian people

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... the Law and the Prophets. Matthew 7:12 (NKJV)

1. *Now, when I say this, I am not saying that God’s law has no purpose in the lives of unbelievers, or young believers –*

A. *God’s law and God’s Word, convict of sin – Peter had been preaching and –*

³⁶ “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” Acts 2:36–37 (NKJV)

- B. *Yet in a believer the law also stirs up sin, it makes sin KNOWN to us, it shows us ourselves at our worst -*

¹³ Has then what is good (*The Law*) become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ¹⁶ If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is good*. ¹⁷ But now, *it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me*. ¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how to perform what is good I do not find*. ¹⁹ For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. ²⁰ Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. Romans 7:13–25 (NKJV)

- C. *Yet, here again in Matthew 7:12, we see another use of the Law and the Prophets, here God’s people keep the law and*

prophets by the power of God's Spirit, in relation to people around them -

¹² Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Matthew 7:12 (NKJV)

2. *This third use of the law, really keeping it and wanting rightly, as Matthew 7:12 says whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them this wanting and doing rightly is by the power of the Spirit –*

A. *For instance, what does the sinner, still in his sin want men to do?*

He wants them to excuse his sin, say it is okay, even that it is good! He would gladly allow others their sin as long as he is allowed his – THIS is NOT what Jesus is teaching!

B. *When Jesus says whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them He is talking to the poor in spirit, hungering for righteousness, truly Christian crowd –*

They would want someone to confront them with sin / they would or should gently confront others!

III. *Of course, the Golden Rule, is taught best by Jesus, not just His Words, but by His unselfish life –*

The Golden Rule as seen in Christ's LIFE is elaborated on by the Apostle Paul –

1. *Count others better than yourself, look out for each other -*

2 Therefore if *there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,* ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2:1–4 (NKJV)

2. *Pray that the humble / obedient mind of Christ will be in you -*

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made

Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point* of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, trusting God work in you, that you might shine as lights in a dark world -*

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do all things without complaining and disputing, ¹⁵ that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, Philippians 2:1–15 (NKJV)

IV. *Note the obedience here is called the golden rule, because it is obedience to God's Law, which is also love, godly pure love –*

⁹ For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there *is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law. Romans 13:9–10 (NKJV)

1. *Note love means "obedience" not disobedience to the law. Note Adultery Romans 13:9, as exciting as it might be to sinful flesh is never love. Love is not committing adultery!*

2. *Murder is never love!*

3. *Stealing is not love!*

4. *Lying, bearing false witness is not love!*

5. *Coveting is not love!*

Movies: The Bridges of Madison County, Oceans 11, many others glorify "breaking the law" "breaking the rules"

Arnold Brevick