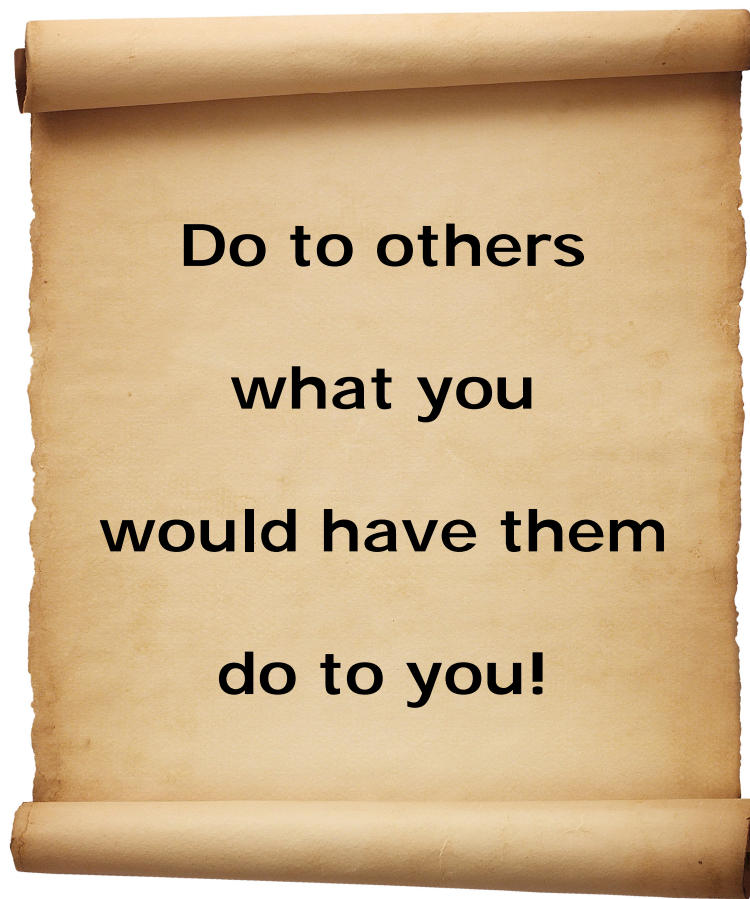


# *The Pastor's Corner Vol. 36*

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## **“The Golden Rule”**



*.... I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith  
that was once for all entrusted to the saints. Jude 1:3 NIV*

## **“The Golden Rule”**

Matthew 7:12 (NIV) *“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”*

1 John 3:17 (NIV) *“If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, **how can the love of God be in him?**”*

James 2:1-4 (NIV) *“<sup>1</sup>My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, **don’t show favoritism.** <sup>2</sup>Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. <sup>3</sup>If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, ‘Here’s a good seat for you,’ but say to the poor man, ‘You stand there’ or ‘Sit on the floor by my feet,’ <sup>4</sup>have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?”*

One day during the winter, there was a man driving to work. This particular winter day was one of the coldest days of the year, reaching a mere 17° F for a high. This man, a Christian, was having a good morning, there was no traffic and he was confident he would be getting to work on time. However, much to his surprise, when he got closer to the bridge he normally crosses with ease, traffic was backed up for a mile before the bridge. Needless to say, the man began to slow down when he saw this back-up ahead of him and eventually came to a complete stop.

Twenty seconds or so after coming to a complete stop, a car plowed into the back of his car. Although the man was shaken up, he was not injured. The man got out of his car to see the extent of the damage done to both cars. Fortunately, the man’s car had very little damage; in fact, the damage was so minor that later on, the man didn’t seek any compensation for the accident.

However, the car that struck him had extensive damages. The whole front of the car was pushed back by at least 12 inches, making it impossible to drive the car away from the accident. Needless to say, the radiator was broken and all of the engine coolant leaked out of it. For this driver, there was no way he could run his engine to provide the much needed heat while waiting for the police and a tow truck. Out of curiosity, the Christian man asked the driver of the car that struck him from behind, “What happened? Why didn’t you slow down like everyone else?” The driver replied, “I’m here from out of town for a job interview. I left my wife and children back home to come here in hopes of landing a job and moving here. While I was driving, I guess my mind was on my family and the interview and I just wasn’t paying attention, that’s how I struck your car.”

To this the Christian man replied, “Hey, it’s ok, that could happen to anybody, all is forgiven.” Meanwhile, because of this accident more traffic developed, making it difficult for the police and tow truck to reach the accident. After 10 minutes of standing outside of the cars, both men started feeling the affects of the 17° F temperature, coupled with the strong wind that day.

Since the Christian man’s car was not damaged in the accident, he decided to get back into his car, start it up and turn the heat on high. However, the driver that struck his car couldn’t start his car and turn on his heat because of the damage done to his car. The Christian man realizing the driver’s dilemma, invited him to get into his car to wait in the heat for the police and tow truck. Finally, after 45 minutes, the police and tow truck arrived. The police officer filled out his police report while the tow truck placed the car on the truck bed to be towed away. As the police officer and tow truck driver were preparing to leave, the driver realized he had no way to get to his interview or to a place where he could rent a car. So he asked the police officer to give him a lift, the police officer said, “Sorry, I can’t.” So he asked the tow truck driver and he too could not give the driver a lift.

The Christian man seeing this driver’s circumstances remembered his pastor’s sermon from Sunday on “The Golden Rule” from Matthew 7:12. Based on that sermon he honestly asked himself, “If I were in this man’s position, what would I want him to do for me? Would I want him to help me? Or would I want him to leave me here in the cold?” Without hesitation, the Christian man said to himself, “I already called my job to say I would be late, the additional 30 minutes or so that I would use to take this man to his interview won’t make a difference, after all, you can’t be late the same day for the same appointment twice, once you’re late, you’re late.” So the Christian man gladly took the driver to his job interview.

“The Golden Rule” from Matthew 7:12 is the rule Christians should apply when there is no specific scripture to be found to tell us how to treat others under the circumstances we’re faced with. The Christian man in the story could not turn to a passage of scripture that said, “Thou shalt giveth the man a ride to his interview after he hitteth your car.” Instead, he applied The Golden Rule to his situation.

The Golden Rule is not limited to Christianity; in fact, there are many that have accused Jesus of borrowing The Golden Rule from other religions. While it is true, that other religions before and after Christianity taught their version of The Golden Rule, it is also true that The Golden Rule as taught by Jesus is quite different. Consider The Golden Rule by others:

- The Hindu religion teachers: “This is the sum of duty: Do naught to others which if done to thee would cause thee pain.”
- The Buddhist religion teaches: “Hurt not others with that which pains yourself.”
- The Muslim religion teaches: “No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.”

- Other sources teach: “Do not do unto others what angers you if done to you by others.”

The obvious difference between what Jesus taught as opposed to what others taught is the fact that Jesus told us to **“Do to others what you would have them do to you”** while the others essentially taught, **“Do not do to others what you don’t want done to you.”**

Simply put, to fulfill The Golden Rule of the other religions and sources, you had to be careful to do no harm to others. However, in order to fulfill The Golden Rule that Jesus taught, we are forced to think about what we would have others do to us then put it into action by actually doing it to or for them, do you see the difference?

Unfortunately, out of all of Jesus’ teachings, The Golden Rule is the one most often ignored by Christians, myself included!! Because we ignore The Golden Rule, many of our relationships are troubled or non-existent. If every Christian would apply The Golden Rule at home and in church, their lives would be so much more peaceful, here’s why:

- Home – if both husband and wife applied The Golden Rule, most of their problems would disappear. Since for example, everybody wants to be respected and listened to not disrespected and ignored.
- Church – if all church members applied The Golden Rule, the unforgiveness that is so prevalent in most churches would disappear since everyone wants to be forgiven of some wrong they have done after they have asked to be forgiven. The struggling Christians would get the help they need since everyone would want someone to help them if they were struggling, instead of talk about them.

Of course we could never obey The Golden Rule without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which all Christians have. So from here on, ask yourself this question before you respond to the actions or circumstances of others, “What would I want them to do or say to me if I were in their situation?” Then “do” to them what you would have them do to you.

Remember, as Christians, it’s not what others do or say to us that shapes our reaction, it’s what pleases the God we serve. True Christian growth is not necessarily seen in how many scriptures we can quote or how faithful we are in coming to church. True Christian growth is seen in how much we become like Jesus in our actions towards others.

God Bless,  
Pastor D. M. Duncan

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