

The Golden Rule

Even though man has given this title to Matthew 7:12, it is a fitting one for this most holy precept. This rule is really a commentary on the second great commandment given by our Master: to love our neighbor as our own self.

This is such a practical rule, applicable to every situation and involves every teaching of our Lord. We can find this element in all of the Sermon on the Mount and throughout the book of James. It makes good common sense. If you smile at someone, they will smile back. If you are angry with one, they may become angry in return.

How about the mote in the eye? If you judge others, they in turn are more apt to judge or question you and your behavior and motives. If you "look down" on someone, they too "look down" on you. Looking down on people never has nor will it ever cause anyone to look up to you. Do you want people to respect you? Do the same. Do you wish folks would cease their judging or gossip about you? Do the same. Do you want forgiveness from the Father? Forgive your brethren.

How do you love and accept others? On the basis of merit, social standing, income? Or, perhaps on their manners, speech and dress. Do you judge by outward appearance, or by righteousness (John 4:24)? Do you love outwardly, or from the heart (1 Peter 1:22)? Do you love only in word, or by deed and truth (1 John 3:18)?

Let us be reminded of these things. People are searching in these uncertain religious times for truth and something real to which they can belong. It is our desire and design to show people what real New Testament Christianity is all about. It is not our aim to snub them nor ignore them, but show them we are **different** from anything they have ever experienced. Let us always practice what is preached, applying the Lord's "Golden Rule."

AND THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

The last verse of I Corinthians chapter 12 speaks of "a most excellent way." That way, of course is love. The title of this article is also taken from 1 Corinthians 13. These are the last seven words of that chapter. Please allow this present article to remind us all that... **LOVE IS A COMMAND**. Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). His command was, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

We also must remember...**LOVE IS SERVICE**. Paul wrote to remind the Christians in the region of Galatia that, "ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only *use* not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another" (Galatians 5:13).

But also, **LOVE IS THE MOTIVE** for this service. Lee made this point as well when he told us that Paul wrote these words, "Let all that ye do be done in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14).

We dare not give up in our service, for **LOVE IS STEADFAST**. Consider these words from inspiration, regarding those who had believed in Laodicea, "that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love" (Colossians 2:2). The steadfast nature of this love is seen in that **LOVE IS ENCOURAGING**. Read Paul's instruction in his first epistle written, "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do...And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all" (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

LOVE IS INSTRUCTIVE and **CONSIDERATE**. One of the greatest admonitions for us is: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God" (Colossians 3:16). This is done as we "consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24) as we assemble, "not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting *one another*" (Hebrews 10:25).

Brethren, let us love...purely, deeply and devotedly. In this way we will obey the Master, demonstrate to the world and enjoy the blessings and benefits of such a wonderful fellowship.

NO GREATER JOY

Concerning our work in the Lord's vineyard, there can be many joys. There is the joy of learning God's truth for ourselves, and of obeying it and knowing that our sins are washed away. Then, there is that joy of communion with those of like precious faith (II Peter 1:1). This kind of fellowship truly is you, is it not? Perhaps one of the greatest joys to me is teaching the way of truth to one and seeing them obey Christ and become a child of God. But there is one joy greater!

I say along with the apostle John, "*Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth*" (3 John 4). Yes, that is the best! This is when and why we can rejoice together, when our brethren and sisters **walk in the truth**.

Truth is absolute. Truth does not, will not fail nor change. Truth has set us free (John 8:32), has purified our souls (I Peter 1:22) and sanctifies us, sets us apart as holy and blameless before God (John 17:17). Truth is not dependent upon its receiver to be true. Truth is not true in my eyes but false in yours. Truth is not subject to our interpretations of it. We cannot hold opposite beliefs on the same Bible truth and both be correct (Amos 3:3).

This then is where our joy comes: that we "*all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among us; but that we be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment*" (1 Corinthians 1:10). Our joy does not come because we happen to agree, but because we agree on the source of our joy--the Truth of God's Word!

RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

July 5, 2009

Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

Wednesday's Wisdom

"Take time to focus on what is right...not what is in the world" Josh Haley



Give Thanks To God For Our Wonderful Nation!

Please pray for us while we travel to Kiev, Ukraine, then on to Kramatorsk, Ukraine where I'll be preaching a three day meeting. The brethren there need lessons on "Faith VS Opinion" "Church Politics" "Duty Toward a Family Member Who Has Been Withdrawn From" and "Knowing and Understanding the Bible."

In Kiev, we'll be studying "Leadership" "Women and the Veil" and "How Men Can Become Leaders In The Local Congregation." Cheryl will be teaching the ladies on "How Wives Can Help Their Husbands to be Leaders in the Church."