

# Living By the Golden Rule

## Introduction

1. A lot of what God expects of us as His children involves relationships with others.
2. The sermon on the mount is filled with sermons that will alter our relationships in life.
3. Jesus' teachings use such words as "others," "one another," etc.
4. The ten commandments involved six commandments that had a bearing on relationships with others.
5. The "second" commandment mentioned by Jesus involves one's neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40).
6. The judgment scene presented in Matthew 25:31-46 is made up of situations involving others.
7. Jesus gave us a very important principle – that will change the world if it would really be applied:

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

8. The apostle Paul applied it to the Christian age in his letter to the church in Rome:

Romans 13:9 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."

## Obligation Involved in the Golden Rule

1. "Let all your dealings with men be conducted in the same spirit in which you would desire them to deal with you."
2. The "golden rule" says, "do," which involves action on my part.
  - A. This action is not a "reaction" to the way others treat me.
  - B. This action is something I must do to bring about a desired reaction from others.
3. The responsibility of the "golden rule" is placed squarely on my shoulders.
4. There is an obligation of love, as taught in the Bible.

John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

5. There is an obligation of kindness and forgiveness.  
**Ephesians 4:32**
6. There is an obligation of compassion.

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;

Matthew 9:36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

## Golden Rule Versus Rules of Society

1. The **“vandal rule”** is really of no profit to anyone. It finds its satisfaction in creating misery for others.
2. The **“pleasure rule”** leads its followers into the pleasure of sin, which is but for a season (Hebrews 11).
3. The **“iron rule”** is followed by those who get what they want simply because of their might.
4. The **“it’s legal”** rule is applied by those who stay within the law, but show no mercy.
5. A **“non-involvement”** rule is all too prevalent in our society, as it was with the priest and Levite in Luke 10.
6. The **“brass rule”** suggests that we do unto others just as they do unto us.
7. The **“silver rule”** is a live-and-let-live philosophy. A negative rule that would not hurt anyone, but would not do good either.
  - **“Do not do unto others what you would not want them to do to you.”**
8. But the rule our Lord gave to us is the **“golden rule.”**

## Areas Where the “golden rule” Would Make a Difference

1. Divorce court would be canceled.
  - A. God has told men how to treat their wives  
**Ephesians 5:22-33**  
**1 Peter 3:7**
  - B. God has told women how to treat their husbands.  
**1 Peter 3:1-6**  
**Titus 2:4**
2. Child abuse and parental abuse would be obsolete ideas.  
**Ephesians 6:1-4**
3. There would be no need for unions nor legislation to demand fair labor practices.
4. Jails, electric chairs, locks on doors, and bars on windows would be unnecessary.
5. More unfaithful church members would be restored and fewer just “written off.”
6. Arguments, hurt feelings and frustration would seldom be a problem.
7. Friendships would remain solid instead of being broken by gossip.
8. Our relationship with God would be as strong as ever.
9. More warmth and friendliness would welcome each person entering a business establishment.
10. The number of people being taught the truth would increase.

## The “golden rule” is Broken in Many Ways

1. Often times the “golden rule” is broken by a simple matter of regret.
  - A. Parents neglect their children because too many other things take the place of priority that the children need.
  - B. Children neglect their parents because they are too busy with their own lives.
  - C. Husbands neglect their wives because they work so much and spend more time with their buddies and/or recreational activities.
  - D. Wives neglect their husbands because they are more “career-oriented,” devote more time to their children, or any number of other reasons.
  - E. We neglect to see the needs of others  
**Matthew 25:31-46**  
**Galatians 6:1-2, 10**
  - F. We often neglect to teach the lost when God has given us every opportunity to do so.

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is **that they may be saved**.

Romans 10:13-15 For "WHOEVER CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED." (14) How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (15) And **how shall they preach unless they are sent**? As it is written: "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!"

2. **The golden rule is broken when we ignore others because we think we are better than they are.**

**Luke 14:7-11**

- A. **“There was a man who thought he was better than me, and he was, until he thought he was!”**
  - B. **There are times when we may need some serious lessons on humility – even among brethren.**
3. **The golden rule is broken by sarcastic remarks spoken with sharp words, which may involve nothing more than the tone of the voice used.**
  4. **The golden rule is broken by the use of gossip and slander.**

Galatians 5:15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

- A. **The tongue must be guarded at all times.**

**James 3**

## Why Do We Break the “golden rule?”

1. Our own sins cause us to treat others as we do.
  - A. Many people take comfort in the faults of others.
  - B. We are not made better by destroying others, but by adhering to the Word of God.
2. Jealousy and envy is often the cause of wrong treatment of others.
3. Ignorance is a source of breaking the golden rule.
  - A. We need to understand the facts and circumstances before reacting.
  - B. Harsh judgments come too often by jumping to conclusions.
4. Perhaps the bottom line is a lack of love:

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, **that you love one another**; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (35) By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

## Conclusion

1. Probably nothing could go further in changing life in general for the better than living the **“golden rule.”**
2. Consider our own lives as a preacher, teacher, companion, neighbor, or whatever your role in life is — and how it could be improved by simply living the **“golden rule.”**

