

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

THE GOLDEN RULE

Luke 6:31 “And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.”

Jesus is speaking these words not to a general audience but to His disciples. Thus, Jesus is not saying this in the sense of as you love yourself so love others. Rather, He says, as one who is loved by God through Christ Jesus so you should daily love those with whom you come in contact.

Digging deeper into the meaning of Jesus’ words, a disciple of His is concerned about his soul, spiritual needs and what others around him can do to aid, support and encourage him in his spiritual journey. Likewise, he is to commit to doing the same for his neighbor, brothers and sisters and those who are strangers to him.

Jesus is simply expanding on the previous verses of Luke 6 where He has been teaching His disciples about their interpersonal relationships with all people of the world. His exhortations have been to bless and support them no matter who they are or the current relationship they have with them.

Jesus is not proposing to His disciples their neighbor gratify them and in turn they will gratify their neighbor. A Christian shows love, forgiveness and support to their neighbor no matter whether their neighbor reciprocates or not. No matter what others do to you, Jesus says, makes no difference as to what you are constantly going to do to them. The goal of your relationships, Jesus says, is to be His instruments to further their relationship with Him in His kingdom.

Jesus’ “Golden Rule” has been adopted and adapted throughout the world far beyond just Christians. However, the difference in how those in the secular world understand it from how you have received it from Him is one of Law and Gospel. The secular world uses Jesus’ words as law, in a cause-and-effect manner. You love with the expectation of those you love will then love you. As a Christian, you love others with a gospel love, for the sake of their soul and eternal life. Your prayer is they will in turn reciprocate to do the same for you.

Prayer: Lord, guide me in my relationships with others that all I say and do will be in accord with Your will. In Jesus' name. Amen.

How wide the love of Christ! It knows not class or race
But holds our one humanity Within its broad embrace.

How long the love of Christ! Its patience will not cease
Until this broken world is bound In everlasting peace.

How high the love of Christ! Beyond all thought it soars,
And yet upon our passing lives Unmeasured mercy pours.

How deep the love of Christ, Descending to a cross!
He bears within His wounded hands All human pain and loss.

All praise to You, O Christ, For love whose depth and height,
Whose length and breadth fill time and space With endless life and light!
(LSB 535)