

JESUS TAUGHT THE GOLDEN RULE

By Keith Greer

“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” [Matthew 7:12] This is one of the most known sayings of Jesus in the scriptures.

During Jesus' "public ministry", while He was on earth, He often dealt with the subject of how we ought to treat other people. Yet, our Lord not only taught on this subject, He also practiced it Himself. Let's take what many call the "golden rule" and look at some proper application of this teaching.

When the scribes accused Him of blasphemies, for forgiving the sins of the paralytic, what did He do? "But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" --then He said to the paralytic, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." {Matthew 9:4-6} Peter gives an excellent commentary about this attitude of our Lord. "Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously." {1 Peter 2:23}

The Pharisees were always trying to discredit the miracles that He did. " ... This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons. " {Matthew 12:24} How did He answer them? "And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against Himself. How then will his kingdom stand?" {Matthew 12:26} He had no anger, no evil, he just answered with truth!

After hearing of the death of John the Baptist, Jesus went into a "deserted place", to be by Himself, yet, the multitudes followed Him. Jesus being grieved at the death of John, could have sent them away for a time. Did He send them away? " ... He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. " {Matthew 14: 14} Even when in deep grief, Jesus cared for others!

The Sadducees also were always trying to trip Him up. On one occasion, when they were affirming there was no resurrection, they came asking a question. By giving a situation, where a wife dies, and all the men's brothers had her to wife. Whose wife will she be in the resurrection? Jesus could have ignored the question knowing their motives for asking it. " ... You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. " {Matthew 22:29}

Another example was the night in the garden, when Jesus' enemies came to deliver Him to be crucified. Peter used his sword to cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. " ... Permit even this. And He touched the ear and healed him." {Luke 22:51} Even when He was being taken and had done no evil, Jesus treated others with compassion. Jesus truly did follow the "golden rule". What about us? Do we treat others as we desire for them to treat us? Let me give you some situations to ponder on before answering this question...

Do we truly forgive those who sin against us even if they do not seek it? Consider Matthew 6:14,15. Do we seek to go straight to a brother or sister when we believe they have sin in their lives—or do we go to everyone else? Please consider Matthew 5:23,24. Could it be that we are reactionary

people—just reacting according to how people treat us instead of according to the teaching and instruction we have from the Lord in His word? Please read Galatians 6:10.

Dear reader, following the “golden rule” in our lives will have great impact on our Christian influence to those around us. Let them see Christ in us – not just hear it from our lips! ***