

In search of...

Truth & Right

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Golden Thoughts

Jesus' divinely summarized and simplified synopsis of the entire Old Testament, as delivered in His famed "Sermon on the Mount" and recorded by the Apostle Matthew, is recorded as follows: ***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 what we today often refer to as "the golden rule." In its immediate context in Matthew seven, it is then instantly followed up by Jesus' admonition and warning to, ***Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it*** (verses 13-14). The conclusion should be obvious to all but the most oblivious: If we want to enter the "pearly gates" and walk the "golden streets" (Revelation 21:21) – then we must enter through the "narrow gate" by living the "golden rule!" This means doing unto others exactly as we would want them to do unto us under similar circumstances. But do we really and truly live like that?

Let's suppose you are young and have small children. They are noisy and active. They run and play in the nursery. How would you prefer that your beloved brothers and sisters in Christ respond to that on any given Sunday morning or Wednesday evening prior to services? By looking disdainfully and disapprovingly at one another out of the corner of their eye? By talking about you and your children later on amongst themselves when they're together in a ridiculing manner? Or by perhaps a kind word and some loving interaction with your precious children that helps occupy and direct them towards a slightly quieter and less active activity – knowing children will be children, remembering their own, and just being grateful that you and your precious children are there (Matthew 19:13-14)? ***"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."***

Or, let's imagine that you are in bible study and despite your best efforts, are really having a problem processing what the teacher is saying. It simply doesn't make sense to you in light of what you've previously learned and you

need some help understanding and applying it. Based on your questions and interaction in the class, it is obvious to all that you are struggling. What would you want from your beloved brethren in Christ at that point if this were you? For them to just pass you off as ignorant or unlearned? To get up after class and filter out into the foyer as fast as they can like you don't exist? Or, to perhaps get up, make their way over to you after class, and humbly and patiently seek to help you better understand the scripture you're so severely struggling with (2 Timothy 2:24-25)? **"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."**

Perhaps it might be more productive at this point, to picture yourself as a slightly more senior, middle-aged saint for a moment; one who has worked and worshipped within the same congregation for several decades now. You know how the congregation works and are both comfortable and familiar, with and within, its programs, processes, procedures and outreaches. All of the sudden some "newcomer" comes along with a new program or approach that, although not unbiblical at all, is still unfamiliar to all. How would you want your brethren to react to your hesitation about its implementation if that were you? Would you prefer that they sought to bully it through without any consideration for you? Would you want them to impatiently and impetuously talk about your old, "fuddy-duddy traditionalism," secretly and sarcastically behind you back? Or, would you want them to repeatedly set down and patiently explain the benefits of this new idea to you, until you could personally examine and get comfortable with all its intricacies, and thereby endorse, get excited, and get behind it? **"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."**

And then, what if you were one of the more elderly, hard of

hearing, or slower moving saints of the assembly? You've lived and served the Lord faithfully for many a decade now. You've raised a faithful and God-fearing family, and served and supported the congregation in more ways than anyone can count or remember except for the Lord God Himself. And now, through no fault of your own and totally beyond your control, your hearing is hampered, your breathing is belabored, and your footsteps are faltered. How do you wish those you worship with would treat you? Making fun or sport of your hearing or eyesight fading? Speeding by you in the building as if you were merely another obstacle in the aisle to be avoided and circumvented? Or, with compassion and concern, lovingly taking your arm and gently assisting you to your seat, while speaking loudly and clearly so you can hear their love and encouragement in Christ? **"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."**

What if you were one of the elders, the preacher, a deacon, or one of the Bible class teachers? Would you want criticism from every corner of the congregation when you had put hours of effort, prayer, and research into a project, decision or lesson – and absolutely done the best you could – even though you might have done it a bit differently than someone else would have (if they'd even have actually done it at all)? Or, would you want people to at least take into consideration the massive amount of effort you had exhausted in order to serve them and their children instead, before sighting their uncaring, caustic, and corrosive volley of criticism in on you? **"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."**

The "golden rule." After Luke recalled and recorded Jesus' statement of it in Luke 6:31, He went on to explain and expand upon this golden truth, following it up with phrases like, ***"Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful"***

(verse 36); and, ***"For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you"*** (verse 38). We supply God with the measuring tape (or rule) with which He will judge us on the last day, by the way we treat others each day we have down here. And that measuring tape, or "rule," is by all means the "golden" one. ***"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."***

The "golden rule." Paul restated what Jesus had referred to as the complete fulfillment of the Old Testament Law and prophets this way in some of his epistles:

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another (Galatians 5:13-15); Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2); and, Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself (Philippians 2:1-3).

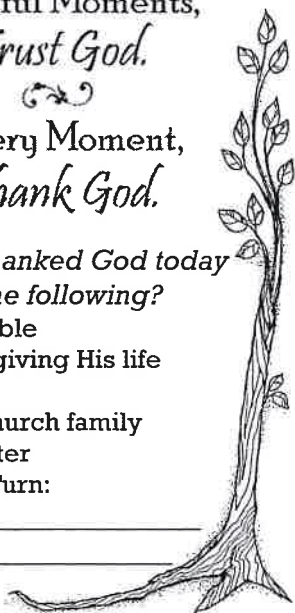
The "golden rule." What a God-send! It is the rule of life that will guide us through the narrow gate, up the narrow path, through the 'pearly gates,' and onto the 'golden streets,' sending us to live with God forever if we will but follow it. It is the "golden gate" bridge to eternity. ***"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you,"*** today and every day, in every circumstance until judgment day, in order to live an eternal day, in the golden light of God's glorious presence!

Doug Dingley

Happy Moments,
Praise God.
Difficult Moments,
Seek God.
Quiet Moments,
Worship God.
Painful Moments,
Trust God.
Every Moment,
Thank God.

Have you thanked God today for any of the following?

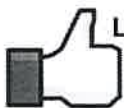
- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Laughter
- Your Turn:



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BIBLE Trivia!

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. Who had Jesus as a guest at a meal with many tax collectors?

- a) Nicodemus
- b) Zaccheus
- c) Matthew
- d) Thomas

2. What prophet had a vision of an idol near the altar of God?

- a) Ezekiel
- b) Daniel
- c) Nahum
- d) Obadiah

3. By what other name was the tax collector Matthew known?

- a) Saul
- b) Cephas
- c) Didymus
- d) Levi

4. Whose daughters became the mothers of the Moabites and the Ammonites?

- a) Lot's
- b) Abraham's
- c) Ishmael's
- d) Esau's

5. Which gospel mentions the voice of Rachel weeping for her children?

- a) John
- b) Matthew
- c) Luke
- d) Mark

6. Who said, "He must increase, but I must decrease"?

- a) Jesus
- b) Simon Peter
- c) Saul
- d) John the Baptist

7. When the foundation for the second temple was laid, the priests played trumpets. What did the Levites play?

- a) Tambourines
- b) Harps
- c) Cymbals
- d) Flutes

8. Where did a follower of Jesus escape and angry mob by running away naked?

- a) Nazareth
- b) Gethsemane
- c) The temple
- d) Capernaum

9. Who burned Joab's barley field just to get his attention?

- a) Asahel
- b) Abner
- c) Absalom
- d) Amnon

10. Which epistle says that parents are to provide for their children, not vice versa?

- a) 2 Corinthians
- b) 2 Peter
- c) 2 Thessalonians
- d) 2 John

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS & VERSES:

- 1) B, Reference: Numbers 22:28-30
- 2) C, Reference: Genesis 20:2
- 3) A, Reference: 1 Kings 18:17
- 4) C, Reference: Matt. 27:19
- 5) D, Reference: Daniel 2:10

- 6) A, Reference: Matt. 26:3
- 7) B, Reference: Rev. 6:12
- 8) D, Reference: Ruth 1:1-2
- 9) A, Reference: Acts 9:32-35
- 10) B, Reference: Luke 13:4