

**Rev. T. Jefferson Rogers Jr.**  
**Righteous Living**  
**Matthew 7:12**

Matthew 7:12 is known as the golden rule, which is the great rule for Christian living. It is Christian because Jesus sets it before us as a rule of righteous conduct. Jesus Himself lived by this and illustrated to us how to practice righteousness in our daily living.

Those of you, who have been hearing me teach weekly, may remember the emphasis of the Sermon on the Mount is righteous living. All who are born again, saved, and citizens of God's kingdom will live by the righteous rule of God.

God righteousness goes beyond all other types of righteousness. Jesus said in Matthew 5:20, ***“Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter the kingdom of Heaven.”*** Your righteousness must go beyond the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, ***“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”*** Jesus reveals what a citizen of God's kingdom by expounding on the persons and practice of righteousness. In other words, what a person of righteousness looks like and act like. Matthew 7:12 is a picture of righteousness and principle for righteousness practice!

## Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12)

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Jesus said in verse 12, ***“Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”***

Notice “therefore” at the beginning of verse 12. The word “therefore” connects verse 12 to what Jesus has already said. How verse 12 relates the previous verses is not plain. Verses 7-11 teach more than persistence in prayer. When we pray we invite God to reign over us. Functioning under the reign of God as a community is what verse 12 is about. In other words, we should treat others the way God treats us. In doing so, we experience God's love in the way we treat each other.

- I. Consideration of Neighbor– Jesus said, ***“All things whatsoever you would that men do to you.”*** Jesus teaches us to put ourselves in our neighbor's place. The way in which we think our neighbors should treat us is the way we should treat them. However, Jesus did not say treat others the way they treat us. Jesus taught against revengeful behavior in Matthew 5:38-41.  
Matthew 5:38-41 says, ***“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.”***  
Here, the Bible is telling us to act not from selfishness or injustice. Putting ourselves in our neighbor's place make us impartial, and candid, and just. It destroys greed, envy, treachery, unkindness, slander, adultery, and murder.  
Notice the scope of the consideration- “all things whatsoever you would.” This encompasses all of life. In all of life we are to consider the desired treatment of other toward us so it would guide us in our treatment of them.
- II. Conduct of Believers: Jesus said, “Do you even so to them.” The word “do” indicates actions. Christian living goes beyond feelings, emotions, and attitude, it requires actions. The actions

of Christianity involve doing for others. We see this modeled in the life of Jesus. Jesus did not come to earth to live His life selfishly. Instead, Jesus lived His life sacrificially. In other words, Jesus gave His life to save you and I from sin. Jesus bore the cross for us, died for us, was raised from the dead for us, ascended to the right hand of His Father where He intercedes for us, and He is coming back to rapture us.

Jesus' life teaches us how to live sacrificially by putting others before self.

### III. Core Teaching of the Old and New Testament:

Jesus said in Matthew 5:17, ***“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law and the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”***

All of the laws that God gave to Israel at Sinai had a single purpose: to show the nation how wonderful it is to live under God's reign rather than human rulers. All the messages that God sent to Israel through the prophets had a single purpose: to call them back into submission to their Heavenly King so they know the blessings of living under His reign. All the Law and the Prophet which is the entire Old Testament called the people of God to love God and love each other.

**Core Commandment of Jesus' kingship**- John 13:34-35 ***“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”***

Matthew 22:37-40 ***Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.***

**Core of kingdom living**- John 15:9-17 ***As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.***