

THE KINGDOM LIFE (3)

“DO UNTO OTHERS”

Matthew 7:12

The Golden Rule embodies kingdom ethics.

Introduction: We normally call Matthew 7:12 “*The golden Rule*”

What is especially important in Matthew is the rule's placement inside Jesus' kingdom teaching and His identification of it with the ethical thrust of Scripture. Matthew's wording presents it as a sweeping command governing the disciple's treatment of others. We know it, we can quote it, but we don't always live it. What would it look like if we obeyed this command? I see four movements and each one comes straight out of the mouth of Jesus.

I. The reach of the rule: “*Therefore, whatever...*”

A. **The rule is comprehensive** – *Jesus says “whatever.”*

1. Some translations express the thought as “in everything.” The language is deliberately broad.
2. There is no little compartment of life where we can hang a sign that says: “*Golden Rule does not apply here.*”

Jesus' command reaches into every relationship, every setting, and every pressure point of life.

B. **The rule applies in ordinary frustrations** - Spiritual maturity is often revealed not in the sanctuary, but in the way we respond when life inconveniences us.

C. **The rule applies to difficult people** - Kingdom love does not take its cue from another person's behavior. It takes its cue from *the King's command*.

D. **The rule applies in every season** - We may retire from a career, but we never retire from *Christian character or kingdom influence*.

E. **The rule flows from the Father's goodness** — (Mt. 7:7–11)
“Therefore” connects our treatment of others with the goodness of our heavenly Father.

Grace received → grace reflected.

Mercy received → mercy extended.

Kindness received → kindness expressed.

II. The reasoning of the rule: “*Whatever you want men to do to you...*”

A. **The rule uses our self-awareness** - Ask: “What would I hope someone would do if I were standing where they are standing?”

B. **The rule requires a changed perspective** — (Phil. 2:3–4) Before you speak, criticize, assume motives, send the text, or repeat the story—*change places*.

C. **The rule exposes our double standard** - We often expect patience while offering impatience, understanding while rushing to judgment, and grace while keeping a record of another person's failures.

Jesus takes our awareness of what we need and uses it to awaken us to what someone else needs.

D. **The rule changes our questions** - Move from “*What am I not receiving?*” to “*What good can I extend?*”

III. The response of the rule: “*Do also to them.*”

A. **The rule is a positive command** - Jesus calls us beyond harmless Christianity to *helpful Christianity*.

B. **The rule calls for active compassion** — (Lk. 10:25–37; Js 4:17) The Good Samaritan did not merely *feel* something. *He did something*.

C. **The rule opens our eyes** - Pray: “*Lord, show me somebody I can treat the way I would want to be treated.*” But be careful, God may answer that prayer!

D. **The rule does not demand repayment** — (Lk 6:31–36) The Golden Rule is not reciprocity with a guarantee. *It is righteousness without demanding repayment*.

E. **The rule calls us to go first** - Be the first to encourage, apologize, forgive, and cross the room.

“Do not wait for someone else to become the kind of person you wish they were. Become the kind of person Jesus has called you to be.”

IV. The root of the rule: “*For this is the Law and the Prophets.*”

A. **The rule is rooted in scripture** — (Mt. 5:17; 7:12) The Golden Rule expresses the *relational heart of biblical obedience*.

B. **The rule expresses neighbor-love** — Mt 22:37–40; Rom 13:8–10; Gal 5:14 - *Love God. Love your neighbor*. The Golden Rule shows what neighbor-love looks like in daily life.

C. **The rule joins love with truth** - Biblical love seeks another person's *true good before God*. Sometimes love comforts; sometimes it corrects—but always with truth, humility, and grace.

D. **The rule reveals our heart problem** - Our deepest problem is not a lack of information. We need more than a rule. *We need a Redeemer!*

Conclusion: The rule and the redeemer (Rom 5:8) Jesus did not merely teach self-giving love—**He lived it**. *The One who gave us the Golden Rule went first.*