



# RULES THAT ARE GOLDEN

*John 15:17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.*

The “Golden Rule” is one of the most well-known sayings in the world. Many teachers spoke about it, and taught it, but usually from a much more negative cast than Jesus does.

- Judaism: *What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man*
- Buddhism: *Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful*
- Ancient Egyptian: *Do for one who may do for you, that you may cause him thus to do*
- Confucianism: *Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you*

Jesus turns all of this on its head by stating the “Golden Rule” as a positive that links to grace and all the Old Testament scriptures.

We also see Jesus connect this verse (“*So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*”) to the greatest commandments (**read Matt 22:34-36**). As we learned in the sermon, Jesus was alluding to a well-known Jewish concept: “That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow.”

***How is Jesus’ law (Matthew 7:12) a higher calling than simply avoiding hateful behavior?***

***How do you want others to treat you? Do you tend to treat others in that same way?***

While Jesus commands us to treat others with the same love and respect we desire, we can easily get caught up in our own behavior. As shared in the sermon, an emphasis on our own works is often the largest threat to our spiritual growth and understanding of grace. **Read Ephesians 2:8-9.**

***What works of yours tempt you to be boastful?***

***What standards do you set for yourself that you feel you have to live up to?***



Grace is a complicated thing. It is rich and beautiful in its power to save us and reconcile us to God, yet it can also seem threatening, because it removes any claim we might have to our own progress or self-sufficiency. It is *humbling*. However, only when we understand and recognize the weight of God’s grace, will we be able to walk in the freedom that He has sacrificially obtained for us.

Grace goes against everything in our nature. Our hearts deceive us (**read Jeremiah 17:9**) into asserting our own capabilities and independence, but the truth is that we have no salvation outside the grace of Jesus Christ. We must remember the desperate nature of our spiritual condition (being poor in Spirit) and run to the Cross.

***In what areas is it difficult for you to admit your dependency on God?***

As Timothy Keller said, “Any time somebody really gets what it means to be saved by grace, it will wreck you.” It will devastate any false notions we have of how “fine” or “well off” we are. It is not always easy to come face-to-face with our brokenness, but we have the opportunity to repent and experience God’s grace every day. Repentance can seem like a scary word, but it is something we need to embrace and do often. It is simply confessing to God (and sometimes others) and living in the forgiveness that has already been extended to you. It is laying the burden at His feet.

***What hardness of heart do you need to repent of?***

***Where have you relied on your own works instead of God’s grace?***

It is from this understanding that Jesus speaks of the “golden rule”—not from a place of our own righteousness, but of simply responding to the grace that has been shown to us. Because our lives have been so incredibly changed by grace, we should treat others in a way like no one else.

***In what ways have you been withholding grace from other people? How can that change?***