

Matthew 7c

The Golden “Rule of Thumb”?

Matthew 7:7

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! ¹² Therefore, **whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for *this is the Law and the Prophets.***



The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule "can be found in some form in **almost every ethical tradition**".

- Simon Blackburn (2001)¹

One should **never** do something to others that one would regard as an injury to one's own self.

- Mahābhārata 13.113.8 (**400 BC**)

Do **not** do to others that which angers you when they do it to you.

- **Isocrates**, 300s BC²

Hurt **not** others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful

- Udanavarga 5:6 (Buddhism)

Refrain from inflicting upon others such injury as would appear undesirable to us

- Yogaśāstra (**Jainism**)

What you do **not** want done to yourself, do **not** do to others

- Confucius, The Analects of Confucius, 15.25 (551 BC – 479 BC)³

Desire **not** for anyone the things ye would **not** desire for yourselves

- Bahá'u lláh, Gleanings (**Bahai**, Iran)⁴

What is hateful to you, do **not** to your neighbor:

that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof

- Rabbi Hillel, Babylonian Talmud, 110 BC⁵

¹ Ethics: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 101.

² <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus>

³ <https://blogs.transparent.com/chinese/confucius-says-pt-2-analects-and-golden-rule>

⁴ <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/>

⁵ https://www.halakhah.com/shabbath/shabbath_31.html

Basically every culture has used this as,
A GOLDEN RULE OF THUMB to ask yourself
“What should I **AVOID** in the treatment of others?”

But... I thought this was ORIGINAL to Jesus!

What if they're all **REITERATIONS** of...

Leviticus 19:18 (1500 BC)
You shall Love you Neighbor... as yourself!

Leviticus predated all of them!

He's not regurgitating them...
He's **reiterating** himself!

Because Jesus is the **God who spoke it first**

But, **how can we KNOW** that this is the same command?

Matthew 22:39b

... ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

⁴⁰ ***On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”***

But... look at how Jesus **changes the popular way** of saying it...

Matthew 7:12

*Therefore, whatever you want men to **do** to you, **do** also to them*

They ALL said DON'T, Jesus says DO!

Jesus is doing something really amazing here...

- He **Re-expresses** an old command, but...
- He uses a more **popular syntax**
- He, at the same time, recovers his **TRUE INTENT**

It's not about DON'Ting, it's about DOING!!

- ***Righteousness is not just about what you refrain from doing... It is about what you do!***
- **Put off... Put on...**

Ephesians 4:22

... **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man... and...
²⁴**put on** the new man which was created according to God,
in **true righteousness** and holiness.

***God didn't just say "Don't Hate"
He said LOVE"***

Notice the POSITIVE...

Luke 6:27 *(Parallel passage)*

But I say to you who hear: **Love** your enemies, **do good** to those who hate you, ²⁸**bless** those who curse you, and **pray** for those who spitefully use you. ²⁹To him who strikes you on the one cheek, **offer** the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, **do not withhold your tunic either**. ³⁰**Give** to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. ³¹**And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.**

How do you WANT to be treated... Do that!!

It's love through a lens of EMPATHY!!!

In this way, God has REINVENTED even His own command!

1 John 2:7

Brethren, I **write no new commandment** to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning... ⁸Again, **a new commandment I write to you**, which thing is **true in Him**...

How is the OLD COMMAND made new IN HIM?

Note Jesus' words here...

John 13:34

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another;
AS I HAVE LOVED YOU...

We are to LOVE LIKE JESUS!

Jesus loved EMPATHETICALLY

Hebrews 4:15

For we do **not** have a High Priest who **cannot sympathize with our weaknesses**,
but was in all *points tempted as we are*, yet without sin.

Remember... this is WHY he became one of us!

But Wait... is this a **RULE OF THUMB...** or is it a **COMMAND?**

John 15:12

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Empathy is just one aspect...

How much did He love us?

Romans 5:10

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that
while we were **still sinners**, Christ died for us.

Who has Jesus loved?

Colossians 1:21

And you, who once were **alienated and enemies** in your mind by wicked works,
yet now He has reconciled

This is how WE are to love!!

Matthew 5:43

You have heard that it was said, ‘**You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.**’⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

So... How do we love like Jesus?

- It's about letting your love be **defined** by the **life and death of Jesus**
- It starts with loving with **Empathy**
- It's not just about what you **avoid!** Its about **what you do.**
- It's about **loving your Enemies as well as your friends!**

**It's about letting your love be governed...
not by circumstance, but by a new nature.**

Matthew 7:15b

Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, **every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.** ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

This is why we MUST be recreated by the Spirit of Jesus!

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**;
old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

**It is only by God's Spirit
that we can keep His commands!!**