

THE GOLDEN RULE

Matthew 7: 12

In the beginning of his sermon the Lord said, "I came to fulfill" the law and the prophets. By his grace, we believe he fulfilled every dot and dash of the very law he has taught us in this, his sermon on the mount, so that he has made us the righteousness of God in him. By the power of his grace, the Holy Spirit has given us the love of God in our hearts so that his love for us causes us to delight in his word: in being quickly reconciled to our adversaries(5: 25), in putting off the lust of the flesh (5:30), we delight in truth (5:37), in mercy rather than an eye-for-eye (5:39), in being gracious without partiality (5:44), in making no show of serving our God (6:1-18), in seeking the righteousness of God and providing for those in his kingdom.

And because his love has been imparted in us in the new birth, when the Lord tells us not to condemn but to ask God (**Mt 7: 1-11**) we realize that believing Christ and trusting sinners into the hands of the God we love is the heart of the golden rule. It is the love that true believers have of God. We have been made willing to lay down our wisdom, means, and old constraints for God's way of simply holding forth the good news of Christ. As we do, we turn to God in prayer on behalf of sinners, trusting him to give life in those who are yet without Christ, as well as to strengthen brethren who err from the truth.

Our constraint is knowing that this obedience and love did not come into our own hearts by man disciplining us into compliance, by religious men attracting us by their various ministries, or by our own power. Therefore, by grace, we continue to patiently endure, visiting helpless sinners, not with oppressive words, but in the sweet songs of the gracious One who is the Power and Righteousness of God unto salvation. In all our own failings, this is exactly what we would have others to do unto us, this is the law and the prophets.