

The Practice of Respecting

(Matthew 7:12)

Yearly Theme: “*Patience is...*”

Series Title: “*The Practice of Patience*”

July 17th, 2022

Something to think about:

Today we focus on the Golden Rule, Doing unto others what you would have them do unto you. It’s found at the end of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7. Let’s take a look:

Matthew 7:12 (NLT),

“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.”

Variations of this saying had been around for centuries prior to Jesus, however, none of them quite measured up to the way Jesus phrased it. Whereas every other saying is quoted in the negative, Jesus takes the alternative approach to make the “Golden Rule” positive.

For instance, in the *Book of Tobit*, “there is a passage in which the aged Tobias teaches his son all that is necessary for life. One of his maxims is: ‘What thou thyself hatest, to no man do’ (*Tobit* 4:16).”¹ Or, consider the words of Confucius who, in replying to Tszé-Kung who had asked him, “‘Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for one’s life?’ Confucius replied, ‘reciprocity.’ ‘What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.’”² And one final one from Epictetus, who “condemned slavery on the principle: ‘What you avoid suffering yourselves, seek not to inflict upon others.’”³

But, once again, notice how Jesus words this statement: “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.”

Here’s the takeaway this morning:

Key Point: “The practice of patience requires the respectful treatment of others.”

So, what is it that respect involves? There are three things:

- **Respect involves doing what’s right, and not just refraining from doing what’s wrong.**

Romans 6:12-14 (NLT), ¹² Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. ¹³ Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So, use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. ¹⁴ Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.

- **Respect involves considering the good in others rather than expecting the bad.**

Philippians 2:3-4 (NLT), ³ Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

- **Respect involves lifting others up.**

Romans 15:2-4 (NIV), ² Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. ³ For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.” ⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Something to take home:

The practice of patience involves the respectful treatment of others, not because they deserve it but because GOD deserves that from us. And when we learn to respect and honor those who have been created in the image of GOD, we might then be able to see a glimpse of GOD we’ve never seen before; we might begin to live in such a way that others might see GOD living through us.

Key Point: “The practice of patience requires respectful treatment of others.”

¹ Quoted in: William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible Series: The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 1*, (Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky, 1975), 273.

² Ibid., 274.

³ Ibid.