

Matthew 7:12 The Golden Rule

Therefore

When we put the Golden rule in the context of the theme of judging others only with righteous judgement, this summary statement becomes clear.

In everything

We all know what it's like to read Jesus' words "Love your neighbor as yourself" and say to ourselves 'Yes, I agree, how wonderful, it makes sense to me'—and then immediately go out into the parking lot and say something unkind about someone. The fact is that all of us fall short of the expectations of Jesus in this area. If we're going to be set apart by claiming the name of Christian, follower of Jesus, then we need to act like Him, not give him a bad name. (Rom 2:23-24).

treat people the same way you want them to treat you

We need guidance. And so, instead of just simply saying "Love your Neighbor as Yourself", and leaving it at that Jesus gives us a basic practical application of "Love your neighbor as yourself" by saying "in everything Treat people the same way that you want them to treat you". A good starting place for how we should treat people is to assume that the other person is the same as I am. The other person is created in the image of God, the same as I am. They therefore have dignity, and immeasurable value, and an immortal soul, just as I do, and Jesus loves them and died for them the same as He did for me. Once we realize that those other people that we know, or ones that we don't know are exactly as valuable to God as we are, then we understand that we should treat them that way. And this makes us ask: "How would I feel if I were treated this way"? "Treat people the same way that you want them to treat you".

The greatest problems in life boil down to problems in relationships. Humanity's greatest problem, sin, results in a lack of relationship with our creator who loves us, and results in broken relationships with those around us. This is human nature, and it's what the spirit fights against. And how much victory we have over these things is an indication of our spiritual maturity. In 1 Cor 3:2-3, Paul criticizes the Corinthian church that they act just like non-Christians **2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to consume it. But even now you are not yet able,3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like ordinary people?** It was their lack of spiritual maturity that caused the backbiting and jealousy and strife. In James, chapter 3, he contrasts world wisdom with the altogether different wisdom that's from God. James asks in 3:13 **13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.** In other words, don't lie against what you know is true by engaging in politics and strife and faction-building, just as the world does. The worldly wisdom of the "taking care of business", the "playing the game", faction-building and politics mentality that characterizes much of human behavior is not inspired by God, but by the enemy. Then James contrasts this with the wisdom that is from God. **17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, free of hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.** And how do we make this peace? We refuse to allow ourselves to be used as a tool of Satan. We refuse to disobey God. We overcome. We refuse to hold grudges and forgive. If we are loving our neighbor as ourselves, and treating others in the way that we want to be treated, we will act toward people as Jesus did.

for this is the Law and the Prophets.

And the centrality of Jesus Admonition to "love your neighbor as yourself" becomes clear when we realize that so often, when Jesus is asked what we must do to get to heaven, His reply was "Love God and Love people".

Matt 17:21**"21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."** Although the Rich Young Ruler

said he loved his neighbor as himself, clearly he didn't. If he loved others as much as himself, he would have jumped at Jesus' offer. It's one thing to talk about loving neighbors as ourselves when it doesn't cost us anything, but quite another when we are called to move out of our comfort zone.

In Matthew 22:37-40 we see Jesus boiling down the whole Law and the prophets down to loving God completely, and our neighbors with the same love that we have for ourselves. In also Luke 10:26-28 the lawyer had the right answer intellectually, in his mind, but it hadn't penetrated his heart. And he knew it, so he wanted Jesus' stamp of approval on his shortcoming. Jesus didn't let him get away with this. Jesus wouldn't let him be justified since he was not justified by his actions.

It's our actions that demonstrate, to ourselves, and yes to others too that we are of God. 1 John 3:18-19 **18 Little children, let's not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. 19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will set our heart at ease before Him,** In James 2:8 he tells us: **8 If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.** Choosing to serve one another rather than serve ourselves will ensure that we have no time or desire to fulfill the evil, fleshly desires, because we are so busy walking by the Spirit and serving one another in love (Gal 5:13-15).