

As You Would Like to Be Treated

In His memorable Sermon on the Mount, one of Jesus' life principles soars above the rest: "Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them" (Matt. 7:12); or "Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them" (Phillips). Though simple, this Golden Rule isn't easy.

Stubborn to the core, our old nature often gets in the way. Universally, the fallen sons of Adam prefer to treat each other as they deserve. We typically treat our former offenders as they have previously treated us. That's just. Or we treat our current offenders as they are treating—or mistreating—us. That's also fair.

Or we treat people as we have heard they have treated others. We do to "Zaccheus" what he has done to others in Jericho: we trick the trickster, steal from the thief, and slander the liar—and self-righteously call it God's judgment and ourselves His instruments! He had it coming to him anyway!

Sometimes our religious reasoning gets in the way. One popular Christian watchword dictates that in every situation we ask, "What would Jesus do?" Then whatever your personal concept of what Jesus is like commands us to do, we execute. But doing what we *imagine* Jesus would do, and doing what He *said* we should do is not the same.

One is obedience to our reason, the other to His Word. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus said we should do to other people what we would want done to us. As Luke puts it, "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). Clearly, "His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33) is a higher standard than either fairness or reason, and He calls us to rise to it.

If obedient, we will deny the stubborn urgings of our old nature, the weak justifications of our unscriptural mind and the relatively new ideas of popular religion, and simply do what Jesus said.

When dealing with people we'll ask, "If I were in their position, what would I want someone to do for me?" And whatever our answer, that's what we'll do for the person in view, if at all possible. And we'll do it now. And fully. And "heartily, as to the Lord" (Col. 3:23), who gave us this extraordinary code of conduct. This kinder and gentler path isn't resistance-free.

All sorts of mental opposition will arise within us to preempt our obedience. We think: "But they don't deserve this favor;" or, "They never did anything kind for me;" or, "They never thank me for what I do for them;" or, "They may misunderstand why I'm doing this and think I've decided they were right all along;" or, "Someone else may suspect and say my motives are wrong;" or, "Others may think I'm soft, weak, naive or foolish."

All these suppositions may be true—and more—but they're all impertinent. The point is, Jesus will understand what we did and why! And He'll note our obedience to His Word, as He did the sacrifice of the poor widow who donated her last two mites to God's treasury. Signs of His approval will follow.

Immediately He'll confirm His delight by imparting to us His deep permeating "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7). The next time we draw near, He'll draw closer than ever before, granting us the inexplicable yet unmistakable sense of His presence, because we've kept His precept: "He who has my commandments and keeps them ... I will ... manifest myself to him" (John 14:21).

He'll give us fresh anointings of His Spirit, just as the Father sent the Spirit upon Him when He was pleased with Him,

saying, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). He'll open new insights from His Word, timely truths we've read but overlooked in less obedient days.

To our delight, He'll enlarge our sphere of favor and service: "Friend, go up higher" (Luke 14:10). But most importantly, the wondrous love of God, and Jesus himself, will be released through us in a new dimension, as Jesus prayed: "That the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26). And that's not all.

Obedying the Golden Rule brings a golden reward. Time and again people will treat us not as we deserve, or as they wish to treat us or as others say we should be treated, but as they would like to be treated. We'll like that treatment! To reap it, we must sow it!

So treat others "exactly as you would like to be treated."

Adapted from *Not by Bread Alone*, by Greg Hinnant, copyright 2011, published by Creation House. This book is filled with 122 devotional thoughts reflecting the balanced nature of God's counsel. As you read them, the Holy Spirit will convict, correct, inform, reform, nourish, revive and stabilize your walk with Christ. To order a copy click on this link:



PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 7-16-2012

This week ask the Lord to give you opportunities to put His Word into practice in your daily life. Ask Him to help you recognize when they come, whether at home, work, church, shopping or a recreation area. Pray for your loved ones and neighbors and ask God to make you sensitive to their needs so that you can be a blessing to them. Continue to pray for those

suffering this summer through bouts of heat, drought, fires, storms, floods and other natural disasters. Remember Israel and continue to pray for revival and the upcoming elections.
Matt. 7:12

To enrich your prayer life and learn how to strategically pray with power by using appropriate scriptures, we recommend the following sources by Apostle John Eckhardt: Prayers that Rout Demons, Prayers that Bring Healing, Prayers that Release Heaven on Earth and Prayers that Break Curses. To order any or all of these [click here](#).