

Matthew 712

The Golden Rule

Text

Matthew 7

“¹² Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

“The Platinum Rule”

“Treat people with the same understanding and respect that you desire from them.”

“A revolutionary concept” in Jesus’ day

In Jesus’ day it was assumed that Rulers were superior to their subjects, Men were superior to women, Masters were superior to slaves, the Rich were superior to the poor, Jews were superior to gentiles.

Jesus’ political philosophy

“**Equality**” – everyone has equal rights and opportunities.

“**Freedom**” – both the wise and the fool are free to be themselves.

“**Empathy**” – understanding and respecting others in domestic and foreign matters.

Empathy (the Golden Rule in a word)

Empathy is not:

- Losing your independent judgment.
- Doing whatever others want.
- Projecting your temperament on others.
- Betraying your values.
- Losing a healthy, reasonable, balanced life.

Developing empathy:

- Understand temperament differences is important.
- Stop, listen, think, ask “How would I like others to treat me?”
- Beware of toxic empathy.

Toxic empathy:

- Anxiety and confusion are signs.
- Community wisdom is a safeguard.
- Aim for a tender heart with a tough mind (not a soft heart and a “blown by the wind” mind).

Grace applied

Matthew 18:21-35

Grace

Experienced – gratefulness, thankfulness, Gospel

Expressed – graciousness, empathy, Golden Rule