



Love, Learn, Live the Word (Matthew 7:12)

“So, in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

Love the Word

Everyone wants to be heard, forgiven, loved, and understood, but the irony is that few want to listen, forgive, love the unlovely, or take time to understand. Recognizing the dilemma of our sinful nature, Jesus summarized His Sermon on the Mount with the main theme.

Learn the Word

While other sages taught, “Don’t do to others what you don’t want them to do to you,” Jesus is credited as the first to teach this concept in a positive light, using, “Do to others what you would have them do to you.” Referenced as the “Golden Rule” because Emperor Alexander Severus had it inscribed on his palace wall in gold, Jesus’ teaching required initiative.

When we do to others what we would have them do to us, we connect with God who connects us with them. If we ask others about their needs, then we are better equipped to meet those needs in order to connect others with God. We will rarely know how to serve anyone in the way that they want to be served, unless we humbly ask and listen. Solomon said that anyone who answers before listening is foolish (Proverbs 18:13). We must humble our hearts in order to connect with both God and others.

As we ask God for guidance and seek to understand the needs of others, humbly serving them, the Holy Spirit connects those we encounter with God, which was the purpose of The Law and the Prophets, to point people to God. This is a self-sacrificial act of love. Jesus described loving God and loving others as the greatest commandments (Matthew 22:37-40). Paul said that the entire law was summed up in one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5:14). He taught the Romans that love fulfilled the law (Romans 13:9-10). Jesus’ half-brother James agreed (James 2:8).

When we follow the Golden Rule, we love others into God’s kingdom. The apostle Peter clarified the importance of surrendering our hearts to Christ and connecting with others for this purpose: “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).



Live the Word

Memorize the Golden Rule and recite it each day for the next month. Think of a person you often encounter who has not fully surrendered his life to Christ. Ask God to give you the wisdom to answer that person's questions and discern his level of hardheartedness. Ask how you can serve him. Take the initiative to humbly listen, forgive, love, and attempt to understand.

Here are four simple questions you can ask to connect with his heart:

“What is your church or spiritual background?”

“Will you please tell me your story?”

“Where is God in all that for you?”

“In terms of the God thing, would you describe yourself as skeptic, seeker, or surrendered?”

If the Holy Spirit prompts you that he might be ready to surrender to Christ, you can ask: “Would you like to draw a line in the sand, put a stake in the ground, and fully surrender your heart and life to Christ as Savior and Lord?” Follow an affirmative answer with a request to pray this prayer to God: “I can't. You can. I can't free myself from the penalty of my sin. In Christ, You can. I can't free myself from the power of my sin. In Christ, You can. I fully surrender my heart and life to You as Savior to free me from the penalty and Lord to free me from the power of my sin. Please forgive and restore me.”

In everything and with everyone, act with Christ's heart of humility, and His Spirit will connect those you encounter with God.