The Golden Rule

Matthew 7:12 (ESV)
“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 7:12 (MSG)
"Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them. Add up God's Law and Prophets and this is what you get.

Matthew 7:12 (AMP)
So then, whatever you desire that others would do to and for you, even so do also to and for them, for this is (sums up) the Law and the Prophets.

This Scripture contains one of the most well-known commands Jesus ever said. (1) The issue of righteousness. How can a person live righteously, that is, have a right relationship with his neighbor?
1. It has been labeled - The golden rule of life
Before we look at the Golden Rule let us look at a few others.
· Golden Rule of Parenting – Always be the person you want your child to be.
· The Golden Rule of coaching communication – All great communication happens first hand, with honesty, and in the context of relationships.
· The Golden Rule of economics – Those who have the gold make the rules.

Matthew 7:12 (ESV)
“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

The golden rule is probably the most well-known command Jesus ever said. It is the summit of ethics, behavior, righteousness, and godliness. It is a very practical statement of God's love; that is, God has done to us just as He wants us to do to Him. God has treated us as He wants us to treat Him (and everyone else). He pursued us passionately, loved us unconditionally and gave Himself sacrificially.

**What does it look like to love Him the way He has loved us?

The golden rule reveals the heart of God. It shows us exactly how God's heart longs for us to live and act. It is a simple statement revealing what love really is and what life in a perfect world is like. It tells believers that they are to live as the golden rule dictates while still on the earth.

Romans 13:10 (ESV)
Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

There are four significant facts that set the golden rule apart from all other teachings and make it the pinnacle of human behavior.
1. The golden rule is a one sentence statement that embraces all human behavior. The fact that all law and all love can be stated in one simple sentence is amazing. The simple statement of the golden rule includes all "the law and the prophets".

Matthew 5:17 (ESV)
“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

2. **The golden rule** demands *true* law and justice. Note the wording: it is *not* negative and passive, yet it tells man how not to behave. It truly restrains man. For example, the golden rule is teaching a man *not* to lie, steal, cheat, or injure. And it is teaching much much more.

3. **The golden rule** is concerned with *true love* and with *positive, active behavior*.
   a. It is more than *not* doing wrong (lying, stealing, cheating).
   b. It is more than just doing good (helping, caring, giving).
   c. It is *looking, searching, and seeking* for ways to do the good that you want others to do to you. It is seeking ways to treat others just as you want them to treat you. – **Marriage!**

4. The golden rule teaches the whole law. The whole law is contained in the words:

   **Matthew 22:39-40 (ESV)**
   And a second is like it: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

   Every human being would like to have all others treat them perfectly: to love and care for them to the ultimate degree and to express that love and care. *(My Mom / my wife)*

   The believer is to love and care for others. They are to give earth a taste of heaven. **That’s what Jesus did!** Others who are treated so supremely and get a taste of heaven/The Father are more likely to turn to the Lord.

   **Romans 15:1-2 (ESV)**
   We who are strong (mature) have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. *(parents)* 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. *(BLESS)*

   **Galatians 5:14 (ESV)**
   For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"

   **James 2:8 (ESV)**
   If you really fulfill the *royal law* according to the Scripture, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself,*” you are doing well.

   *What would you want your neighbor to do for you? Do it for them! What would that neighborhood look like? BLESS!*

   **Ecclesiastes 12:13 (ESV)**
   The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

**Thought 1.** A one sentence golden rule has to do three things.

1) Demand true justice: insist that men be treated justly in all situations.
2) Include real love: insist that men *actively* do good and even go beyond and do more than good.
3) Teach the whole law: insist that men do all that the law teaches.

**Thought 2.** Three things are required of the follower of Christ.

1) To know what Christ taught.
2) To believe what Christ taught.
3) To do what Christ taught. It is not enough to know or to believe the golden rule. **We must live it.**
**Thought 3.** Two simple rules can revolutionize a person’s life (or society itself).
1) Treating God as we want God to treat us.
2) Treating others as we want others to treat us.

**Thought 4.** In practice, the golden rule says several things.
1) We should not treat others the way they treat us: good for good, evil for evil.
2) We should not treat others the way they think they should be treated.
3) We should not treat others the way we think they should be treated.
4) But, we should treat others the way we want them to treat us.

**Thought 5.** There are several significant truths.
1) Our profession is empty unless we are living out the golden rule. The golden rule condemns us and shows us how far short we come.
2) How do we want others to treat us? The judgment as to how we wish to be treated is ours. We are totally responsible for our conclusion. Our conclusion is critical, for it is how we are to treat others. It is the basis of judgment upon ourselves. We will be judged for how we actually treat others.
3) The golden rule makes all men equal. How we wish to be treated is how we should treat others. And how others wish to be treated is how they should treat us. All people—the wealthy, famous, and powerful as well as the poor, unknown, and unimportant—all are to treat each other just as they would wish to be treated. If men would practice the golden rule, the ills of society would be solved: hunger, poverty, disease.
4) The golden rule would bring about a world of peace overnight if we would just commit ourselves to it/Him.
5) The way of wisdom is to live by the golden rule. It is the wisest thing that a person can do. Why? Abundant life. Many will draw close to a person who treats them well all the time, and they will respond with like treatment, at least a good deal of the time. Realistically, not everyone will respond, but many will.
6) One way to practice the golden rule is to ask the simple question: "How would I want to be treated?" Then treat the other person that way.

Note that Christ says both the golden rule and the two great commandments contain all the law. The laws of God and the laws of men would both be obeyed if we practiced the golden rule and the two great commandments.

**Conclusion** The Lord did for us what He wanted us to do for Him. Then Jesus commanded us “Love one another”, now that you KNOW LOVE do for others what has been done for you.