

# THE SUMMARY STATEMENT ON HOW TO LOVE OTHERS

From the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

Understanding & Applying the Golden Rule (Matt 7:12)

Pastor Andy Chappell

**INTRODUCTION:** Oh, how we love shortcuts and summaries!

## OVERVIEW:

Jesus is going to summarize the totality of the Law and the Prophets in one simple statement in what is commonly referred to as, “The Golden Rule”. Unfortunately we don’t fully grasp the unique quality of this essential teaching. We will learn that merely avoiding doing wrong to others is not enough. We must treat others positively as we ourselves would want to be treated. This is the fuller meaning of loving others.

## TODAY’S TEXT

*“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, ESV*

## BACKGROUND TO THE “GOLDEN RULE”

- A humorous, yet true sentiment: “He who has the gold rules!” (or “makes the rules!”)
- The origin traditionally comes from the Roman Emperor Alexander Severus (A.D. 222-35), who, though not a Christian, was reportedly so impressed by the comprehensiveness of this statement from Jesus that he had it inscribed in gold on the wall of his chamber.
- Other main religious systems also utilize a similar form of this statement, though negatively stated.
- “...known generally as the Golden Rule, is not completely unique in the ancient world, but here it is stated in its most emphatic, selfless form. It is stated negatively in Tobit 4:15, and can also be found in the Talmud in a story about the great rabbi Hillel, who is said to have told a Gentile who asked to be taught the Torah, “What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor; that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof; go and learn it” (*b. Shabbat 31a*.)” (NET Study Bible)

## ANOTHER SUMMARY OF THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

### 1. The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40)

*“And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”*

### 2. The Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12)

*“So, whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”*

## REVIEW: JESUS, AS RELATED TO THE LAW AND PROPHETS

- Jesus stated that He didn’t come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them (5:17)

Jesus’ good news (gospel) of the kingdom doesn’t replace the OT, but rather it fulfils it through His life and ministry. This along with His teaching on it completes and clarifies the original meaning of the whole Old Testament as God intended.

## CONNECTING THE “GOLDEN RULE” WITH THE PRECEDING CONTEXT

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

- The word is **οὕτως**. It means “then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so”. This word connects “The Golden Rule” to what precedes it.
- Former Subjects: Proper biblical judging, helping others, and God giving good gifts to His children when He responds to our persistent praying. If God responds to us positively, “**so**” we should treat others favorably as well!

## THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS’ STATEMENT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE POSITIVE AND THE NEGATIVE!

### TRADITIONAL NEGATIVE STATEMENT (PASSIVE)

“DON’T DO to others what you wouldn’t want done to you.”

What to *AVOID DOING* to others:

“Don’t hit, verbally abuse, steal from, lie to others...”

### JESUS’ POSITIVE STATEMENT (ACTIVE)

“Whatever you wish others would DO TO you, do to/for them.”

What to *PURPOSELY DO* to/for others:

“Do embrace, verbally bless, give to, be truthful to others...”

**So... Don’t focus merely on what you SHOULDN’T do to harm someone; focus rather on what you SHOULD do to bless them!**

## RECIPROCATING LOVE

- *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*” (John 13:34-35, ESV)
- *In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.* (1 John 4:10-11, ESV)
- *We love because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19, ESV)

## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

1. Re-direct your mindset to not only avoiding harm to others by your thoughts or actions, but also to what you can purposely do to bless others as you yourself would want to be blessed by them.
2. Begin each day with the attitude that you are going to purposely and tangibly love others as you would want to be treated.
3. How fluent of a speaker are you in “The 5 Love Languages”? Study others and speak their preferred love languages to them.

---

### The 5 Love Languages (Dr. Gary Chapman)

- \*Acts of Service
- \*Tangible Gifts
- \*Quality Time
- \*Words of Affirmation
- \*Physical Touch

(<https://www.5lovelanguages.com/learn>)

---

## SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Citizens of God’s Kingdom treat others the way they themselves would desire to be treated, thus fulfilling the Law and Prophets.

---



## TALK THE WALK (Discuss this with Others for Further Understanding and Application)

In what ways would you like to be treated when:

- A. ...you are met with a different point of view, or are confronted about something wrong in your Christian living?
- B. ...you find yourself in a room full of people who seemingly know each other, but you don’t?
- C. ...you are hurting emotionally, physically or spiritually?