The Golden Rule
Woman in the Pharisee’s House

Introduction

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  - How do we, followers of Christ, respond when the world around us changes in ways we would not want?
  - Jesus gave us the Golden Rule – “treat people the same way you want them to treat you” (Matthew 7:12) and the negative flip-side – “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged”
  - The Golden Rule is still golden – it is the word of our Master for us to live by, always, in all situations (even when our cultural no longer accepts or appreciates God’s standards)
  - Good Samaritan = The Golden Rule is golden – because it encapsulates or is the outworking of the greatest commandments.
  - If we, disciples of Jesus, are going to live out the Golden Rule then we need to get rid of, or put off, hypocrisy in our own lives
  - Let’s look at the story of the Woman in the Pharisee’s House – Luke 7:36-50

Sermon

- Woman in the Pharisee’s House
  - The woman’s actions – Luke 7:36-38
    36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.
    37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,
    38 and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.
  - “sinner” = public, well-known sin
  - “wet...wiping...kissing...anointing” = actions – her way of demonstrating her love to/for Jesus

- The Pharisee’s reaction – Luke 7:39
  39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."
✓ “who and what sort of person...sinner” = it’s a shame that it is this woman’s sin by which everyone categorizes her (Jesus never uses the word sinner or sinners for a specific person but always in general)
✓ “sinner” = how does she get into the Pharisee’s house? How is she known to the Pharisee?

• Jesus’ parable – Luke 7:40-43
40 And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher."
41 "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.
42 "When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?"
43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."
✓ “five hundred denarii...fifty” = About 21 months of pay and about 2 months of pay
✓ “love him more” = Matter of perspective – the one who loves believe that he loves completely
✓ “forgave more” = Matter of perspective – the one forgiven of more sins believes he has been forgiven more

• Jesus’ application – Luke 7:44-50
44 Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.
45 "You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.
46 "You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.
47 "For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little."
48 Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."
49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?"
50 And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."
✓ “have been forgiven, for she loved much” = NET translation – are forgiven, thus she loved much; it’s not that she loved much and was forgiven but was forgiven and loves much (point of the parable)
✓ “Your sins have been forgiven” = Perfect passive indicative of forgive or indicative (matter of fact), passive (recipient of the action), perfect (already completed but the results continue), forgive (cancelled, abandoned, set aside)
✓ “Your faith has saved you” = Love is shown by actions but salvation is received by faith – trusting Jesus for forgiveness
✓ “go in peace” = live your life in concord or harmony with your forgiveness

✓ “Your sins have been forgiven” = Matter of perspective – the one forgiven of more sins believes he has been forgiven more
Forgiveness isn’t something to be trampled but appreciated, not something to manipulate but something to motivate

- Jesus’ example – Luke 7:34

34 "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"

- “friend” = a close associate, used of the best man in weddings, one with whom there is affection and personal regard (contrasted to the Pharisees and religious leaders)

- Jesus’ actions and words never condoned sin but sinners found Him to be a friend – is the same true of His disciples?

➢ Golden Rule Demands You Put-off Hypocrisy

- Live like you believe
  - All sin is the same – a violation of God’s holiness
    - Homosexuality is a sin – there is no way to get around the Bible’s treatment of homosexuality without destroying the linguistic, historical and contextual framework of the Biblical passages that deal with it (the Elder Board has done our own study of these Biblical passages)
    - Homosexuality is a sin just as any sex outside the marriage of a man and a woman is sin
    - Later in this series I will talk more about what the sin of homosexuality is and what it isn’t but for now, let me say, the sexual intercourse of one person with another person of the same sex is a sin
    - But so is sexual intercourse of one person with another of the opposite sex to whom they are not married
    - And so is lying and greed and murder and idolatry
    - All sin is a violation of the holiness of God and as such is the same
    - Our current struggle in the Church is that we seem troubled, upset, disgusted by some sins and not by others (and generally it is the sin of others we dislike and our own that we tolerate)
    - If I believe that all sins are the same, then I need to live like all sins are the same and not hypocritically apply the Golden Rule to some sinners and not to others

  - No sins should be accepted
    - Our current struggle with the World is with the world’s acceptance of sin or some sins
    - Contrary to an article widely spread from Desiring God ministries entitled “Why Homosexuality is Not Like Other Sins” homosexuality is like other sins – it’s the acceptance of homosexuality that has changed
    - But it’s not just the World that has accepted some sins and not others, the Church has gotten comfortable with some sins
    - Jerry Bridges, in his Respectable Sins, talks about our (Christians) acceptance of sins like a lack of self-control, impatience, anger, selfishness, pride (the Pharisee’s sin?), envy, jealousy
If I believe that no sins should be accepted, then I need to not accept any sins differently and not hypocritically apply to Golden Rule to some sinners and not to others.

I’m going to close this series with a couple of messages of practical application but for now, let me say…

If I wouldn’t serve homosexuals because of my religious beliefs and serving them would be an acceptance of their sin, then I shouldn’t serve adulterers or fornicators or thieves or idolaters or greedy people or liars or impatient or prideful...

All sins don’t share the same immediate outcomes but they do share the same eternal consequences.

While we believe that all sins are the same and that our acceptance of all sins should be the same, we also recognize all sins don’t share the same immediate outcomes.

A murder does end the life of a person and a lie may not but a lie may end the lives of thousands or millions (like the lie that abortion is just a choice) and a murderer may only kill one person.

The immediate outcomes of different sins may not be the same but the eternal consequences of all sins are the same – death, spiritual death as separation for eternity from the Lord God Almighty.

If I believe that the eternal consequences of all sins are the same, then I can’t allow the difference in immediate outcomes to cause me to hypocritically apply the Golden Rule to some sinners and not to others.

Live in the balance of competing realities
- Reality of sinners
  - Reality – we are all sinners
  - Danger – accepting sin to accept sinners (World and liberal Christianity)

- Reality of saints
  - Reality – Christians are saints (set apart from sin)
  - Danger – keeping sinners away because they don’t measure up

- Balance of strugglers
  - Reality – we can either be…
    …a church of sinners – accepting sin and never helping anyone overcome their sin
    …or a church of saints – causing only the “perfect” to feel valued and accepted
    …or a church of strugglers – where sinners can be valued and accepted while continually being helped to gain victory over their continual sins
  - I want Northside to be a church of strugglers
  - A church of strugglers will always feel open to sinners and saints but only strugglers will stay – those content with their sin or their perfection won’t endure the struggle
  - A church of strugglers is a church fighting against hypocrisy – the hypocrisy of sinners (accepting sin) and saints (rejecting sinners while they are sinners themselves)
➢ **Next Week**

- Golden Rule and the Woman at the Well
  - John 4:3-38 = reread it this week

- Love and Prejudice

➢ **Application**

- Call to examination
  ✓ Do you treat sins differently?
  ✓ Do you treat sinners differently?
  ✓ What sinner could walk in the door, sit in your pew next to you and make you more uncomfortable than the sinners already sitting next to you? Why?

- Call to brokenness
  ✓ Are you looking to be a church of sinners?
  ✓ Are you looking to be a church of saints?
  ✓ Are you looking to be a church of strugglers?

- Call to commitment
  ✓ Pray and ask God to speak to you through this series
  ✓ Ask Him to show you how you can better live out the words, character and life of Jesus