

January 10, 2021

Viewpoint from the Valley Grove Church Of Christ

“Do To Others”

By Robert F. Turner

The Lord gave me a yardstick by which to measure every relationship in my life. It is easy to understand, and easy to apply if I have the will to do so. It involves no complicated formula; it is with me every wakeful hour. Its strength is in direct proportion to my weakness; binding me with cords of my own weaving, or freeing me as I free my own heart. It comprehends my whole duty to man.

While yet a child I learned it as: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you;” but later I found it is properly stated: *“All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”* (Matthew 7:12; see Luke 6:31).

“All things” is very broad. This includes my driving on the highway, selling a rifle, working for an employer, living with my wife, writing to my brethren, or about them.

“Whatsoever ye would . . .” is not “whatsoever they do.” This rule does not depend on the other fellow — it is determined in my own heart. How would I like to be treated? The rule is so reasonable, so unquestionably just, that it defies objection. It asks no pound of flesh, because its regulator would give none. It prescribes fair, honest treatment, because the party of the first part desires such. Self-interest, which so often blinds me to my duty to others, becomes the very indicator of those duties. God made the rule, but I am left to apply it — with the intensity gendered by man’s most powerful inner force, self-love. *“No man ever yet hateth his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it. . .”* (Ephesians 5:29).

“Do ye even so . . .” Lenski comments: “what we would like to have men do to us, whether they do that to us or not, we are to keep doing (poieite, durative) to them.” Till seven times? Nay, but until seventy times seven. This regulates conduct, but it is far more than a law of “doing” — it is a basic principle of attitude, of under-lying motive, which demonstrates itself in what we do.

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“The law and the prophets” Jesus said; making it clear that this is no new rule, but one inherent in God’s will for man in all times. Further, this clearly relates the rule to the giver of law, emphasizing the external authority of God. Those who seek to limit the “whole duty of man” to humanitarian obligations seem to miss this all-important point. 1 John 3:14-f clearly relates our love for our fellow man with our prior love for God. Because He laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren (vs. 16). *“And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.”* (vs. 23).

Christians are in a position to understand and apply the “Golden Rule”, as are none others. But the sad fact is that many so-called Christians make little practical application of this rule in their life, and seem a bit embarrassed if the preacher uses it as a text. Until we learn well the “second table of the law” (Matthew 22:39) we preach the “gospel” (?) in vain.

How Do People View You?

By Stan Cox

I have an interesting question to ask you. How do people view you? And, is it important to know that? Ultimately, does it matter? There actually is a Bible answer to the second question, which we will discuss. You will have to answer the first by examining yourself, and trying to look at your words and actions as others do.

First, does it matter? Well, in one way yes, and another way no. Consider Paul’s words, “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord” (1 Corinthians 4:3-4). God will judge us. Because of this, we must ultimately please Him alone. If we are pleasing Him, then it doesn’t matter if others condemn us. All that matters is God is pleased.

However, that doesn’t give us carte blanche to go around acting obnoxiously, with no concern what others might think. Consider that God requires us to concern ourselves with how others might view us. In other words, to please God we need to please men, within certain parameters.

We are to be good examples. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

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Our lives must be lived so that God is seen through our actions.

We are to do whatever possible to save souls. Paul wrote, “I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22). Paul considered who he was teaching — Jew, Gentile, man, woman, weak, strong, and tailored his approach (though the gospel was always the same) to avoid any offense that might make his teaching less effective.

We are to be loving toward one another. “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).

Ultimately, our call is for careful self-examination, with a view to helping your brethren in Christ and your fellow man. So now, let’s try to answer the first question.

Do you consider yourself to be a tolerant person? How do others view you? Do they think of you as tolerant of sin? Of being unwilling to admonish another, when such admonition is needed? Here is the important question. If they view you in that way, is there a real reason for it? Might your view of yourself be a rationalization for some real fault that exists?

Do you consider yourself to be a defender of truth? How do others view you? Do they think of you as intolerant, judgmental and closed minded? Do they think you to be unkind, undiplomatic, quick to

criticize? Is there a real reason for their perceptions? Are you rationalizing a sinful tendency?

Do you think of yourself as easygoing and flexible? Do others perceive you to be undependable, uninterested, lacking in diligence in your duties and the promises you have made? Is there some legitimacy to their less than flattering view of you? Are you excusing yourself when you fail to follow through with an obligation or promise?

Do you think of yourself as plain spoken? Do others view you as cantankerous, unkind, meddling, unpleasant, critical? Do they have a real reason for looking at you in such a light? Do you dismiss others being offended because you were “telling it like it is?”

What about your view of yourself as being sociable and an extrovert? Do others look at you as a gossip? Are they disappointed that you have revealed a private trust they have shared with you? Is there a valid reason why they may hesitate to talk with you of weighty or serious matters?

We could go on and on with the questions. Yes, there is certainly the point to be made that we should all think the best of others, and strive not to ascribe bad intent when such intent is not there. Having said that, we should also be careful to examine our words and actions that we might encourage, rather than discourage others.

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I have long observed that many people are lacking in self-awareness. For some it is a natural flaw, one that needs to be worked on. On others it is simply a lack of care, which is unfortunate and wrong. If you have ever said to yourself, “I don’t care what others think”. . . you need to think again.

You may try and try to be acceptable to men, and never be successful. That’s OK, as Jesus was crucified, Paul was persecuted, and in the end, all that matters is whether or not you please God. But, you need to do the best you can to be a positive influence, perceived as righteous by your brethren. “Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another” (Romans 14:19).

Study Your Bible

Visitors — We pray that you benefit spiritually from our worship together and hope to see you again.

January Birthdays:

The 22nd Jennifer Collins;
The 23rd Paula Brown; The 25th
Jacqueline Pryor; The 25th David
Justice; The 27th Johnny Little;
The 29th James Brown;

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Valley Grove Church Of Christ
2110 East Stateline Road
P. O. Box 461
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Sunday

Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.

Worship 10:30 A.M.

Worship 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

Phone: 662-342-1132

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