

# Thought of the Week -The Golden Rule 2.0

(Week: 20180402) By Jim Fannin

Luke 6:31-32

*Treat others the same way you want them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.*

In my Psychology and sociology studies in college, I became aware of a fact of social behavior. Given a choice we usually hang out with people we like, who generally think the same, and behave as we do.

We know everyone wants other people to agree with them because in our minds, agreement translates to "acceptance" or "validation." On the opposite side, our brains think disagreement translates to "rejection." People with different views, social behavior, or who are socially awkward, subconsciously represent disagreement, i.e., rejection. And most people avoid rejection whenever possible.

Jesus faced the same issue of rejection by groups who had formed to affirm and confirm each other's views and actions. The Pharisees, Sadducees and religious elite of Jesus' day banded together in like-minded groups. As a result, Jesus' differing belief's and behavior caused them to reject Him.

We often have similar circumstances in our churches. Groups form around people who agree with and behave similarly which often leaves out or isolates some people. We may believe this grouping behavior is natural, or normal, and thus Ok.

Yet Jesus's behavior and thinking says, "not." Of course, Jesus's thinking was not typical of what we consider normal. Why? Sin corrupts our thinking. While in God's perfect thinking, Jesus sees not the differences, but the sin and the need for redemption we share.

Jesus further demonstrates our human thinking is not God's thinking as He expounds on the "Golden Rule." Most of us recognize it as it appears in Luke 6:31 above, "treat others as you want people to treat you." But Jesus doesn't stop there. Jesus exposes our sinful, corrupt thinking by

reminding us the Golden Rule is “easy,” when you know the other people like, agree with, or share your views. He says:

*“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.”*

Jesus points out that the Golden Rule means we have a responsibility to share the comfort, the love, and our Christian fellowship with “every” Christian. Yes, some Christians’ views, social awkwardness, or behavior may make us uncomfortable because they don’t fit exactly with what we think. Nonetheless, Jesus makes it clear, our natural inclinations are corrupt. He tells us, even those who make us uncomfortable are still joint heirs as well as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Thus, God expects us to set the example of God’s love and comfort in this world and in our churches, both to fellow Christians and the lost. As we prayerfully examine our hearts, let Christ transform our thoughts to see others as He does.

Humbly, with God’s guidance, seek to include those outside your normal flock, to seek people who may not necessarily agree with, or like you. See them and think of them as Jesus does.