

## The Golden Rule

"Therefore 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

Jesus states the "Golden Rule" in His Sermon on the Mount. This is one of the most frightening statements in the entire Bible. When Paul tells us that God will judge us on our application of this "Rule," we are confronted with the horror of judgment. "Therefore you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another; for in passing judgment upon him you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who do such things."<sup>1</sup> Paul says the fact that you judge others affirms your realization that you yourself will be judged.

This can easily lead to your preoccupation with trying to "beat the system." Lying, deceiving, and manipulation are expressions of this. In Christ we try to beat the system by arguing that judgment is ameliorated by grace, that God will not hold us accountable for our sin. But such is not to be. God is impartial in that He will compensate each person in eternity, in part, on the basis of his consistency in obeying the "Golden Rule."

God will not hold you accountable for what you do not know, nor for what you do not have. No one will be penalized for ignorance, the absence of opportunity, or a lack of giftedness. But you will be held eternally accountable for what you do have. As Jesus said, "To whom much is given, of him shall much be required."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Romans 2:1-2 <sup>2</sup> Luke 12:48

## Stupid People

"For My people are stupid, They give Me no heed; They are foolish children, They are not intelligent. They are clever at doing wrong, But unable to do right." Jeremiah 4:22

God speaking through His prophet laments over His people Israel. They are stupid in that they think they can thwart the will of God with impunity. It is not that they are ignorant regarding the expectations of God; He personally told the people what they could and could not do at Mt. Sinai. Evidently, they thought they could ignore His express commands and do as they please.

These words of Jeremiah are frighteningly relevant for the people of God today. We know how to read and we have an abundance of Bibles in a variety of translations giving us in clear, unambiguous language the expectations of God. Still, we live as though His expectations do not exist.

When Lot warned his sons-in-law that God was about to destroy Sodom, "he seemed to his sons-in-law as one who jests."<sup>1</sup> As you know, they perished with the rest of the Sodomites. Paul warns, "...in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ..."<sup>2</sup> We read it thinking that he is jesting. We are a stupid people.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 19:14 <sup>2</sup> 1 Thessalonians 1:8