

## OUTLINE

Introduction

Prayer

1. The Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12)
  - a. Reciprocity
  - b. Paul
  - c. Other rules
    - i. Silver Rule
    - ii. Diamond Rule
    - iii. Bronze Rule
2. The Strait Gate (Matthew 7:13-14)
  - a. Contrast strait and crooked
  - b. Contrast narrow and wide
  - c. Contrast restraint and constraint
3. False Prophets (Matthew 7:15-20)
  - a. Disguise
    - i. Sheep vs Wolves
    - ii. Grapes vs Thorns
    - iii. Figs vs Thistles
  - b. Deception
    - i. Truth and Lies
    - ii. Corruption
  - c. Discontent
    - i. Discord
    - ii. Confusion
    - iii. Chaos

Questions

Conclusion

Bible Study

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

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## Introduction

Matthew chapter 7 begins with instructions on judging others. It then shifts to a “how to” if you will, as it refers to asking, seeking and knocking. The chapter is filled with solid advice on how we can become not only better Christians but better human beings. John 16:13 (KJV) “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth... As we continue our study of the chapter, we come to tonight’s topics, the Golden Rule, the Strait Gate, and False Prophets.

## Prayer

What comes to mind when we hear, “we should follow the Golden Rule”? What is the Golden Rule, and where did it come from. Who said it? How many people say and do they really know what it means? Well let’s talk about and find out.

Matthew chapter 7 verse 12, “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. Also see Leviticus 19:18. The major theme of the verse is reciprocity, the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit as defined by the New Oxford American Dictionary.

A “classification” of the Ten Commandments teaches us how we are to behave with regards to God first and then each other. This is the “law”. Throughout the Scriptures we see the result of not abiding by these commandments. Further throughout the Scriptures the Prophets always spoke with regards to these commandments.

Jesus, the great Teacher, taught “the principle of reciprocity” in the Lord’s Prayer. “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” The Apostle Paul also refers to the “the principle of reciprocity” in many ways throughout the New Testament, see Galatians 6:1-10 (...for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap...), 2 Corinthians 9:6 (...He which soweth sparingly...), and Matthew 26:51-52(...all that take the sword shall perish with the sword.), and Luke 6:38 (give and it shall be given to you...), are portions of scriptures that we know and recite all the time.

Now this I did not know! There are other rules, the silver, diamond and platinum as well as bronze. Imagine that! After all these years learning that there are other rules! Quickly the silver rule, “Do not do unto others as you would not have them do unto you.” This rule only requires an individual not to harm others; it does not ask the person to engage in positive behavior. The diamond rule, “treat others as they wish you to treat them” and the bronze rule, “if they are not bothering you, don’t bother them. Other rules include the iron and platinum rules.

## DISCUSSION

The strait gate! Is it strait or straight? In nautical terms a “strait” is a route or channel, so narrow as to make passage difficult. “Enter ye at the strait gate...” begins the 13<sup>th</sup> verse. A strait (straight) passage may be difficult however you can usually see what is ahead of you. A narrow passage does not provide a lot of space but nevertheless you can still navigate a course on it. **Compare and contrast strait (straight) and crooked, narrow and wide. Identify the main difference between restraint and constraint.**

## DISCUSSION

Our final topic of this lesson is false prophets. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Not only are we warned about false prophets, we are also given insight as to how to recognize them. Verses 16-20 tell us what to look for to identify false prophets.

Disguise is at the heart of and is an effective tool of the false prophet. He or she is trying to be something they are not. They are trying to convince others to see them in a way that is not their true self. Given time, the real, true and usually corrupt individual will become visible despite the illusion they have created. They look like one of us, they talk like one of us, and they even sing like one of us but are they really one of us? They're at the church before the pastor arrives and they always want to help. They might even appear to be a little over zealous. The old saying, "haste makes waste" applies. We must be very cautious about those we allow to "speak" into our lives; after all the power of life and death is in the tongue.

Another tool of the false prophet is deception. As the serpent caused the women in the garden to question God, so the false prophet will lace lies with bit of truth. Thus it is prudent for each individual to know the bible for themselves. If you already know the word of God for yourself, it is more difficult, not impossible, but more difficult for you to be fooled. For all the people who fish, you cover the hook with the fish's favorite food and the rest is history when the fish is in your frying pan or in the oven with onions, garlic and dill.

Finally, as a result of their teaching and influence, discontent follows. They have gently and gradually sown the seeds of discord among the members. You see, they have been giving private "words of prophecy" to this one about that one; instilling animosity within the congregation. "A house divide against itself cannot stand." They've stirred the pot of confusion. They added a teaspoon of strife, a pinch of malice and let's not forget that tablespoon of envy and ¼ cup of jealousy. He or she threw in a cup of distrust, a cup of suspicion and a dash of self-doubt. With this recipe, in no time at all the church has descended into utter chaos. Then he or she goes to the pastor and says, "My season" is up and they move on to the next church.

## **DISCUSSION**

## **CONCLUSION**

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.  
(Philippians 2: 2 KJV)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:10-12 KJV)