

GOLDEN RULE IN THE LIGHT OF LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF

Jesus said you must treat others in the way you would want and expect to be treated. This is the famous Golden Rule.

It is said by the Churches that the Golden Rule is a paraphrase of love your neighbour as yourself. Considering how Jesus made it central that is quite correct. He sanctioned the command to love God absolutely and your neighbour not absolutely but because God says so. He declared that the command to treat others as you would be treated is all the sum of the law and the prophets. So the Golden Rule and love God and love your neighbour as yourself are all identical. They are about action towards others in the name of the love of God. The implication is that you need to love the God in them to love them and this love is for God's sake. God is not left out. In fact God has to be treated with respect just like you want respect so he is one of the others too.

Love your neighbour as yourself does no good at all. Jesus made it the second greatest commandment, with the command to love God totally being first. But it is not.

The view that certain things are wrong under all circumstances is the ethical theory of absolutism. Absolutism ignores the consequences of doing or not doing something. Consequentialism is the theory that even murder, though bad, is right under certain circumstances and it all depends on the intended results. You can't mix absolutism and consequentialism together they are oil and water. If any harmful actions are right because of the intended consequences then there is no room for saying things like 'abortion is always morally wrong' etc. Catholicism has a lot of absolutism in its theology. Divorce is never right. Contraception is wrong even when it protects from AIDS. Disbelieving in what God has supposedly told the Church is always wrong too.

Jesus preached absolutism too. So you treat others according to those absolutes and you tell yourself that if they protest it is what they really want even if they don't see it.

So Jesus' commandment was useless for it didn't tell us how to love. What is the use of love if you should let people divorce and don't know this and think divorce is always wrong?

Jesus then should have declared either absolutism or consequentialism to be true.

The only reason he gave love your neighbour as yourself such a high status was because God commanded it. So we are to keep the rule because God commanded it. Jesus didn't care if it was right or wrong or dangerous or whatever. Pleasing religion was all that mattered.

We would worry, as would the psychiatric world, if the commandment said, "Love your neighbour more than yourself." But Jesus said that the first greatest commandment was to love and serve God totally and without any reservations. So God comes first. This makes "Love your neighbour as yourself" as bad as "Love your neighbour more than yourself." In principle, they are the same: they both require you to devalue yourself.

Jesus said the Golden Rule was the summary of the law and the prophets. He said that about love your neighbour as yourself as well. The Golden Rule is as much of a failure as is the command to love your neighbour as yourself. The two commandments are believed to be different ways of saying the same thing. So they are really the one commandment. They fall together.

