

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

## **The Golden Rule**

**- Pastor Hank French**

*"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets"* (Matthew 7:12).

There is a "golden thread" that runs through the Bible. It begins in Leviticus: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD (19:18).

Jesus picks up the thread: "A lawyer, asked Jesus a question to test him. 'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:35-40).

Paul also picked up the thread: "Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8-10).

Paul again: "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

From 1 John: "How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action (3:17-18).

And of course, the Golden Rule: "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." Most of us would not have others hate us or hurt us; we would not have others treat us unjustly; we would not have others refuse to forgive us. We would have others love us, care for us, be kind, gentle and just with us.

Love is the golden thread that runs through the Bible. The word love appears 538 times in the Bible. In just the Gospel of John, Jesus uses the word love 57 times. In 1 John, a small book of only 5 chapters, the word love appears 46 times.

From Paul one more time: "Now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). This is the greatness of Christianity—the centrality of love, of wanting only good for others.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for calling your people to be the great lovers of the world. Amen.