

THE BOTTOM LINE
The Power Zone XII
Matthew 7:12-13, 15-20, 23

INTRODUCTIN

- A. The story of the inexperienced man at the railroad.
 - 1. Assigned to report on happenings in remote desert outpost.
 - 2. Absolutely nothing, until pig hit by train. Long report.
 - 3. Instructed to make reports more brief.
 - 4. Pig killed again. "Pig on track. Toot-toot. Sausage."
- B. Jesus was the master at simplifying things.
 - 1. Preached [3 chapters] foundation of Christian living:
 - a. How to live a happy life.
 - b. How to be examples for the world.
 - c. How to deal in personal relationships:
 - i. Don't be angry.
 - ii. Don't commit adultery.
 - iii. Don't make oaths.
 - iv. Loving your neighbor.
 - v. Judging others.
 - d. How to deal in our relationship with God:
 - i. Praying.
 - ii. Giving.
 - iii. Fasting.
 - iv. Trusting in God.
 - 2. He sums up the life in the power zone with Matthew 7:12.
 - 3. It is Genesis through Deuteronomy and the Prophets all combined.
- C. Note the various "rules" of living as seen by the world.
 - 1. The Iron Rule – "Do to others before they do to you."
 - a. Robert Michels, German sociologist.
 - b. Control by domination, intimidation, dictatorship.
 - 2. The Bronze Rule – "Do to others what they do to you."
 - a. The law of retaliation, getting even, striking back.
 - 3. The Silver Rule – "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you."
 - a. Confucius.
 - b. The rule of passivity. Leave others alone, don't bother folks.

I. THE GOLDEN RULE.

- A. The Golden Rule is Proactive.
 - 1. It is not a passive or static type of relationship.
 - 2. "*When you see a need, grab the initiative in doing something about that need.*"
~Eugene Peterson
 - 3. Luke 10:30-37. The story of the "Good Samaritan."
- B. The Golden Rule is Pensive.
 - 1. Serious thought should go into a proper response.
 - 2. What is the best thing for the person being dealt with?
 - a. Give someone hungry a fish, or...
 - b. Give someone hungry the ability to catch fish.
 - 3. Prayerfully consider the possibilities, Jas. 1:5.

- C. The Golden Rule is Practical.
 - 1. It is a call to meet genuine needs of individuals.
 - 2. Jas. 2:15-16
 - 3. 1 Jn. 3:17-18
- D. The Golden Rule is Proven.
 - 1. The world is a better place because of the life of Christ.
 - 2. The Golden Rule is the crux of human relationship today.
 - a. Crux is Latin for cross.
 - b. On the cross, provision was made for the deepest need.
 - 3. Phil. 2:5-8 – Jesus not only taught this rule, He lived it.

II. SOLID FAITH.

- A. How Do We Live This Life?
 - 1. Don't look for shortcuts, 7:13-14.
 - a. Narrow way – extremely difficult.
 - b. Lk. 13:24, “Strive” is to agonize or be in anguish.
 - c. Broad way – no restrictions, no requirements.
 - 2. Be wary of false prophets (teachers), 7:15-20.
 - 3. Knowing the correct password, 7:21-23.
 - 4. Improvements in standard living, 7:24-27.
 - a. Paraphrase: *“But if you just use My words in Bible studies and don't work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter...”*
 - b. Foundation of sand / bedrock (10 ft. down); Sea of Galilee.
 - c. Winter rains – sand would wash away.
- B. What is Eternal Life?
 - 1. It begins at the new birth, Jn. 17:3.
 - 2. Not a life of words, but of power, 1 Cor. 4:20.
- C. Christianity, A WAY OF LIFE.