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*"In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*  
(Matthew 7:12)

### I. The Guiding Principle

- a. The "Golden Rule" Scripture is one of the most misunderstood statements in the Bible. First of all it only applies to believers and this is based on who Jesus is teaching...His disciples.
- b. If our judging of others is not guided by this principle, we will gossip and become over critical.
- c. The person who lives the Golden Rule refuses to say or do anything to harm themselves or others.
- d. Practicing the Golden Rule means paying a price. We can want God's best for ourselves and others. When others resist or oppose us there is a price to pay in those relationships.
- e. The Golden Rule guides us to put into practice the practical teachings of Jesus: don't hate, love your enemies, don't seek vengeance, and turn the other cheek.
- f. We are *salt*, and salt stings the open wound. We are *light*, and light exposes dirt.
- g. *This is the Law and the Prophets*. The O.T. emphasizes human generosity (being kind to another) (Deut. 10:19; Lev. 19:34, 25:35) (Hebrews 13:2)
- h. The Golden Rule is grounded in this basic test question, "How would we like to be treated in this situation?" (Gal. 5:14)

### II. The Two Ways, Your Choice

- a. Life outside of the Lordship of Jesus is life that leads to destruction (moral ruin).
- b. The two Gates; one represents the way to hell (broad way) and the other the way to heaven (narrow way).
  1. The broad way is the easy way and popular. Jesus warns us that the majority is not always right.
  2. The fact that "everybody does it" is no proof that what they are doing is right.
  3. We can walk on the broad way and keep our "baggage" of sin and worldliness.
- c. God's people have always been a remnant, a small minority in a "wide world."
- d. The narrow way has fewer travelers, because it is a lonely and costly path.
  1. Believers must give up personal and worldly desires to walk the narrow way.
- e. The call to "enter through the narrow gate", is the call to make Jesus Lord. The narrow gate requires dependence on the one who owns the Gate. Jesus alone is the "Narrow Gate."

### III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. This is the first test: *Did your profession of faith in Christ cost you anything?*
  1. Many people who "trust" Jesus Christ never leave the world's appetites and association.
  2. They have an "easy" Christianity and a slippery, sliding faith with no real anchor and real change.
  3. The world tells people to follow "your own way" because "all ways lead to God."
- b. **Spiritual Reality check #1:** We cannot walk on two roads, in two different directions, at the same time.
- c. The life of a disciple must pass through the narrow gate daily. It is an *uneasy* road of obeying His commands against anger, lust, retaliation and arrogance.
- d. **Spiritual Reality check #2:** The narrow way will break your heart, but Jesus is there to comfort you. On the narrow way, you will be neglected and rejected by friends/family, but Jesus will keep you.
- e. Loving enemies and blessing those that undermine your kindness is a narrow way that the majority will not understand. We must go the way of the little flock and not the great herd.