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# Words of Truth

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## Whatsoever Ye Would That Men Should Do To You...

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Selfishness is not a new problem. There are those people that only care about themselves (Luke 15:25-32). The children of Israel were this way when they came out of captivity and let the Lord's house lie in ruins (Haggai 1:3-11). Selfish people think more, if not only, about themselves and their own needs.

Jesus left us an example to follow in being unselfish (Philippians 2:1-8). However, many people only look to Jesus to see what they can get for themselves so they miss that Jesus was selfless. We should not be so blind. We should be able to look to the Scriptures and see that the attitude of service those before us had in Christ has brought us to where we now are as Christians.

God expects us to care more about others than we do ourselves. Consider these Scriptures: *"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just... I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive... Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another... We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me... For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you... Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth"* (Luke 14:12-14, Acts 20:35, Romans 12:10, Romans 15:1-3, I Corinthians 9:19-23, and I Corinthians 10:24).

Another principle in the Scriptures is to love our neighbors as ourselves (Leviticus, 19:18, Matthew 22:37-39, Romans 13:8-9, Galatians 5:14, and James 2:8). Your neighbor is not just the person who lives near you. Your neighbor can be a complete stranger who desperately needs your help (Luke 10:25-37). If we care more about others than we do ourselves and if we love our neighbors as ourselves, we are surely going to leave selfishness behind. Yet, that does not mean we should stop

thinking about ourselves when we are helping or communicating in any way with others. In fact, there is a good reason to think of yourself when dealing with other people.

### **Do Ye Even So To Them**

Notice this Scriptural truth: *“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... And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise”* (Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31). As you just read, Jesus teaches us to consider how we desire to be treated in the ways that we treat other people. If I treat you in a certain way that should be how I want to be treated. For the sake of clarity, it must be noted that these Scriptures do NOT allow for us to treat others the way they have treated us, especially as it relates to them mistreating us (Romans 12:17-21, I Thessalonians 5:15, and I Peter 3:9). That being said, it is a great principle to consider when we are relating to other people. I should ask myself if the way I am treating this person is the way I would want to be treated if the situation were reversed.

To apply this principle, consider an application or two. Let us say that some brother or sister in Christ has fallen on bad times. They, due to nothing wrong on that brother or sister’s part, have lost a job. If I have the means to help, I know the Scriptures teach me to do so (I John 3:16-19). That is easy to know. The how to help is not so clearly given to us. It takes more thought in considering how we’re going to help that needy saint by thinking about how we would want help if you or I were in that situation. Would you want someone to invite you to their home for dinner or give you the means to obtain it yourself? Would you want someone to give you a place to stay in their home or help you keep your own home? For me, I would want people to be considerate of me and ask me questions. Therefore, I treat others with kindness (Colossians 3:12) and consideration (I Peter 3:8).

Let’s say you are practicing the Scriptural work of hospitality by having a brother or sister in Christ into your home (Romans 12:13 and I Peter 4:9). Now, it is time to choose what is going to be for dinner. A considerate individual will want to know the dietary needs, likes, and dislikes of their guests. Others, who are not so considerate, will serve what they want. That inconsiderate person will not care if his or her guests are comfortable. This type of person figures whatever they serve you should just eat it. Rather than a “take it or leave it” mentality, a Christian must have the mindset of a servant to others (Galatians 5:13). How do you want treated in these situations? Do you want to eat something that makes you ill? Do you want to eat something that might give you diarrhea? Do you want to try some food that you aren’t sure about and be put in a situation where you might offend the person opening their home to you? Consider how you would like to be treated when you are a guest in someone’s home when you are practicing hospitality.

### **Conclusion**

If only we’d all take the time to consider how it feels to be in another person’s shoes we might just be a little bit more compassionate. Take the time to be that person. This is what God expects of you and I. Applying the principle of treating others the way you want to be treated will also help us to be better friends and brethren to each other. While we certainly need to deny ourselves to be faithful Christians (Matthew 16:24), it is good to consider yourself when engaging with others!