

UNGOLDEN RULES

(Luke 6:20-31)

Intro: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."
-Luke 6:31.

Golden Rule.

- We call it.
- Did not originate with Jesus.
 - #Similar expressions go back at least to the book of Leviticus.
 - *6th century B.C.
 - + "Love your neighbor as yourself."
 - =Leviticus 19:18.
- Wasn't called the Golden Rule.
 - #Until the 18th century A.D.

There is much that appeals to us in this Golden Rule.

- I'll be nice to you.
 - #So that you'll be nice to me.
- I'll be generous with you.
 - #So that you'll be generous with me.
- I'll do you a favor.
 - #So that you'll do me a favor.

But have you ever noticed?

- Jesus uses this so-called Golden Rule.
 - #As a summary of how we are to deal with our enemies.
- Jesus said to those who would listen (Luke 6:27-31):
 - # "Love your enemies."
 - # "Do good to them."
 - # "Bless them."
 - # "Pray for them."
 - # "Give to them."
 - # "Do unto them as you would have them do unto you."
- Isn't it interesting?
 - #How we lift out the summary statement.
 - *Call it the Golden Rule.
 - #How we tend to ignore the rest of Jesus' statements.
 - *Treat them as if they are Ungolden Rules.

- I. This Is All Saints Sunday.
 - A. We Remember The Saints Who Have Lived And Died In The Faith.
 1. We intentionally name those who have died in the last year.
 - a. Kaden Malsam.
 - b. Bill Burgess.
 - c. Elois Woods.
 - d. Fred Preston.
 - e. Rosemary Ohde.
 - f. Arvis Taylor.
 - g. Allen Kroblin.
 2. You, no doubt, have others whom you name in your own heart.
 - a. Parents.
 - b. Spouse.
 - c. Loved ones.
 - d. Friends.
 - Who have died.
 - Who have already received their crown of life.
 - #Revelation 2: 10.
 3. If you:
 - a. Open the covers of your hymnals.
 - You may see the names of others.
 - b. Look at the inscriptions.
 - On some of our communion ware.
 - On the end of the benches up in front.
 - #You will see still other names.
 4. There are other items.
 - a. In and around the church.
 - b. Given in memory of the saints.
 - Who were blessed by God.
 - #In and through this community of faith.
 - Who in turn were a blessing.
 - #In and through this community of faith.
 - B. But, As I Suggested In My Article In The Ascent, We Don't Have To Die In Order To Become Saints.
 1. Each one of us is a living saint.
 - a. Not dead.
 - But alive.
 - b. Not perfect.
 - Merely forgiven.
 - c. Not because we are so good.
 - But because God is so good.

2. We are saints—people of God who are called to live out our faith.
 - a. Not only in this community of faith.
 - But in the world.
 - b. Not only in the light of the Golden Rule.
 - But also in the light of the Ungolden Rules.
3. Do we really want to be saints under those conditions?
 - a. It's often more tempting.
 - To hate our enemies.
 - #Than to love them.
 - To do harm.
 - #Than to do good.
 - To curse.
 - #Than to bless.
 - To abuse people.
 - #Than to pray for them.
 - To strike back or to strike first.
 - #Than to turn the other cheek.
 - To take.
 - #Than to give.
 - To do unto others.
 - #Before they do unto us.
 - b. Let me clarify a couple of things.
 - I don't think Jesus is saying:
 - #You should meekly endure abuse.
 - #You should let somebody beat your brains in.
 - *If someone is abusing you.
 - +Physically.
 - +Sexually.
 - +Emotionally.
 - =Get out of that situation.
 - *If someone is abusing a child.
 - +Physically.
 - +Sexually.
 - +Emotionally.
 - =Get the child out of that situation.
 - What I think Jesus is saying:
 - #You don't have to get even.
 - #You don't have to strike back.
 - #You don't have to do the very thing.
 - *You wish to condemn in the other.

- c. If we are constantly retaliating.
 - Where will it all end?
 - #If I punch you on the arm.
 - *You punch me back.
 - *But it feels like you punched harder than I punched.
 - #So I punch you again.
 - *But harder this time.
 - #You punch me back.
 - *Even harder this time.
 - #Back and forth we go.
 - *Where will it all end?
 - At some point.
 - #Hurt has to be absorbed without retaliation.
 - #Pain has to be absorbed without retaliation.
 - #Even injustice has to be absorbed without retaliation.
- 4. That point is the cross.
 - a. Jesus didn't play by the world's rules.
 - He didn't retaliate against those who crucified him.
 - He didn't send:
 - #Fire and brimstone.
 - #Cruise missiles.
 - #Legion of angels.
 - He didn't curse.
 - He didn't even threaten.
 - #"God is going to get you for this."
 - b. Instead Jesus played by:
 - God's rules.
 - Ungolden Rules.
 - #Loved.
 - #Blessed.
 - #Prayed.
 - #Forgave.
 - It wasn't easy.
 - #It cost him his life.
 - But on Easter morning.
 - #He got:
 - *New life.
 - *Second life.
 - *Resurrected life.
 - +Life that continued to be lived by the Ungolden Rules.
 - +Life that is offered to each of us through faith.
 - =Loving.
 - =Blessing. =Doing good.
 - =Praying. =Forgiving.

II. What Should The Life Of A Saint Look Like?

A. Maybe It Should Look Like Norman Borlaug.

1. The latest issue of The Lutheran.
 - a. November 2007.
 - b. Tells his story.
2. Norman Borlaug.
 - a. Geneticist.
 - b. Plant pathologist.
 - Now 93 years old.
3. He's devoted his professional life.
 - a. To developing.
 - High-yield.
 - Disease-resistant.
 - #Wheat.
 - b. To reverse food shortages.
 - India.
 - Pakistan.
 - Africa.
4. When he was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.
 - a. America's highest civilian honor.
 - b. Citation read:
 - “Dr. Borlaug has saved more lives than any other person who has ever lived, and likely saved more lives in the Islamic world than any other human being in history.”
5. Why would he devote his life's work to feeding people?
 - a. Of different countries.
 - b. Of different cultures.
 - c. Of different faiths.
6. He said:
 - a. “Poverty and misery lead to *-isms*.”
 - Terrorism.
 - Separatism.
 - Extremism.
 - b. “Peace cannot be built on empty stomachs.”
 - For his work.
 - In 1970.
 - #Norman Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
7. Norman Borlaug.
 - a. Living the life of a saint.
 - b. Living by Ungolden Rules.
 - Loving enemies.
 - Doing good.
 - Blessing.

- B. Maybe The Life Of A Saint Should Look Like These Hands.
1. They're your hands.
 - a. We put them up to illustrate our stewardship theme:
 - Give God Five.
 - b. After Consecration Sunday last week.
 - When we collected:
 - #Time and Talent surveys.
 - #Statement of Intent cards.
 - I was thinking we should probably take those down.
 - #They've served their purpose.
 - Then I decided that maybe we should leave them up awhile longer.
 - #They won't stay up there forever.
 - *I'm thinking:
 - +We'll leave them up through the end of the church year.
 - =Through November.
 - =Through Christ the King Sunday.
 - +We'll take them down before Advent.
 - #They are a reminder:
 - *To those who haven't yet returned their:
 - +Time and Talent surveys.
 - +Statement of Intent cards.
 - =Bring those.
 - =Mail those.
 - Or you might be getting a phone call.
 - #From the Stewardship Committee.
 - *That we are God's hands in the world.
 2. Our Evangelism Committee.
 - a. Going to meet today.
 - After the 11:00 service.
 - b. We haven't had a functioning Evangelism Committee.
 - Since I came here.
 - #More than 1½ years ago.
 - So this is a blessing.
 - #If you are moved to join us.
 - *You are welcome.
 - c. I don't know what's going to come out of our gathering.
 - d. But I know some of the input I'm planning to share.
 - This week I attended.
 - #Fall Theological Conference.
 - *Of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod.
 - Our theme was:
 - #"Mission into the 21st Century."

-One of our presenters made this point:

#The church's mission is to bring God's gift of salvation to the world.

*Salvation is more than asking:

+ "Are you saved?"

+ "Do you know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior?"

+ "If you died tonight, would you go to heaven?"

=That's a piece of what we have to share.

=But only a piece.

-Probably not in those precise terms.

*Greek word for salvation means:

+ Save.

+ Heal.

+ Make whole.

*Hebrew word "shalom" means something similar.

+ Wholeness.

+ Completeness.

+ Well-being.

e. One of the questions I hope we will ask.

-Not just as an Evangelism Committee.

-But as a congregation.

"How can we be God's hands?"

* "To receive God's gift of wholeness."

* "To share it with others."

"How can we be living saints?"

* "Living by God's Ungolden Rules?"

+ Loving.

+ Doing good.

+ Blessing.

+ Praying.

+ Giving.

Concl: It begins here.

-At this altar.

#Where we are in communion.

*Not only with our Lord.

*But with all the saints.

#Where we open our hands.

*To receive the body and blood.

+Of the one who loves and blesses the world.

*So that we, in turn, might be God's hands.

+To love and bless the world.

=Living saints.

=Living by Ungolden Rules.

