

## HOW TO TREAT OTHERS

by John Isaac Edwards

Events that have captured the public eye underscore the need for all of us to learn how to treat others. The Bible gives practical instruction along this line. There were divers laws and ordinances in the Old Testament that dealt with one's treatment of others. Leviticus 19 is a good example. The New Testament also teaches us to be mindful of others (Phil. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:2; Jude 23). How are we to treat others?

**1) AS WE WOULD WANT TO BE TREATED.** Matthew 7:12, often called the Golden Rule, states: *“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them...”* Think how better this world would be, if everyone practiced this teaching! Proverbs 24:29 records, *“Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me...”* This is the spirit of vengeance, and vengeance belongs to God (Dt. 32:35; Ps. 94:1; Rom. 12:19).

**2) WITH LOVE.** The second commandment states: *“...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”* (Mt. 22:39). When a young man asked about eternal life, the Lord referred him to the commandments that were in force at the time, which included: *“...Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”* (Mt. 19:19). This goes

back to Leviticus 19:18 when the Lord said, *“...thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself...”* Paul taught, *“For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”* (Rom. 13:9-10). The word “love” is to have a preference for, wish well to, and regard the welfare of. Even our enemies are to be treated with love (Mt. 5:43-46).

**3) WITH HONOUR.** Peter penned, *“Honour all men....”* (1 Pet. 2:17). The meaning is to have in honor, to revere, venerate. Romans 12:10 says, *“...in honour preferring one another.”* We would do well to remember the principle of Romans 13:7: *“...honour to whom honour.”* There are many to whom honor is due: those in authority (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:17), father and mother (Eph. 6:2), widows (1 Tim. 5:3), elders (1 Tim. 5:17), masters (1 Tim. 6:1), husbands and wives (Eph. 5:33; 1 Pet. 3:7), and the list goes on. Such a disposition requires a spirit of humility and subjection

as Peter said, *“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble”* (1 Pet. 5:5).

**4) WITH COMPASSION.** This is seen in the account of the good Samaritan as he *“...had compassion on...”* the man who fell among thieves *“...And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him”* (Lk. 10:30-37). To have compassion is to be moved as to one's bowels, to have the bowels yearn (for the bowels were thought to be the seat of love and pity). This Samaritan certainly exemplified the spirit of Christ. When Jesus saw the widow of Nain, *“...he had compassion on her...”* and delivered the young man to his mother (Lk. 7:11-15). We ought to do all that we can whenever and wherever we can to help whoever we can along life's journey.

**5) WITH KINDNESS AND COURTESY.** *“Charity...”*, or love, *“...is kind...”* (1 Cor. 13:4). Paul told the Ephesians, *“And be ye kind one to another...”* (Eph. 4:32). Colossians 3:12 teaches,

*“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness...”* 1 Peter 3:8 says, *“...be courteous.”*

“Common courtesy” doesn’t seem to be so common anymore. Saying thank you, holding the door for someone behind you, offering someone your seat, saying goodbye when you leave, listening to someone speak without interrupting them, throwing your garbage in a bin, putting your phone down, letting someone in front of you, and the like — politeness that people can usually be expected to show— where has common courtesy gone?

**6) WITH IMPARTIALITY.**

There is no respect of persons with God (Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:11). Neither should there be with me! James 2:1-9 shows that to show respect of persons is to commit sin. I should not expect any special treatment because of the color of my skin (red, yellow, black or white), how rich or poor I am, the level of my education, and so on. Recognize that all men and women are made in the image of God and bleed the same (Gen. 1:26-27; Acts 17:26).

**7) WITH PATIENCE.** The

language in the account of the unforgiving servant well expresses, *“Have patience with me...”* (Mt. 18:26, 29). I need you to have patience with me, and there may be times when you will want me to have patience with you. Patience is the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset. Other words that ought to characterize us include *“forbearing”* (Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:13) and *“longsuffering”* (Gal. 5:22; 1 Cor. 13:4).

**8) WITH FORGIVENESS.** Live long enough and, more than likely, you will be trespassed against and you will trespass against another. We all need forgiveness! The model prayer teaches: *“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors....For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”* (Mt. 6:12, 14-15). When Peter asked, *“Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but,*

*Until seventy times seven”* (Mt. 18:21-35). Remember Jesus’ example? One of His last utterances on the cross was, *“Father, forgive them...”* (Lk. 23:34).

When it comes to how to treat others, may we set the example. *“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Mt. 5:13-16).

***“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”***

***Philippians 2:4***

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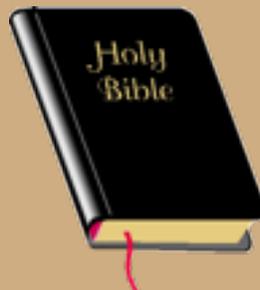
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