



**Orthodox Mission of the  
Entrance of the Theotokos  
into the Temple**

**306 W. Main Street  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727**

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***The Golden Rule***  
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**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

**Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!**

*And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. (Luke 6:31)*

This lesson comes up for us to ponder twice a year: once from the Sermon on the Mount in the early weeks of the cycle of St. Matthew, and then again in the early weeks of the cycle of St. Luke. And every time it comes up, I think, “What more can be said about it?” This is the most basic teaching of all teachings of how we should live. It is a simple guideline for the behavior of a Christian.

And yet it must be admitted that of all the teachings we hold dear in our faith, this is the one that people have the most difficult time with. It is far easier to do as we want for the sake of our own well-being than it is to show concern for the well-being of others, especially for those whom we think of as belonging on the outside. Multitudes of people, for example, line up on the borders of our country wanting to come in, to share the great wealth that we have as a nation. According to this teaching of Jesus Christ, we should welcome them with open arms; we should show mercy to them. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” And yet, we do not. The political parties haggle about it. One party muddles about, hoping to find favor with this or that segment of their voting base as the people languish at our borders; another

strictly opposes their entrance into our overly rich nation, because they want to preserve it all for themselves.

Again, there is the prevalent notion in our land at the moment that we must preserve our personal freedom at any cost. This is shared by people in both political parties, even though they apply it differently, depending on what selfish behaviors they want to follow. Absolute self-service is alive and well to the exclusion of the well-being of others in every political corner of our land. One group wants absolute freedom to kill unborn children for the sake of convenience, while an opposing group wants absolute freedom to prevent the protection of others from the COVID virus. Both groups have rejected the Golden Rule for the sake of self service, because both groups have rejected Christ.

The truth is that we cannot follow the Golden Rule unless we are grounded in faith in the One Lord, Jesus Christ. Otherwise, the Golden Rule will simply be a principle for those who are losers, as one of our past political leaders liked to describe those who did not support him. "Losers and winners." Losers are supposedly those who are unable or unwilling to prevail in the great competition of natural selection or economic prosperity; winners are supposedly those who succeed in forcing through their own way, in prevailing and acquiring wealth, even at the expense of others. According to this way thinking, losers are like sheep going to the slaughter; winners are those who slay. But these principles of absolute self-service for any and all personal desires are not the way of the Lord Jesus. The way of the Lord Jesus is to treat others as we would be treated ourselves.

The Golden Rule is a simple, direct and clear path for those who are of Christ. It cannot and will not be followed by those who reject Christ. We need to be clear: When we see any action of self-service without regard for mercy, sharing, charity and service to others, it is not of Christ. Thus, we Christians stand with Him, the One Who accepts the weak, the poor, the suffering, the invalid, the dependent, all those whom our own hateful political leaders consider to be losers. We are merciful even as He is merciful. We accept the sinner, even while we reject the sin. "Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain mercy! As you would be treated yourself, so treat others that way also." These are the simple, clear and direct principles followed by those who follow Christ. Those who do not seek to follow them quite simply reject Him, the One Who lived and taught us the way to Life Abundant.

Fr. Elias

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