



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

306 W. Main Street Emmitsburg,
MD 21727

<http://EntranceMission.org>

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The Law of Love
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Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In today's Gospel lesson, Christ instructs us on the Golden Rule: "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise." Or another way to say this is "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Many other religious traditions have a similar rule but in the negative. In the Book of Tobit, among the Jews, the Stoics, Confucius, you can find something along the lines of "Do not do unto others what you would not have done unto you." But Christ goes further than this: he teaches us to *do* unto others as you would have them do unto you. We act out our faith. When we see a beggar on the street, we give them money. When we see someone who has fallen, we pick them up. When we see someone who is hurt, we help them out. We do this just as Christ does it to us. We are beggars, and He gives us food. We are fallen, and He picks us up. We are hurt, and He heals us. Christ does this for us. And just as He does it for us, we do it for others.

This is a jewel of our faith. We don't let love simmer in us as a feeling, just as the dinner I ate last night simmered in my stomach. We proclaim and share our love with others.

Who are we to share our love with? Christ tells us explicitly in today's lesson. Not only are we to love those who love us and do good to those who do good to us; we are to love our enemies! How difficult this can seem! Not only are we to love them, but we are also to do good to them, lend to them, and hope for nothing in return. Just ponder on that for one minute. In my personal life, when I do a favor for someone at work who is not my enemy, and after the favor they go about their business without thanking me, I am quick to hold a grudge against them. But this is not the way we are to be. We are called to be different, holy, set apart from the ways of the world.

How do we become this way? How do we get to the point where we do good to others, love our enemies, lend without hoping for anything in return? By the Grace of God. Iron, when it is put into a fire, takes on the properties of the fire. It shines and becomes hot to the touch. When we commune with God through prayer, participate in the Liturgy, partake of the Sacraments, we are immersing ourselves into God like the iron when immersed into the fire. By communing with God, we become more godlike. And when we become more godlike, we will naturally be the kind of person who loves our enemies. For now, while sin is still a part of our lives, it may take more effort to love our enemies or lend without hoping for anything in return. But by the Grace of God, we can do this.

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