

Here is the new commandment given to us by Jesus:

I give you a new commandment:  
love one another.

*As I have loved you, so you also should  
love one another.*

John 13: 34-35

This is different from the Golden Rule. As I see it, following the “Golden Rule” does not necessarily make you a Christian. Most religions of the world have the equivalent. I am going to list some for you below. You can certainly find the Golden Rule in the Old Testament. Leviticus 19:18.

Christ gave his followers a higher standard. Loving someone as Christ loved you is not the same as loving someone as you love yourself. It requires more. It is unconditional and sacrificial.

Think about this difference and decide whether you are a "Christian", whether you can accept the challenge to be a Christian (Christianity is not for the faint-hearted...) and how you might be a better Christian today and always.

**Questions for reflection:**

What implications does this “new commandment” have for you? How do you need to change your life to be a better Christian?

How does it affect the way you love? How does it affect the way you forgive?

What behaviors or traits keep you from loving others as Christ loved you?

Does pride keep you from loving others fully and unconditionally?

What one thing can you do to be more like Christ?

Think of one person you need to love "more" and decide to do it.

## **So, are you a Christian?**

### **The Golden Rule**

Here it is in its many permutations: that which is commonly known as The Golden Rule.

#### **Baha'I Faith**

“Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you; and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.”

Baha'ullah, Gleanings

'And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou choolest for thyself.' Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

#### **Buddhism**

Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

The Buddha, Udana-Varga 5.18. '...a state that is not pleasing or delightful to me, how could I inflict that upon another?' Samyutta Nikaya v. 353

#### **Christianity**

'Do to others whatever you would have them do to you.' Jesus, Matthew 7:12

“Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 19:19; 22:39) (Mark 12:31)

(Luke 10:27) Romans (13:9) (James 2:8)

#### **Confucianism**

One word which sums up the basis of all good conduct...loving-kindness.

Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself. Confucius,

Analects 15.23. 'Tse-kung asked, 'Is there one word that can serve as a principle of conduct for life?' Confucius replied, 'It is the word 'shu' --

reciprocity. Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire."  
Doctrine of the Mean 13.3

### **Hinduism**

'One should not behave towards others in a way which is disagreeable to oneself. This is the essence of morality. All other activities are due to selfish desire.' - Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva, 113.8

### **Humanism**

'Humanists affirm that individual and social problems can only be resolved by means of human reason, intelligent effort, critical thinking joined with compassion and a spirit of empathy for all living beings. ' Principles of Humanism,' Humanist Association of Canada. 'Don't do things you wouldn't want to have done to you.'" British Humanist Society.

### **Islam**

Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself. The Prophet Muhammad's Hadith

### **Jainism**

'In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self.' Lord Mahavira, 24th Tirthankara

### **Judaism**

'Love thy neighbour as thyself.'" Leviticus 19:18 "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary.'" Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a

### **Sikhism**

I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all. Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1299

### **Sufism**

'The basis of Sufism is consideration of the hearts and feelings of others. If you haven't the will to gladden someone's heart, then at least beware lest you hurt someone's heart, for on our path, no sin exists but this.' Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, Master of the Nimatullahi Sufi Order.

**Taoism**

Regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain, and your neighbour's loss as your own loss. Lao Tzu, T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien, 213-218. 'The sage has no interest of his own, but takes the interests of the people as his own. He is kind to the kind; he is also kind to the unkind: for Virtue is kind. He is faithful to the faithful; he is also faithful to the unfaithful: for Virtue is faithful.' Tao Teh Ching, Chapter 49

And my favorite:

**Yoruba (Nigeria):**

'One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts.'