

The Golden Rule Essay Contest.

WB Leopoldo Boquiren
First Honorable Mention

In any language, race, or religion, the Golden Rule to do unto others what we expect others to do unto us is essentially the same. Humanity is so constituted that the thoughts and sentiments of one race sound similar in cast with another, regardless of a difference in culture. Morally, all people are beholden to one another; and whatever would cause injury to a person would likewise tend to damage another in like circumstances. Man is basically a self-centered creature; he desires protection for his own self and his family and the esteem of others. In this regard, he obeys an unwritten code among his own kind, devised in such a way to protect himself and in turn to protect the others from his own hand. The Golden Rule is therefore an unwritten law of reciprocity — a tacit agreement between two beings not to molest each other — and designed to insure mutual protection within the tribe.

Since the Golden Rule is fundamentally a moral injunction, capable of expression in a few words, it was not found necessary by the world's lawmakers to render it into a formal legal enactment. The Rule as it is framed was not supposed to regulate external conduct, define a contractual obligation, or enforce a certain right in favor of a person. It is strictly a matter of conscience; an injunction addressed to the inner man; a moral undertaking. And because of its peculiarity as a moral commandment, the business of expressing it or enjoining its usage was confined for a time to certain religious congregations. Thus

Masons Implementing the Golden Rule

some of the world's greatest and oldest religions, Brahmanism and Confucianism, for instance, had it in their systems in some form or another.

A comprehensive research on some of the world's great religious' teachings will show the universality of the Golden Rule in any age or clime. Different versions of the Rule culled from their bibles or sacred books prove the same idea; thus: —

1. *Brahmanism*: This is the sum of duty: do naught upon others which cause pain if done to you. (*Bhagavad-Gita*)
2. *Buddhism*: Hurt no others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. (*The Sutras*)
3. *Confucianism*: Is there one maxim which ought to be acted upon throughout one's life? Surely it is the maxim of loving-kindness: do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you. (*Analects of Confucius*)
4. *Taoism*: Regard your neighbor's gain as your gain, and your neighbor's loss as your loss. (*Tao Teh King*)
5. *Zoroastrianism*: That nature alone is good which refrains from doing unto another whatsoever is not good for itself. (*Zend Avesta*)
6. *Judaism*: What is hurtful to you, do not to your fellow human; that is the entire law, all the rest is commentary. (*Bible; Old Testament*)
7. *Islam*: None of you is a believer

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until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself. (Koran)

8. *Christianity*: All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. (Matthew, 7; 12, New Testament)

It is a tribute to the wisdom and foresight of our Masonic founders that they had adopted and incorporated the maxim of the Golden Rule with the Laws governing our Order. Without it the principle and practice of Brotherhood would have become meaningless. For one could not enjoin or enforce brotherhood without the concept of the Golden Rule informing its substance. Indeed, to regard your fellow man as a brother, one must needs treat him as you would want him or others to treat you likewise. This is paramount. And Masons, who address each other as brother, as some religions do, must of necessity apply the Golden Rule as a measure for determining the worth of this principle. With them the Rule is a synonym for brotherhood.

Since the Golden Rule counsels each man, and particularly, the Mason, to think only of the best side of his neighbor's character, it behooves him to extend its practice over a wide circle. This will help foster understanding and goodwill among all mankind. If all men, say all races and nationalities, would only observe the Rule in their own hearts, what a great difference it would make! Then, wars would end; international conflicts shall be resolved; crimes against persons and property would decrease; and social problems, like poverty and hunger, would be minimized. It is laudable, therefore, that Masonry which considers brotherhood as an article of faith should endeavor to implement and practice the Golden Rule as a way of life throughout the

world.

In order to do this simple but truly difficult task, our Masonic leaders must take the initiative and devise a program that would arouse the whole world towards the observance of the Golden Rule. Today, men seem to have forgotten the import of the Rule in their daily lives; as witnessed by the mounting cases of violence and crimes in cities and towns. Inversely, the "golden rule" now seems to be: each man for himself and damn the other fellow's feelings! Unbridled egoism seems to be the order of the day in all strata of human society. And into this sorry picture, shall Masonry step forth and bravely light its little candle in the frightening darkness.

But how shall it proceed to perform this herculean task? I propose the following means as a mode of operations, to wit:

1. Masonry shall endeavor to convince the leaders of the world, through the United Nations, if possible, to set up a "Golden Rule Observance Week" as a distinct reminder to all men to practise it in their daily lives; and

2. It shall promulgate a set of commandments, explaining the practice and implementation of the Rule to fit any situation in human life.

The first method would not seem far-fetched and impossible if we consider the fact that from time to time the Pope at Rome decrees a week of holy prayer and fasting to remind the faithful of their obligations towards the Church. But inasmuch as Masonry is not a religious body and cannot set aside a prayer-week for the observance of its members, it can however remind the latter and mankind in general to observe the Golden Rule by providing a week for its remembrance. And since the Rule as pointed above is strictly a moral injunction, why could it not influence the

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world's leaders without infringing on their religious and political sentiments?

However, with respect to the second method, the chore of promulgating a series of commandments embodying and amplifying the Golden Rule would not be a difficult task to accomplish. Indeed, the idea of "breaking up" the Rule into several components to provide a better interpretation for men, faced with various critical situations in life, is a meritorious one. This would make the effort of following the Rule easier. For all its worth, therefore, the author has provided the following in answer to this need for the consideration of his Masonic brethren: —

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF THE GOLDEN RULE:

1. Look upon every man as your blood-brother, whom you would not cause any harm either physically or morally.
2. Regard every man's family as you would your own, to preserve and cherish till the end.
3. Speak of a man with honor and goodwill in the same way as you would wish others to speak about you in the company of your betters.

4. Consider every man as an end in himself and not as a means to an end for your own self.
5. Be thy brother's keeper: his welfare shall become thy welfare and his loss shall be the measure of thy loss.
6. See, hear, and speak no evil of any man, unless it shall be for his own good and for humanity's sake.
7. Desire no harm to befall any man as you would desire others to desire you no harm in any way.
8. In all cases, work for a man as you would work for your own interests if you were your own master.
9. Seek no advantage or profit in any dealing with any man, which you realize would cause injury to his business if you were in his own place.
10. Above all, act as if the mode of your behavior were to become the general rule of action for all men everywhere.

With these two proposed methods above, the author fondly hopes that Masonry shall have the chance to implement and promote the practice of the Golden Rule throughout the world in this our time. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished. △



In the Grand Lodge

MW Mariano Q. Tinio, Grand Master, and his party left for Sorsogon, Sorsogon on August 18, 1967 to be present at the annual district convention of Dist. 13. The thirteenth district, made up of Isarog Lodge #35, Bulusan Lodge #38, Mayon Lodge #61 and Camarines Norte Lodge #107, had a successful convention in the capital town of Sorsogon province, whose governor is a Brother of the

Craft, Gov. Juan Frivaldo.

The airstrip in Sorsogon, being temporarily out of commission, the Grand Master and his party flew to Legaspi City at which place they were met by a delegation and driven down to Sorsogon. The two-day convention was scheduled as follows: Aug. 18, registration of delegates and seminar on Lodge Administration; Aug.

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