

What Ever Happened to the Golden Rule?

Immigration — Part 2

Steve Berger February 18, 2018

Review — Kingdom Ethics or Cultural Evils?

- Golden Rule is summary of entire Sermon on the Mount
- Golden Rule is summary of law and prophets — **bespeaks its importance**
- Golden Rule isn't unique to Jesus — it was historically *defensive* — He made it *offensive*!

Today — *continue to investigate a hot button, controversial issue that is at the forefront of American politics — and its surprising connection to the Golden Rule — Immigration — I know and believe Kingdom Ethics should shape our **personal opinions** and **national policy** as much as possible.*

Disclaimer

- these biblical principles don't map over perfectly for our contemporary day — there are many issues we could benefit from in developing our own opinions, as well as crafting immigration reform.
- **DO NOT HEAR ME SAY THIS IS THE END-ALL TO IMMIGRATION ISSUES!**
- **DO HEAR ME SAY THAT IF THE SPIRIT OF THESE SEVEN PRINCIPLES WERE APPLIED TO OUR IMMIGRATION PROBLEM, WE WOULD BE MUCH BETTER OFF!**

My Study

- Studied every verse and its surrounding context of the words:
Strangers Foreigners Sojourners Aliens Pilgrim

Interesting

- **all the verses seemed to fall under 7 categories**
1) Understanding 2) Conversion 3) Assimilation 4) Justice 5) Generosity 6) Accountability 7) Love

More Interesting

- 4 of the 7 would be embraced more favorably by both political parties
- seek a balance — a compromise of our favorites in order to achieve a balanced whole
- **there's enough here to make most everyone nervous or mad!**

Last week — first three of seven biblical principles of immigration

• Understanding

• Exodus 23:9

Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

- don't treat others how you hated to be treated; put yourselves in others shoes, have some understanding!

• Conversion

• Numbers 15:15-16

One ordinance shall be for you of the assembly and for the stranger who dwells with you, an ordinance forever throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. One law and one custom shall be for you and for the stranger who dwells with you.

- **Assimilation**

- **Deuteronomy 31:12-13**

Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.

- stranger must hear, learn, carefully observe all the law – conversion so real it's practical!

TODAY – 4) accountability 5) justice 6) generosity/compassion/charity 7) love

Accountability

- Immigrants are accountable to uphold the values, laws, and ways of the country. Break the law, pay the penalty
 - Last week at the State of the Union Address in D.C., there were illegal immigrants brought in as guests of congress – not a good message

- **Deuteronomy 29:9-13**

Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do. All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones and your wives—also the stranger who is in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water— that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today, that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and that He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

***Application** – the stranger in your camp—enter covenant and oath with God (in a theocracy), become His people, He'll become your God, being accountable to Him... in Leviticus 24:16, accountability for blasphemy is applied to citizens and strangers alike! In USA, accountable to laws of our land (Constitution, Bill of Rights, etc.).*

Justice

- once conversion, assimilation and accountability happen—there must be Justice—fairness, equality for the immigrant
- **Leviticus 19:33-35**

And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume.

 - justice, love, understanding

***Application** – no double standard, no oppression, no discrimination, no mistreating—Golden Rule!*

- **Deuteronomy 27:19**

Cursed is the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

- **Ezekiel 22:6-7, 29**

Look, the princes of Israel: each one has used his power to shed blood in you. In you they have made light of father and mother; in your midst they have oppressed the stranger; in you they have mistreated the fatherless and the widow. The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.

- **Tragic** – mistreatment, oppression, of factory workers—illegals or not—injustice is wrong!

Generosity/Compassion/Charity

- providing for the immigrant, giving a hand up!
- **Deuteronomy 24:17-22**

You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment as a pledge. But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing. When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.

 - justice, understanding, generosity, understanding
- **Leviticus 25:47**

Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich...

 - **Love it** — God's principles allow opportunities for prosperity for immigrants!

Love

- loving neighbor as self, doing unto others, all law and prophets!
- **Leviticus 19:34**

The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.
- **Deuteronomy 10:17-19**

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Application — *love the stranger because God does, love stranger as self, as you'd want to be loved!*

Final Passage

- **Matthew 25:31-40**

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

 - church does well with the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, imprisoned

Application — *if the church in the USA started taking in the stranger (Jesus) according to God's principles of immigration, it would benefit the country and the immigrant. As long as we continue with one-sided, our way or no way—the dangerous will continue to break in, and the deserving will continue to merely want it—the dangerous will destroy, and the deserving will be deprived...how sad.*

Lots to consider...

**Understanding, Conversion, Assimilation, Justice, Generosity, Accountability, Love
...lets give these priority in our personal opinions and national policies!**

Discussion Questions —

... from Pastor Steve to consider in personal opinions and national policies...

- 1.** What about children brought here illegally, not their fault, this is all they've known, they are contributors, not criminals?
- 2.** What about securing the borders, building a wall, keeping criminals and drugs out?
- 3.** What about a one-time pathway to citizenship or legal status for those who are not criminals, who have converted and assimilated as much as we've allowed, learned the language, paid taxes ITIN, passed citizenship tests, repaid part or all of drain they've been on the system, productive part of society, want to be here more than anything?
- 4.** What rights for those who have come illegally yet receive legal status? No voting? No welfare until certain time?
- 5.** What role could the church, non-profits take in shouldering some of the costs because we see it as our God-given mandate?

Before the Throne

Wednesday

March 14th 6:30 p.m.

Sanctuary