

a religion of rules at all, it is a religion of principles. The man who makes his religion consist of a burdensome catalogue of 'thou shalts' and 'thou shalt nots,' and who, by thus shutting himself up in a case of his own manufacture, leaves the Spirit of God no room to work upon his individuality, has yet to learn the meaning of Christianity. He has mistaken the true religion for spiritual slavery. He has yet to learn the meaning of that glorious liberty about which Paul and James love so much to talk. No, do not make any mistake here; Christianity knows nothing about rules; in the place of specific rules and precepts it acts forth the great ends with reference to which we must shape our conduct, the motives which should actuate us, and within these bounds it leaves us for the most part to the guidance of our own enlightened consciences. It seeks, in short, to mould the motives of action in such a way that the Christian shall be a law unto himself, and shall perform his duties spontaneously, as it were, and not under a feeling of legal restraint. This is Christianity.

The Christian then performs his duties in the fullest exercise of Christian liberty—at least he should do so. And here the golden rule comes in as a principle of conduct. You see its proper position in the realm of Christian life I trust. True, it is a moral principle, but I repeat that while Christianity may not

be morality there can be no Christianity without morality. To hold that the man who backbites, who slanders his neighbor, who is unable to forgive his enemy, who is destitute of brotherly love—to hold that such a man is a Christian is simply a contradiction of terms,—it is a delusion which will lead its victim into the pit of hell. If, my brother, you pray, read the bible, attend the sanctuary, sit down at the Lord's table, talk about religion to every one you meet, and then go away and act unjustly, dishonestly, uncharitably, trifling with what your conscience tells you is your plain duty to your fellow-man—if you do this and think at the same time that you are a Christian, then I say, with all the earnestness of which I am capable, you are simply deceiving yourself, and the sooner you awaken from your sleep of death the better. If a Christian, strive to govern yourself by the Christian rule "whatever ye would that man should do to you, do ye even so to them."

And now my hearers you have the Christian law of equity, the 'golden rule.' You know its meaning. Let me ask you in closing, are you ready to take it as a governing principle in your life? Are you ready to make your own desires and expectations the standard by which you will determine your conduct to others? It seems a very simple thing, but are you ready to do it? Are