

word, we are equal, and therefore our obligations are equal and our duties mutual.

The golden rule then rests on a foundation which has no alternative; its philosophy is sound; anything else than this rule indeed would be unphilosophical as well as opposed to common sense.

Now a word or two on the proper application of this important principle. A moment's reflection will show you that to interpret and apply it literally, apart from the guidance of common sense, and without any limitations, would at once land us in endless difficulties. For example a man might wish me to give him all my property; would he have a right therefore to conclude that he was under obligations to give me his? Now in answer to this and many similar questions which might arise, we may say that it is at once evident that the expectations and desires which we should take as the standard in applying this rule should be lawful and reasonable. Otherwise our desires might be most extravagant and our notion of duty most unreasonable. When Christ said "Whatsoever things ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them," he simply meant whatsoever things you expect from others consistently with common sense and reason, give the same to them.

Again, the differences in the stations and characters of men must be taken

into account in the application of this rule, because in proportion to these diversities in that proportion are our respective duties. For example, I have no right to expect that the king must render the same submission to me as I am obliged to render to him. I must suppose our positions reversed, and thus do unto him what I would expect him to do unto me were I king and he the subject. If you are a master the rule does not imply that you must perform the same obligations to your servant as you expect your servant to perform to you; it simply means that you must do unto him what you would expect him to do unto you were you the servant and he the master. The conduct which is proper towards me in my station may not perhaps be proper towards another man in his station—what is the rule? The rule is for me to suppose myself in his position and he in mine, and then the respect and consideration I would expect from him I must give to him.

So much then for the proper application of this important rule. To sum up in one sentence: It must be interpreted and applied with certain limitations—limitations which bring it into accord with the laws of right reason and the great principles of our Christian religion.

Here then is the Christian rule of equity—here is Christianity as opposed to heathenism. Heathenism says "Do