

God Will Do To Us What We Do To Others

By Vic Zarley

I want to share a story that happened to a minister, Pastor Ken Gaub. His life has been devoted to sharing the Gospel around the world. Several years ago he was traveling with his family through Dayton, Ohio on I-75 in their bus when one of the kids asked if they could get a pizza. They pulled off the freeway and drove into a randomly selected fast food area. The rest of the family went in to eat but Ken did not feel like eating right then. He was feeling somewhat in despair about his ministry—and life purpose in general, and he cried out to God, “Am I doing the right thing telling people about You, Lord? I need a sign, God.”

He decided to stretch his legs by walking over to a Dairy Queen where he bought a soft drink. Heading back to the bus, he heard a pay phone ringing and wondered why the people manning the service station nearby weren’t answering it. It rang and rang. Finally, out of curiosity, he answered it.

“Hello,” he said.

“Long distance call for Ken Gaub,” said an operator.

He nearly choked on his drink. “You’re crazy,” he responded without thinking.

“Is Ken Gaub there?” the operator persisted.

He thought it might be Candid Camera so he quickly ran his fingers through his hair. But no camera crew came.

“I was just walking by when I heard the pay phone ringing—and I picked it up,” Ken said, trying to understand what was happening.

“Is Ken Gaub there?” asked the operator.

“I’m Ken Gaub,” he finally said, still making no sense of this ordeal.

“Yes, operator” chimed in a third voice, “that’s Ken. I recognize his voice.” The operator hung up. “I’m Millie from Pennsylvania and I need your help.” She began weeping. “I was about to commit suicide and I was telling God I really didn’t want to do that. Then I thought if I could just talk to that nice, understanding TV minister, he could help. As I finished with the request, some numbers began coming into my mind and I wrote them down. I thought, wouldn’t it be wonderful if I had a miracle from God and he gave me your number? Are you in your California office?”

Ken responded, “No. I don’t have a California office. My headquarters are in Yakima, Washington.”

“Where are you, then?” she probed.

“I’m in a phone booth in Dayton, Ohio,” Ken eventually confessed.

Ken, still baffled by this call, began praying for the wisdom to help this lady and felt the Holy Spirit fill up the phone booth as God gave Him exactly what he needed to say to her.

When Ken’s wife returned to the bus, after eating, Ken told her the story and proclaimed joyfully to her, “Barb, God knows where I am.”

There can be no doubt that God orchestrated Ken's encounter with Millie. Only God would know the phone number of a phone booth near a randomly selected fast food area in Dayton, Ohio. Let's look at how this story relates to Matthew 7:2.

When Pastor Gaub was feeling low, God miraculously had him encounter a lady who was about to commit suicide so that the pastor could help minister to her. God set it up so that Pastor Gaub could give the help that he, himself, needed and as he gave the love and assurance to Millie, God gave love and assurance to him. God gave to him what he gave to Millie in a perfect example of the truth of Matthew 7:2.

As we look around us, here in this fallen world, the law found in Matthew 7:2 (God will do to you what you do to others) does not seem to be active. There are many people, we might say, who do not seem to reap what they sow. In other words, it appears, people seem to get away with murder. But, since God's Word is true, we may need to reconsider our observations. Is it possible that people may reap what they sow in the afterlife? Of course we can't really answer that. But I know in my heart that God wants us to live, trusting that Matthew 7:2 is true. In doing so, we will encourage others to come to Christ because we are behaving in a Christ-like manner by doing to others only the best because that is the way we want God to treat us.

Three guys died and were greeted at the pearly gates by St. Peter. "Why should I let you in?" Peter asked the first guy.

"I'm a doctor and I helped a lot of people."

"Ok, come on in." Turning to the next guy, Peter asked, "Why should I let you in?"

"I'm a lawyer and I helped a lot of people."

"Ok, come on in." Turning to the last guy, he asked, "Why should I let you in?"

"I worked for an HMO and I helped save our company lots of money with regard to medical procedures."

"I see," said St. Peter. "Okay, you can come in—but you can only stay three days."

Will God do to us what we do to others even in the afterlife? For those who don't know it, HMOs (medical insurance companies) frequently only allow you to stay in the hospital for three days.

Again, we'll never know, by appearances, how Matthew 7:2 in the Word is true but we can be assured that it is true because it is in God's Word. Exactly how God divvies to us what we do to others remains a mystery because we can't always see God divvying out what we are doing to others. It is especially hard, if not impossible, to witness God divvying out to others what they have done to you. But this is not where God wants us to focus.

The Bible has supplied us with highly pertinent information at Matthew 7:2 "God will be as hard on you as you are on others! He will treat you exactly as you treat them." (Contemporary English Version) Let's think, for a while, on the ramifications of that truth. In addition consider the Golden Rule found at Luke 6:31, "And as you would like and desire that men would do to you, do exactly so to them." (Amplified). This needs to be considered in our thinking because it is a counterpoint to Matthew 7:2. Both of these truths, if they were taken seriously, could lead to our peace of mind, increased joy, and a lighter, less cumbersome path while we reside on this earth. And not because we'd have a life with fewer problems. It would be because we would know that by our forgiveness of

others, we will be forgiven (per God's promise). This knowledge should make us all eager to forgive, and less likely to hold grudges.

So, if others are consistently cranky with us, could there dwell, deep inside our hearts, a demon of crankiness? If God does to us what we do to others, this COULD be the case. Please remember, however, whether they are reflecting our crankiness or not, we must comply with the Golden Rule and not do to them what they are doing to us.

If we maintain that all is well with us, but others are extremely rebellious and are desperately in need of God's adjusting and correcting, we are obsessing on a path of never-ending frustration. Our responsibility lies only in OUR OWN acceptance of the truth, as stated in the Word. We do not need a life of endless frustration, now, do we? We know that Jesus removes our burdens as we give them to Him. By our forgiveness of other people's trespasses, then, Jesus, dwelling within makes our yoke easy and our burden light.

If we extend the principle of Matthew 7:2, when we believe that others are always in need of God's adjustment, we will, then, always be under scrutiny and be needing God's adjustment (because Scripturally God will do to us what we do to others). God wants all infestation removed from our hearts so that we can be Christ-like, drawing more to Him. Therefore, even our rebellious and obsessing thoughts about others needing adjustment MUST be given up or God will continue to send the tormentors who insist that WE are rebellious and need God's adjustment. Where do they get that crazy idea? How can people be so mean to us? we wonder. We're innocent of that type of behavior, we'll exclaim.

Sometimes WE don't even know that this Matthew 7:2 principle is active. But, like the law of gravity or the law of reaping and sowing, it is quite active all the time. Can we be open minded enough to consider that if there is a significant trend of negative assaults on us, that God IS trying to tell us something? Is it possible, hidden in the depths of our hearts, hidden even from ourselves, there is a demon of crankiness, or a demon of rudeness, or a demon of bitterness? If we have tried all kinds of worldly bug spray to eliminate all the people and conditions that seem to "bug" us, perhaps it is time to try the heavenly bug spray (the only spray that really works) forgiveness—for forgiveness is not really for the people we forgive—it is for us. Why? If God does to us what we do to others, when we forgive, we will be forgiven. It is a law. It is scriptural. It is true. As we forgive from the deepest part of our hearts, it is just a matter of time that we can know our relief will come as others reflect the forgiveness we now consistently share.

Folks, the worldly bug spray does not work. Has getting away from people worked? No, more just come at us as if from out of the woodwork. Has fighting the people back worked? No, somehow they are even more clever than we are. They seem to be champions of mean-spiritedness. Has shunning them or trying to keep them out of our hearts and minds worked? No, because we, then, feel shunned and left-out as God continues to drive His point home. God will do to us what we do to others.

Now what can we do about this problem where others are always in need of God's adjustment? Trust. Can we trust that God is working with them, adjusting them and we do not need to help Him out on this. It is, in fact, our choosing to usurp God's work and "help" Him that is causing US to be criticized and put down. God may use us to help Him as we become very sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading, but we should never attempt to do God's work for Him. God gave us free will so we can choose to "be God"

and help Him if we feel we must. But He will invariably send tormentors in order to help us reconsider our position.

We must get humble with God and adjust our attitude so that we can, at last, hear the truth the Word is telling us. Our hearts need to get out of the driver's seat so that we can be "Altared" by God. I am using the word "Altar" here because we must get humble and down on our knees and let God know we are perplexed about other people's behavior, but we are willing for Him to look deep into OUR souls and make adjustments in us. We are willing to believe that if we drop our condemnation and criticism (even if the other party "justly deserves it," according to our perception), we are open to God's healing spirit soothing OUR souls. Is it worth it to us to try this? Why would God give us Matthew 7:2 unless he wanted us to use our free wills and apply it? Remember, this lesson is for the Christian willing to mature in Christ. Jesus already died for our sins. Our eternal salvation is assured as we accept this, however, our daily salvation is found only in following Jesus' teachings. He said He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

We must remember that OUR truth is that mean people need our adjustment. God's truth is, He wants us to love others as we love ourselves. Again, if we love others only if they are good to us or only if they obey us, then we have loved conditionally and will be loved conditionally. It is simple, isn't it? If we can grasp that what we give is what we receive, we will be on the road to a life of joy, not sorrow; peace not battles; love, not hate, or, worse, indifference. Why? Because we will know and apply Matthew 7:2 by giving to others what we want to receive because we will know that God gives to us what we give to others.

When we do this, will our life become all roses and sweet music? No. But when something bad happens to us, we will not be in a tizzy about it—we will be more at peace about it because we will be in compliance with God's will. Isn't this what we want? Can God's peace be a realizable goal for us? It certainly is something we can achieve without the need to control everyone around us and make them conform to our comfort needs and our "rules." God's peace IS achievable for us, but making other people conform to our rules and regulations and comfort may not be possible. Do we want to go for a peace that fails more times than it succeeds? Or do we want to go for lasting peace found only in conforming to Jesus' commands to love the meanies of the world unconditionally? This may seem hard to do but if you are living a life where, more times than not, people are constantly being mean and hurtful, perhaps there is something more that can be done. Perhaps we need no longer be victims of their meanness and hurtfulness. Perhaps there really IS victory which is found only in the Word and in following Jesus' commands to love.

If we claim to love people and even speak well of people but have threads of detestation running through our hearts, God knows the threads of detestation running through our hearts must be eliminated and has people express that to us in mighty uncomfortable ways. Because we are speaking well of people and never show how we really feel, we may even convince others to believe us when we say, "I never do anything wrong, but God keeps harassing and testing me by bringing different people into my life who seem to do nothing but irritate me. I don't deserve this treatment."

Of course we don't deserve this treatment. No one does. This is God's way of saying that He wants us to have a pure heart, not a heart that detests while we have only a surface façade that pretends all is well with our world and our perception of God's

children. Pretending isn't acceptable to God. He wants us to really love His children. And He, being our Almighty God, has set up the world in a way that will accomplish this goal. He has shared with us His secret in Matthew 7:2. He will do to us what we are doing to others. This will be understood by all Christians eventually. Everyone of us must take the Word seriously and resolve to follow Jesus by loving those who don't seem to deserve it.