

February 11, 2018
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THE PRIME DIRECTIVE MATTHEW 7

In the old Star Trek television shows in their various manifestations, the Star Fleet always had what they called the Prime Directive. It was that Star Fleet personnel must never interfere with the development of any planet's society. StarTrek.com had a poll asking which of the various Star Trek captains had the most respect for the Prime Directive. The winner was Jean Luc Picard by a landslide. In one episode Picard said, "The prime directive is not just a set of rules, it is a philosophy, and a very correct one. History has proven again and again that whenever mankind interferes with a less developed civilization, no matter how well intentioned that interference may be, the results are invariably disastrous."

There are some prime directives in real life. I coached some of Toby's hockey teams when he was a kid. I had a prime directive for the players on those youth hockey teams. Never try to clear the puck from our own end up the middle. Always clear it around the boards. For some reason kids had a tendency to try to get the puck out by firing it up the middle of the rink where invariably an opposing player would intercept it and be in position to have a good scoring opportunity. A prime directive for quarterbacks in football is never throw late down the middle. Such throws almost always end up being intercepted. Doctors have a prime directive. It is "First, do no harm."

Wouldn't it be good if there was a prime directive for our lives, a philosophy of life, something we could always rely on to guide us? We all want to do whatever the right thing is, but that is not always clear. We need a prime directive to help us understand what the right thing is. It should not surprise us that Jesus actually gave us a prime directive. It is one we routinely forget and all too often fail to live by, but it is a brilliant principle that can help us know what we should do. As Picard said about Star Fleet's Prime Directive, whenever we fail to live by this prime directive the results are invariably disastrous. We will see this directive as we take a look at Matthew 7.

DON'T TRY TO BE SANTA CLAUS

The first 2 verses of Matthew 7 could be the national anthem of our culture. "Do not judge, or you too will be judged." The word "judge" might be the first five letter word ever to become a four letter word in our society, meaning in today's society "judge" has become a dirty word. The cardinal sin is to judge anyone for

anything. So these words from Jesus are much beloved in America today. This is our society's Prime Directive.

We all know that Santa Claus is making a list and checking it twice. He's going to find out who's naughty and nice. So Santa is looking at everyone, finding out whether they are being good or not and making a determination of whether they actually get a gift based on that evaluation. He is judging people! Who knew that Santa was such a terrible person? He's so judgmental! How dare he? I suspect in the near future Santa is going to become persona non grata for his incorrect behavior. Or more likely he will be morphed into some more tolerant form that entirely does away with that awful naughty or nice list.

Jesus warned against following Santa's example. Don't be making a list and checking it twice to find out who is naughty and who is nice. This sermon began with "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God." Do you think that people who are poor in spirit are going to mistake themselves for Santa Claus? Do you think they'll be judging people a lot? No way. The very act of judging someone else is a loud statement that you think you are better than they, thus you are clearly not poor in spirit.

This sermon is a frontal assault on the religious elite of Israel in Jesus' day. They thought they were doing it right, and they were accepted by God because they kept all of his rules. Paul thought like they did before his confrontation with the risen Lord Jesus. In Philippians 3:5-6 he said at one time he saw himself as, "A Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the Law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the Law, faultless." He thought he was faultless. He believed he kept the rules perfectly and never did even one thing wrong! If you have no flaws you have the ability and the right to point out the flaws of everyone else. Luke 18:9-12 gives a glimpse into that thinking. "To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable. 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get."'" He was sure he was faultless, not like others, totally holy, so he judged them big time.

That parabolic Pharisee was confident of his own righteousness and looked down on everyone else. Would you consider that being poor in spirit? His problem was exactly what Jesus described in Matthew 7:3. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

By the way, that is yet another example of Jesus' sense of humor. That's another joke, and it was a good one. He was funny! Think of the image of a guy with a 2 by 4 sticking in his eye pointing to a dust mote in someone else's eye. The Pharisees could look down on and judge people who might walk too far one Saturday thus violating the Sabbath. The Pharisee saw them as terrible sinners while failing to note that he himself had murderous hatred in his own heart toward Jesus, the most innocent man who had ever lived. They could spot the tiniest dust mote in someone else's eye from a mile away, but somehow couldn't see a log the size of a redwood tree in their own eye. In Luke 18:14 Jesus summed up that parable saying, "All those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

This proud judging thing has commonly been a problem for religion. Being the fastest draw in the west when it comes to judging is endemic among religious people, like me. A number of years ago we were on vacation and some friends from our church happened to be on vacation in the same area. Our stays there overlapped by just a day or two, so we wanted to get together. We made a plan to have dinner together. We agreed to drive to the condo where our friends were staying to connect with them, then we would all go to a restaurant together. We followed the directions to their condo, and as we drove up I could see our friend standing outside on the sidewalk by the street to make sure we would find the place. But he was talking to a guy I'd never seen before while he waited for us. As we got close I immediately recognized the situation. The guy was obviously a homeless person. I've been accosted by such people asking for money many times. I knew instantly that this guy was hitting up my friend for a handout. We parked our car then walked to meet up with our friend, just as the guy he was talking to left. When we got there, even though I knew the answer, I asked, "Who was that?" He said, "He's a Christian who lives up the street. He's walking to a Bible study. When he saw me standing out here he stopped to talk, hoping to tell me about Jesus. When he learned I was a believer he invited me to go to the Bible study with him." I was so quick to judge that guy just on the basis of looks, and I couldn't have been more wrong. It is common for religious people to be quite judgmental, but those who are truly poor in spirit will never judge anyone.

That message is music to the ears of people in our culture, for in our culture if you ever even hint that some way a person is living is wrong, they immediately cry "foul" and start yelling about how you are judging them. They will be deeply offended. But here's a tough question: is recognizing something is wrong the same as judging the person?

Notice what Jesus said in verse 6. “Do not give dogs what is sacred, do not throw your pearls to pigs.” That is commonly interpreted to mean don’t share Jesus’ good news with people who are utterly unwilling to listen. You’d be giving what is sacred to dogs. But isn’t calling people dogs or pigs about as judgmental as it gets? If that’s what Jesus meant that command would be a direct violation of what he had just said. Pharisees saw some people as dogs, but how could Jesus say something like that after saying “do not judge”?

I don’t believe that’s what Jesus meant at all. He’s not calling anyone a dog or a pig. I think he’s simply using vivid illustrations of a principle. The principle was “don’t be stupid.” Would you buy some fine jewels then go to the pig sty and say, “Hey, you guys look like a bunch of hogs, so I got something that will make you look a lot more spiffy.” Would you toss them some fine diamonds? Would you say, “Here, piggy, piggy, come get some nice gold jewelry? If you would do that, then you are as dumb as a box of rocks. Jewelry won’t help pigs look any better. And pigs could care less. They’re not interested in looking spiffy and they have exactly zero use for diamonds, so to do that would be really dumb.

We had a dog for almost 16 years and he was a great pet. His name was Luke. But he was a shameless beggar. He would do anything for table scraps. At meal times he would sit on a chair near our kitchen table hoping to be included in the meal. He was amazing. When we prayed before the meal he would bow his head as though he was also praying. Seeing that he obviously had faith, on Sundays when we had communion I would bring the elements home and have a brief communion service with him. Do you believe that? I hope not, because that would be idiotic. To give what is sacred to a dog is as stupid as stupid gets, because the dog has no clue what it’s about and could care less. He’d just be eager to eat the crackers because he is eager to eat anything. Jesus was saying “Don’t judge others, but in your not judging don’t be an idiot.”

In what way might we be idiotic? The kneejerk reaction to hearing “do not judge” is that we must never regard anything as wrong. And Jesus was saying “That’s idiotic.” He’s telling us to be humble, to not look down on people, to not judge them, to value them always and treat them all with respect and love regardless of who they are or what they do, but that doesn’t mean that we put our brains on a shelf and refuse to see that some things are wrong. In fact, it is an evil thing when we refuse to call evil that which is evil.

Though they are often not aware of it, people in our culture who are so vehemently opposed to judging, also know and act upon the fact that there is a difference

between judging and saying some actions are wrong. The very act of opposing judging is ironic. It is judging someone who judges! But even if they claim to never judge and to be opposed to judging, everyone in our culture identifies wrong and opposes it. Have you noticed the rush to judgment, the almost witch trial atmosphere right now, in regard to the sexual harassment and assault issue? If we take “do not judge” as a blanket rule that one must never identify something another person does as bad or wrong, shouldn’t those who are being pilloried merely because they make unwelcome sexual advances to women stridently and indignantly cry, “You’re judging me! Who are you to say my lifestyle choice is wrong?” No, they shouldn’t, because sexual harassment, assault or abuse is wrong, it is always wrong, and we know it. It’s not merely a lifestyle choice. And it is wrong to refuse to call it wrong, for that just promulgates more wrong and it devalues the victims of the wrong.

There is a movement among some in the church to immediately jump from “Do not judge” to “don’t ever call any action or lifestyle wrong.” In Jesus’ words, some people are rushing out to buy precious jewels to give to pigs. They’re being dumb, and it’s a dangerous dumb because it fosters destructive choices, actions and lives.

Observe that in verse 15 Jesus said “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.” Hey, isn’t that awfully judgmental? He’s saying what they’re doing is wrong! He’s calling people ferocious wolves. No, it’s not judgmental. It’s true. What those people teach is wrong, comes from impure motives, and it will destroy lives. Therefore it is important to identify evil when it is present and not pretend everything is just fine. To watch out for and reject false prophets requires that we use our judgment to determine right and wrong. We absolutely must not say “I don’t want to judge so I must accept everything.”

So to sum up, Jesus said, “Don’t judge, but don’t be brain dead either. When you see wrong, don’t pretend it is not wrong. Call it as it is. But be humble, gentle and respectful always, don’t condemn people, rather love and respect them no matter what they do.” To put it in a nutshell he say, “Do not judge, but use good judgment.”

BELIEVE IN GOD’S BENEVOLENCE

Jesus then teaches that we should ask God for what we need and believe that he will answer. Ask, and it will be given. Verses 9-10 is another one of those places that people miss the fact that Jesus was very funny. “Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a

snake?” Hey, Dad, I’m really hungry. Could I have some fish for dinner? Dad responds, “Sure, son, here you go,” and promptly plops down in front of him a plate with a writhing, hissing rattler on it.

This was a joke. In Jesus’ culture it would have been a real knee-slapper. That Jesus. He really cracks me up. But his humor got the point across. Any dad is going to give his son what he needs to eat. Don’t you think the Heavenly Father is at least as good as an average human dad? If so, then surely we can trust him to give us what we need if we ask.

This was not a promise that God is like some online vendor that you can order whatever you want from and he’ll send it on its way to you. He is not the Divine Amazon. Hey, maybe he’ll soon start using drones to answer prayers, right? No, that’s not what Jesus meant. This is a promise that God will provide what you need, not everything you might happen to ask for but what you need, if you ask. When my kids were young if I had felt bound to give them whatever they asked for we’d have gone bankrupt, our kids would have been a complete disaster, and they would have tried to live on ice cream, cake, doughnuts and candy. The Father provides what we need, not everything we ask for. But there is something odd about these verses I think we should pay attention to.

They seem out of place in the sermon. It seems like they should have come before verses 1-6. In chapter 6 Jesus had talked about how God provides for the birds and flowers. He said we shouldn’t worry about what we eat or wear because God would provide. Seek God’s kingdom and all the stuff we need will be given to us. It would make sense to put these verses right there where they would promise that if we ask, God will do what Jesus just said he would and provide. Then the whole judging thing would link up smoothly with the following verses where Jesus judged false prophets.

It could be that Jesus was a bit random in his speaking style at times and wasn’t concerned about logic in his rhetoric. Some of the ancient prophets would cycle through themes in a somewhat circular pattern, so maybe Jesus was doing the same thing. But he doesn’t typically do that in his speaking. Could there be another explanation? I believe there is, but I don’t see this commonly suggested in commentaries. So this is my interpretation, which clearly is not infallible. Nevertheless, I think it is correct. The problem is Jesus has just said we should not judge the way the Pharisees do, but that we also must still exercise good judgment.

The question that pops into mind is, how do we walk that fine line? How do we have a humble attitude and not judge people, but still stand against wrong when we see it? Jesus gives us two pieces of helpful instruction. First, ask, and God will give you what you need. Ask God to enable you to know how to walk that fine line, and he will show you how to do it. He will give you the wisdom to be humble, not judge people, but still recognize wrong when you see it. Second, live by the Golden Rule. Treat people the way you'd like to be treated and you'll do the right thing. Even if someone is, in fact, living in total violation of God's will, treat them as you would like to be treated, which is always going to be with kindness and respect and love.

TAKE THE HARD ROAD

Last year one time Laurie and I were driving up to the Newport Beach area. We looked at Google Maps and it showed us the two alternatives for getting there. One was to take the 5 to the 405, which goes right through Newport, and the other was the Toll Road, Highway 73. The 405 is free, the Toll Road you have to pay. So take the 405, right? Wrong. Google showed us that the 405 was solid red all the way, meaning it was doing a terrific imitation of a parking lot. The estimation was if we went that way we would arrive at our destination sometime around the year 2025. The Toll Road, meanwhile, was wide open and flowing freely.

They could have charged us a month's mortgage payment and I'd have been tempted to take that road anyway. Given that the toll is not much money that was an easy decision. Why take the tough road through gridlocked traffic when you can go the easy way? That's a no brainer. It's common sense. If you have a choice between a nice wide, easy road, and a congested, narrow and difficult one, you take the wide road.

That's fine if you're going to Newport Beach, but not if you are going toward the kingdom of God. Jesus warned us that unfortunately the road to God's kingdom is narrow and often forbidding, and not a lot of people are taking it. In verse 13 he said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction." Verse 14 says the road that leads to life is narrow and not many find it. He then proceeds in verse 15 to warn against false prophets. At this point Jesus is concluding his sermon and he is throwing down the gauntlet. He is talking about the religious leaders of his day and calling them false prophets. They are the ones who will say to him "Lord, Lord" on the day of judgment and he will say, "I never knew you."

The problem is the way of following the religious leaders was wide open. That's the way everyone in their culture was going. It was by far the path of least resistance in Israel. Jesus was warning that if people chose to be his disciples they were taking a path that most would not go down and that it would be difficult. They would be taking a road that would result in persecution. But it is the path to life, and the nice, wide Pharisee Freeway was the road straight to destruction.

Jesus is telling his audience, including us, that we have a choice to make. There is still, today, a nice wide freeway out there. It is the way the majority of people in our culture are going. The path of least resistance is to go right along with them. Just fit in, Buy into what our world is selling. It is wildly popular, but Jesus said it is also the path to ruination. There is a path to life. It is the path of following him. But don't kid yourself. It won't be easy. Follow it and you will always be in the minority. You will be viewed with disgust or suspicion and you will be opposed. You must choose. The choice is the easy way to death or the hard way to life.

BUILD A HOUSE THAT CAN TAKE IT

This sermon was terrific news to a lot of downtrodden people. But it was downright offensive to some, especially those at the top of the society in Jesus' world. So people had a choice, as we have seen. Take the narrow, hard road that leads to life, or go with the flow in society and be like everybody else. Just fit in, and sail away to death.

Jesus concluded with a parable about two guys building houses. One finds some nice beachfront property and builds his house on the sand. The other guy puts his foundation down into hard rock. The result is no surprise at all. When Laurie and I first moved here 38 years ago there was a nice, wide beach that ran from Cardiff to Solana Beach right next to the 101. The sand was almost level with the highway. Have you been there recently? The level of the beach is much lower than the road, and there's not much sand there. Much of the time there are just rocks. When the tide is up there is no beach at all. Where did all that sand go? The storms and tides over the years have washed it away. If you had built a house right on that beach, what would have happened to it? It would be gone. It would have crumbled and washed away too. And that's what happened to the guy in Jesus' story who built on sand. But the other guy, who built his house in a less desirable location on a solid foundation, would be doing just fine.

Jesus' point is that his message is the rock. You can build your house founded solidly on that rock and know that it will stand firm when the storms come, including the storm of judgment. Or you can build it on the shifting sands of

whatever you think is a good idea. It will not stand the test when it comes. So this is quite a conundrum. One way to live is to take the wide road along with everyone else. It's a nice smooth, wide freeway. But it is building a house on sand and it is all going to implode. The better choice is to build your house on the rock of Jesus' teaching, which means taking the road less traveled, the hard one, but the one that inevitably leads to life.

IMPLICATIONS

THE STORMS WILL COME

I once had a conversation with a man who basically had decided he didn't need Jesus and spouted some of his own personal philosophies, which he seemed to think were quite deep, but in fact they were shallow and made little sense. I listened, then told him, "Unfortunately I can guarantee you two things. First, when tragedy strikes in your life your ideas are not going to be enough to sustain you. If that's all you have, then you're going to crumble. And I know that from experience, for I have been through tragedy that shook me down to the bedrock of my existence. And second, tragedy is going to come. No one gets through this life without having to face devastating tragedy."

Eliphaz in the book of Job got a lot of things wrong, but he said one thing that is totally true in Job 5:7. "Man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward." You can test that one. Go out and start a bonfire or a campfire. Which way do the sparks go? They go up, and you can count on that. Just as you can count on the fact that humans are going to experience trouble in life.

Life will hold its share of difficulty for all of us, and sometimes it will be so painful that it will feel unbearable. We are all going to need something that will enable us to withstand that, to survive it without being utterly undone. And at the end of life there comes the biggest storm of all, the test that will determine our eternal destiny. In all storms, to not just thrive but survive, you need an anchor for your soul. Hebrews 6:19 is the verse that gave rise to the name of our church. "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." That hope is the word of Jesus Christ.

CHOOSE THE TOUGH ROAD

Jesus has challenged us all in this passage. We are going to have to make a choice between the wide gate and the narrow one, between building our house on sand or putting it on a solid foundation of rock. He is telling us we have to choose.

At Christmas in our family we typically have two kinds of pie for dessert after our dinner. There is almost always chocolate pie and apple pie. To me that's a no brainer call. Laurie's apple pie is the best thing ever. But there are chocolate lovers in our family. Some actually choose the chocolate pie over the apple, a completely irrational decision. But it is common for some to say, "I'd like both. Please give me a small slice of chocolate and a small slice of apple."

Jesus doesn't offer us that choice in this sermon. You can't take a little of the wide road and a little of the narrow road. You can't build your house partially on sand and partially on rock. It's one or the other. Jesus is not interested in having admirers or fans. He wants followers. He is quite clear in this sermon that following him will be costly. It is the more difficult path. But it is the path to life. It is the way to experience real hope because you have eternal life and don't need to fear life's final storm. You will have what Hebrews 6:19 says is the anchor for your soul that will hold firm and safe in the storms, so you can have peace. You will have Jesus' strength and presence with you so you can stand. And you will have his joy within you. So make the choice to build your house on him, on the rock, and take the narrow road.

LIVE OUT THE RULE

How can we know what Jesus wants us to do? Verse 12 helps us with how we relate to people, how we keep from being judgmental and harsh as religious people so often are. Treat other people the way you would like to be treated. Jesus said that one principle sums up all of the Laws in the Bible when it comes to other people. This is the Prime Directive for followers of Jesus. It is a philosophy to live by, one that applies to every situation every moment of every day of our lives.

That begins with being poor in spirit, being humble, so humble that we do not judge people. That doesn't mean we pretend what is wrong is not wrong. We've had a number of neighbors who have flagrantly violated God's revealed will, from the woman who committed adultery and left her family to the guy who was just mean to people and pretty much every other biblically identified sin. While we are not to condone or approve of their actions, we are still to treat them with kindness, love and respect. My desire would be that those neighbors would have no idea what I consider right and wrong just from looking at the way I treat them. No matter what they are or do, I am to treat them the way I would like them to relate to me.

How do you want to be treated? I read something from a Christian mom named Kimberly Nies who lives in Texas. She and her husband make an effort to teach

their kids to always show respect to their parents, but also to live by the Golden Rule in regard to others. One morning after they had talked a lot about the Golden Rule the night before she quizzed her daughter Katie. She asked, “What’s the Golden Rule?” With a look of exasperation Katie said, “I know, I know. You’re the mommy.”

That’s not the Golden Rule, although it is an important truth. We all have some directives that determine how we act and how we relate to other people. What is your prime directive? What rule guides your interactions? All too often we live by the rule that says, “Do whatever you have to in order to get what you want.” Or we live by what I think of as the Iron Rule. “Do to others whatever they do to you.” That is our most common way of relating. If someone is harsh or impatient with us, we send that right back to them. We’re like a mirror, bouncing back whatever they send our way. If they are kind and loving to us, we are kind right back. If someone is generous to us then we are loving right back. Jesus calls on us to be as loving and kind at all times to every person as we would like them to be to us.

The way I would like to be treated is for others not to do to me whatever I do to them. I would like them to treat me with kindness, patience and gentleness even when I don’t deserve it. I would like them to believe in me, even when I hardly believe in myself. I would like them to love me even when I fail or my shortcomings are glaringly obvious. I’d like them to be patient with me when I’ve been an idiot. I would like them to communicate that I matter, that I am important, rather than tell me I’m just one more number among 7 billion people, even though I’m not really important.

I watched at the end of the Super Bowl as everyone cheered Nick Foles, the Philadelphia quarterback. Just weeks before people were saying that the Eagles’ chance to go to the Super Bowl, never mind win it, had disappeared because their starting quarterback was injured and done for the year, and there was no way on God’s green earth that they could win with Foles. He was a barely adequate backup, and he would singlehandedly destroy their hopes. Suddenly he was not just good enough, he was the MVP! People were cheering him as a hero. And I thought, “I wish people would cheer me that way. I’d love to have people acclaiming me as the best thing since the invention of cinnamon bread.” If that’s what I want, then guess what Jesus says I should do for others!

Recently I was answering nature’s call in the bathroom at home. When I was done I could see that the toilet paper roll was near the end. I wanted to just ignore it. But I had been thinking about this verse. What would I want if I was the next person to

use this facility? I think they'd like to have plenty of toilet paper and not have to scramble around looking for more because that's what I'd want. Putting a new roll on the holder is not a big thing, but it's kind of annoying. However, I decided if I'm going to live by this rule then I needed to change that roll. So I did, and then I realized I had put it on so that it would roll with the paper coming off the back rather than the front. I would prefer it coming off the front. I sighed, took the roll off and turned it around. That's a tiny way of living by the Golden Rule.

I told the story a while back where we were treated poorly by a local big box store. They really jerked us around. When I tried to get the problem solved I talked to a clerk at customer service and he admitted that they had really messed up. They had treated us badly and they ought to fix it. He said he'd need to get the manager. The manager came and listened to the story then basically said, "There's nothing I can do." I asked if he felt they'd handled the situation properly and he acknowledged they had not, but said, "I'm sorry, but I can't do anything about it." I asked, "Is this the way you'd like to be treated?" He just shrugged, said, "I'm sorry, but in the future if you're in the store and need help ask for me," and walked away. Yes, because he'd been so helpful in that instance. Was he treating me in a way he would like to be treated? Absolutely not.

How different our world would be if we all just followed Jesus' instruction and treated people the way we'd like to be treated. When a spouse is short, impatient or harsh, instead of firing right back we would answer with patience and kindness. In his book, *Jesus Nation*, Joe Stowell wrote about thinking about this way of living. It was 6 in the morning and he had just finished his morning run. He stopped in Starbucks to get a latte. It was early so there was only one person ahead of him. But as Joe got near he could see things were tense. All the guy wanted was to buy a copy of a newspaper that he was holding, but he had a \$50 bill. The employee said they did not have that much change yet, and the customer was getting very upset. The situation was tense, and getting worse. Joe thought about the clerk's predicament and thought, "what would I want if I were in his shoes?" He immediately knew what to do. He said, "Hey, put the paper on my bill; I'll buy it for him." Instantly the tension dissipated. The customer said, "Thanks a lot." After he left the clerk said, "Mister, that was a really nice thing for you to do. This world would be a lot better place if more people were like you." Indeed it would be. For he was doing what Jesus told us to do, and if we did that the world would be a whole lot better. That's not going to happen until Jesus comes back, but we can make it happen in our lives. When we do we bring a little bit of the kingdom of God to our little slice of the world.