

=Country Philosopher=

The land of pleasant living

by Amos Arthur Holmes



There are many avenues leading to an individual's philosophy of life: the wisdom and guidance of parents and church; the facts and fiction gained from books; the personal observations that make marked differences in your intellectual growth.

You see a man beating a horse and you are appalled. You watch a father soothe a crying child and this concern and love is pleasant to you. You have the knowledge that it takes more effort, physically, to smile than to frown, and you also reach the conclusion that the extra effort is worth it. You know the need for progress and yet you are saddened by each falling tree. You climb the mountain of happiness with the birth of a child, and fall into the abyss of despair at the loss of a loved one.

And after years of patient questioning you arrive at the personal philosophy that will guide you through life.

And on this subject of man forming precepts, or rules of life, I ran into something that was terribly interesting to me, and I hope will be interesting to you.

I spend a great deal of time browsing through the encyclopedia, and over the course of several months I encountered four philosophies, almost identical, from four men of different generations.

Do you know who said, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you?"

Well, you are wrong. Nobody said this. It is simply a more understandable, misquoted version of the Golden Rule.

But this philosophy has been the guide for many great men. And I would like to tell you about four of those men. One was a slave, one an Oriental wise man, one a God, and one a Jewish spiritual leader.

Henry Robinson was a negro slave. He was not, in any degree, an educated man. But there are still folk tales in the south that tell of his wisdom. And his philosophy was, "I

love all men as I pray they would all love me." This was his rule of life, and he lived by it.

The Oriental wise man was Confucius. He spent a lifetime helping men develop a moral sense of responsibility toward others. He taught people that they must be gentlemanly and kind and that they should show respect to their elders and superiors. And four hundred years before Christ, he said, "What you do not like done to yourself, do not unto others."

The Jewish spiritual leader was Hillel the Elder. His outstanding traits were humility and love for his fellow man. He was born seventy years before Christ, and his rule of life was, "What is hateful to thee, do not unto thy fellow man."

And then there was Jesus Christ. And this God of the Christian world fought sin, particularly hypocrisy and cruelty to the weak. And in His Sermon on the Mount He gave us this rule, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them."

There is your Golden Rule.

Now I do not mean for this article to be a sermon. There is not one soul in this county less qualified to preach than myself. I am quite sure that when I die, Saint Peter is going to point his finger at me, and say, "I'm awfully sorry, we are completely filled up at this time."

But isn't it strange that these four men would have a precept, or rule of life, so identical. Scholars will show the differences in these philosophies, but basically they are the same. And wouldn't it be nice if every human being in this world would take any one of the above philosophies and incorporate that philosophy into their own lives.

I believe that we could then refer to the entire world as, "THE LAND OF PLEASANT LIVING."