

In Matthew 22:36 Jesus was asked the question "Which (is) the great commandment in the law?"

He replied " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment.

And the second (is) like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'.

On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

He did not mention the first commandment in Matthew 7:12. In the message that is recorded there He emphasized the manner in which people are to interact with each other.

However, the implication in all of His teachings is that a person cannot act properly toward others unless they love God with all of their heart, soul and mind.

If a person loves God with all their heart, soul and mind they will not get involved in things like idolatry and sorcery.

Another thing that doesn't appear to violate the rule of "doing to others what you would want others to do to you" is a homosexual act between consenting people.

The clearest discussion of this is in Paul's letter to the Romans. In chapter 1, verses 18 to 32, he talks about those who "...worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator..." (verse 25) "For this reason," Paul continues, "God gave them up to vile passions..."

So this sort of thing would appear to be a judgment on people for worshiping and serving a created thing rather than the Creator of all things. If a person loves God with all their heart, soul and mind they will not have any desire to do things like this.

However, I would like to point out that I can't find anything in the Bible to indicate that people who practice such things should be denied any of the rights that others enjoy in this world. They should be warned that God will judge them but it would be wrong to discriminate against them in any way; unless their behavior is hurting another person.

To prove this they quote verses like John 1:12 which says "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, (even) to those who believe in His Name".

If you read this verse carefully, you will see that those who "received" Jesus are those who "believe in His Name".

From quotations we have looked at earlier, it is clear that repentance is necessary in order to truly believe. Therefore, the only way to "receive" Jesus Christ is to repent and believe in Him.

In order to deal with all of the verses that are used to promote false ideas about salvation, I would have to make this book unnecessarily long. I think that the best advice I can give you at this point is to urge you to always read the theme or story in which the verses are found and remember that, if the verses "seem" to contradict the main message of the Bible, be sure that you read as many of the surrounding verses as is necessary to see what the writer is talking about. There are no contradictions in the words of God.

I would like to mention one more verse in order to illustrate this. In Romans 4:5 Paul says "...to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness."

I have heard people using this verse to prove that good works are not necessary. But if you read the entire message of Paul's letter to the Romans, particularly chapters 3 to 6, you will see that he is explaining that righteousness can not result from keeping the law of Moses but rather that righteousness is the result of faith.

However, Paul makes it very clear that, although good works will not justify a person, it is still necessary to do them. Read the first two verses of chapter 6. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?"

The Bible makes it abundantly clear in many places that, although good works will not produce salvation, they must exist or the person does not have salvation. As I point out in the next section, good works are the proof of salvation.