

THE CHRISTIAN' ATTITUDE TOWARD WORLDLINESS

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A good start in the study of "attitude" may be to define and, or, explain the word, which, at first thought, could turn out to be an attitude itself...! What do you think? Explaining attitude could be influenced by "attitude", is my thought.

Let me start by giving a dictionary definition of selected words to define attitude as; a *manner* of action, feeling, or thinking that shows one's disposition, opinion, mental, or mind-set. If we choose these words and expressions as the definition we would, possibly, need to analyze a couple of the defining words, which are good and acceptable as I noted them.

First, let us look at manner; or (manner of action). We need to define manner, so lets settle with manner to be; a way of action...mannerism of our action [so-to-speak]. A way of acting could be [a sarcastic manner]; it could be a [comical manner]; or, it could be as [one who has no manners]. There are other expressions i.e., [by no manner of means]; or [in a manner of speaking]. Let me say, if we were to substitute in the bracketed expressions the word feeling, or thinking, in-place of manner, speaking and means what would that get us? Would it not be about the same? I think so. Well, this could be a drill to make us think more.

I do not want to wear this out, but let me say a couple more defining words or thoughts. It could be said that, attitude is; a complex mental orientation involving beliefs, feelings, values, and dispositions to act in certain ways; i.e., "he had the attitude that work was fun." I found in my research that disposition was defined: First: A person's inherent quality of character. (That sounds good, don't you think?) Second: An inclination or tendency. (To me that sound as in need of teaching or growth).

Well here is my confession! I wonder about that "inherent quality of character", and I desired to know if I had any of that? I looked it up in the Oxford University Press Dictionary and here is what it said, "inherent - adjective; existing in something as a permanent or essential attribute." Now that sounds very good! Attitude is an attribute! Yes it surely is! The right kind of attitude is essential to Christians! Isn't it? Yes, it surely is! Now I know the answer to my question...which was, "That sounds good, doesn't it?" So now let's go to the Word and let it show, tell and, teach us that we may learn more about attitude, The Christian's Attitude toward... whatever, but always the right attitude.

The first path that I'm going to take to in this study is on attitude of Christians "toward the world"; or not conforming to the world, identified as, "worldliness." Worldliness is sin! We are admonished to give entire consecration to God. If we do, and really...we must, we would not be "worldly". Christian's must give their entire life's dedication in doing God's Will. If we do, worldliness is automatically eliminated from our life...will you agree? Now that is a great formula! Well, it is a great formula, and I would further say, it is the right way!

There is however, the question, why does the Word counsel us, giving us so much cautionary advice, about avoiding worldliness? "Do-not & shall-not" are throughout the Word of God. The Word also blesses us with unmistakable directions as to what to do, and yes, *how to do*. We are not only to do, but also do according to His Will. We are to learn and do and teach others to do His Will, and at the same time teach those whom we teach to teach others. That is obedience...yes! Think about it...that may be why it is said, "God's love is self-perpetuating.

All that is good is from God. God is love! All that we do must be because of our love for God, and His love for us, and our love for each other, and for our fellow man. What e'er we do in word or deed, we must do all in the name of the Lord. I am willing now to say to you this, "but good and needed study must be 'gone-over' every once in a while." It's sorta' like, well...fellowship together in conversation, and choosing to talk about the different attributes written in the Holy Word for our admonishment and how to effect them more excellently in our life. Thank you for your time and for us study-talking together. I love it! Now, let's be on with more good thoughts and fellowship about the subject at hand...attitude.

Hear the inspired words of the apostle Paul from Romans 12:1-2 as he said, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Now, let's evaluate, motivate, and plan the reviving of the great principles of the cited scripture into our lives. Let us make a promise to ourselves and God that we will affect, put them into action, more dedicatedly into serving God and our fellow man. Serving our fellowman is doing for others as we do for ourselves. Please study the two words...effect and affect

(Presenting your bodies a living sacrifice): The Christian life begins with total commitment...irrevocable, if you will...it really is! (Please think about it). God wants the sacrifice of our lives not our death. The sacrifice we are to make of our bodies is a living sacrifice. Not only is the presentation of our bodies a living sacrifice but also, it is to be a holy and acceptable sacrifice. When the sacrifice of us to God is holy it is inherently acceptable to God and well pleasing to Him. (Read that again) 'O good, now let's do it!

The verse in Romans 12:1 continues by saying to us that the sacrifice of us to God is our reasonable service. Reasonable can be translated either rational or scriptural. The presentation of our bodies is to be the pattern of our behavior.

Verse 2 in Romans 12 cites' a warning to us, "*And be not conformed to this world*". That is a command; in fact if we do not conform, it eliminates worldliness. Then, there is no place for worldliness. It is eliminated when our life began with total commitment in doing God's Will.

The only possible way for the believer *not to be* fashioned after this world is to be transformed in mind. Remember, as we think, so are we (Proverbs 23:7). Transforming implies a fundamental change in our inward nature and following of the pattern of our character that we presented our bodies as living sacrifices.

Christians must have an attitude of resistance to the values, goals, and activities of the world, which would pressure us into their shapes. The Christian must continue being transformed, (molded), from within by the power of God. The thoughts of our mind, our attitude, are renewed, and we must find out through study of God's word and learn, and come to know what God wants for us.

If we permit the attitude of transformation by renewing our minds we will find out what is morally good, and thus produce a good affect on others. Then our attitude toward wordiness would be as we are counseled in Romans 12:9-13, cited below:

(9). "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor, (detest; hate) what is evil. Cling to what is good.*" (Christian love is not mere emotion but action: Abhor evil: "We must abstain from every form of evil, (1 Thessalonians 5: 22)."

(10). "*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another*", brotherly love: The kind of love for each other that Christ shows us. "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another*" (John 13:34).

(11). *“...not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord...”* (Note the descriptive adjective of how we are to serve Him! And not lagging, serve diligently and fervently in spirit. Powerfully, I'd say!

(12). *“...rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulations, continuing steadfastly in prayers...”* We must be rejoicing in the hope of eternal life with God being patient when we are tested, and living always in the attitude of prayer. *“...pray without ceasing...”* (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

(13). *“...distributing to the needs of the saints, given in hospitality.”* (Distributing; hospitality: doing good as we have opportunity, especially to the household of fellow Christians, the Saints, (Galatians 6:10). See also (Matthew 25:31-46.)

With this attitude put into effect as stated in verse 11 of Romans 12, worldliness in our life would be non-existent. My, oh my! Why, why? Lack of love, lack of diligence! Need help? Work the plan, call a Brother! The world today, (present age), is an evil age, (Galatians 1:4), and is dominated by *“The god of this world”* (2 Corinthians 4:4). We must not have our lives be governed by the thought patterns and dictates of this evil world.

We have covered what I think to be a much needed study. At this point it could be said that our plate is full. It was a great study; A study, which has blessed us with great gain in knowledge. My prayer is that it can be said that we have taken a big step toward perfecting our walk in Christian conduct, which is right and good conduct of life for life.

I have a hard time closing out my study writings. I know why that is; it's because I love you and also when I've gotten your attention I just want to keep going and talking about God's word and Christian disciplines...so enjoyable! But, the bell has rung.

So I'm going to call this study writing to a close. I know...I've used that line before. So please forgive. It has been great and of much reward to me to have studied with you in this way. I want to be blessed to do it again and again.

I promise that I will, in fact I have about three or so writings in work presently, on different subjects and I know you will have an appreciation for them.

I invite you to view all the writings on my Website, www.geocities.com/dubbyt. Please note other writings and my poems. There is a writing posted that I am sure you will want to view and copy. The writing title is, "The Church of The Bible, Christ's Church." It has a two-page enclosure, the title is, "What Must I Do To Be Saved."

Please study both of these writings with an honest and receptive heart for truth and obedience. You will be blessed! God bless you for studying with me on this good study of Christian Attitude. We all have an "attitude", and may we manifest a good Christ-like attitude every hour of every day that we are given. God loves you...and I do too! Your servant in the Lord...

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My Website, www.geocities.com/dubbyt, has a link to: www.hartsellechurch.org, which is the Hartselle Church of Christ, Hartselle, AL, a link to, www.austinvillecoc.org which is the Website of Austinville Church of Christ, Decatur, AL, and a link to www.northcobbchurch.org, which is the Church of Christ at North Cobb, Kennesaw, GA. Please visit those Websites also; you will be blessed.