

THE CHRISTIAN' ATTITUDE TOWARD WORLDNESS

By: Bill Richardson

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 what I am calling a, "shot-gun" definition and that would be; a *manner* of action, feeling, or thinking that shows, (manifests), one's disposition, opinion, mental, or mind-set. If we choose this as the definition we would, possibly, need to analyze a couple of the defining words.

First, let's 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]. Other expressions i.e., [by no manner of means]; [by any 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, what would that get us? Wouldn't it be about the same? I think so. Well, this could be a drill to make us think more.

I don't want to wear this out, but let me say a couple more defining words or thoughts. Could it be said that, attitude is; a complex mental orientation involving beliefs and feelings and 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, doesn't it?) Second: An inclination or tendency. (To me that sound as in need of teaching).

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 real 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... ("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... "Toward...whatever, but always the right attitude.

The first path that I'm going to take 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! It is a great formula to me anyway!

There is however the question, why does the Word warn us, gives us so much cautionary advice about avoiding worldliness? “Do-nots” 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’m willing to say you know this, but isn’t it good and needed to study and go ‘over-it’ 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 excellent 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.

Hear the inspired words of the apostle Paul from Romans 12:1-2:

“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 and promise ourselves, and God, to effect them more dedicatedly in our serving God and our fellow man.

(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!

The verse in Romans 12:1 continues and says 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 says, *And be not conformed to this world*. That’s a command; in fact, it eliminates worldliness. Then, there is no place for wordiness; it was eliminated when our life began with total commitment to 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. Transforming implies a fundamental change in our inward nature and following of the pattern of our character that we presented our bodies as living sacrifice.

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 effect 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.

(11). *"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)."*

(12). *"...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!

(13). *"...rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulations, continuing steadfastly in prayers..."* (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).

(14). *"...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! Lack of teaching! Lack of doing! Yes I need help!

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.

The scriptures and commentary that has been set forth in this study has been of great benefit to me. These wonderful scriptures and principles, which we studied, have been motivating to my conscience, and it is my prayer that you who read and study, that you will accept all truth herein and that it will be a conscience server to you also.

The well-trained conscience is equal to the knowledge, abiding faith, and love that we expose or submit our mind to. With confidence I say that you are studying this lesson with faith and love, and that it will be of great benefit to you.

With confidence I also say, that you desire to be blessed, to gain more knowledge, (true abiding biblical knowledge), which is associated with responsibilities, which creates a desire to seek, to search diligently, to accept when found, to associate with, and be an active part of, and that you will abide faithfully in the Lord's Church until death.

The church that I am speaking of cost the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is His Body, His Kingdom, which is His Church. Please be an obedient dedicated part of the church of the Bible. Christ's church. The church we read about in the Bible. You cannot pass through Heaven's gate if you are not in His Body, (His Church), and it is the church that we read about in the New Testament. That is the truth. That is what the Bible teaches.

I invite you to view my Website, www.geocities.com/dubbyt, please note other consecrated writings. 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, which has the title, "What Must I Do To Be Saved." Please study both "biblical-truth" writings with an honest and receptive heart for truth and obedience. You will be blessed! God bless you for studying with me on this great subject. God loves you! And I do too! Your servant in the Lord...

Bill Richardson, Hartselle, Alabama

NOTE: Page 5 is an "Enclosure", a great writing, and could be used with any writing one would do. Brother Ray has good writings and I use them very often and they are a blessing. Thank you Bro. Ray!

DO WE HAVE A SERVANTS HEART

By: Ray Varner – Servant of the Lord, Church of Christ at North Cobb, Kennesaw, GA

Our Lord taught that if we would be truly great in His Kingdom, we must develop a servant's heart. *"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant"* (Matthew 23:11). If we understand this truth, then we will be working more and more to acquire the attitudes and characteristics of a servant. What are some of them?

If I possess a servant's heart, then I will be ready and willing to do any job that needs to be done—even when it is not the job that I really wanted to do. Some tasks are difficult and receive little recognition, but I'll do these anyway. After all, I shouldn't do my works to be *"seen of men"* (Matthew 6:1ff).

With a servant's heart I will worry less (ultimately none at all) about how others serve me, and I will be more and more interested in finding ways to serve others. *"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant"* (Matthew 20:26-27).

As a faithful servant, I will not be rebellious against God, the things in His Word, or to those who are in authority over me (elders, parents, employers. etc.). To do so would be completely contradictory to the whole notion of servant hood (1 Peter 5:5-7).

As I grow in these attributes of a servant, I will begin to see my needs and myself as less important in the "bigger scheme" of things. *"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"* (Romans 12:3).

And finally, as a servant who is seeking to please God, I will grow in the realization that my work is never done—that I have never done as much as I could have or should have done. *"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say. We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty"* (Luke 17:10).

Is your heart as a servant's heart? If not, why not start being a true servant today.

Love you all...Ray