

OUR ATTITUDES AS CHRISTIANS

Matthew 15:1-9

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Attitude defined: A mental position with regard to a fact or a state; a feeling or emotion toward a fact of a state. It is our disposition, actions and reactions toward problems of life.
- B. Attitudes are very important because they control our living, fix our character and determine our destiny.
- C. One cannot expect his actions to be in harmony with God's law unless we maintain the attitudes demanded by it.
Illustration: Unscriptural attitudes result in unscriptural actions
- D. Acceptance or rejection of truth depends on our attitude. This emphasizes need for proper attitudes in investigation, but especially in matters pertaining to our souls.
- E. Let's study some scriptural attitudes we must maintain throughout our investigation is we are to profit by it.

DISCUSSION:

I. TRUTH MUST COME FIRST

- A. Allow nothing to take precedence over our desire to **know and practice** truth, the word of God Jhn 17:17
- B. Truth comes before: families Matt 10:37; friends Jas 4:4 traditional practices Matt 15:1-9; personal likes or dislikes Lk 9:23
- C. God's word is all important Jhn 8:31; Jas 1:21; 2Thess 2:10; Matt 6:33; Rom 3:4

II. UNITY THEN MUST COME SECOND

- A. Look at importance of unity: Some try to put this first: Psa 133:1; Jhn 17:20,21; 1Cor 1:10
- B. But unity is less important than truth because it must be based upon truth to please God
- C. Earnestly desire and work for unity; but cannot obtain scriptural unity at the expense of divine truth
- D. Division is abominable in the sight of God Prov 6:16-19. Only one thing is worse than division - unity in error
- E. We must be willing to sacrifice everything but **truth and conscience** for unity

III. ONE MUST HAVE AN OPEN MIND

- A. Must be a willingness to hear all sides of any issue with an open mind
- B. Individual with closed mind is wrong even though the things he believes in are right
- C. Prejudice is a lock on the door of a closed mind.
 1. The first enemy of information, & progress; intellectual astigmatism; the perfect combination of conceit and ignorance
 2. Prejudice never saved a soul, nor settled any question in the light of truth and justice

3. It is the defense of the devil; the shell of a petrified mind and the ceiling on understanding
4. Prejudice is a robber many entertain in their hearts
 - a. It robs us of generous feelings we should have for others, and leaves us the tormenting of hate; by shutting our eyes and stopping our ears.
 - b. It robs us of many precious truths, and leaves us the cross of our distorted opinions
 - c. It robs us of light, and shuts us up in the darkness of our own ignorance. "No other robber can leave us so poor." (R. L. Whiteside)
5. "He who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool, and he who dares not is a slave."
(William Drummond)
6. Condemnation before investigation is a bar against all information, proof against all argument and cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance.
Illustrate: You are right even before we discuss it.

- D. Must hear then consider: Prov 18:13; Matt 13:15; Lk 8:15; Jhn 7:51; Isa 1:18

IV. FLEXIBILITY IN MATTERS OF EXPEDIENCY

- A. Expedient = to be an advantage or profitable
- B. If we are unwilling to say a person is lost for doing or Not doing something, then we admit that it is optional, expedient or a matter of opinion, and such matters should never be made the cause of strife or the instrument of division
- C. Be willing to do work of Lord in way on which all agree is scriptural and remain united 1Cor 6:12; 10:23; 8:13; Rom 14:4

V. LOVE FOR BRETHREN

- A. Accept one as being sincere in what they believe
- B. We must not judge motives 1Cor 4:5
- C. We must deal with issues not personalities
- D. Disagree without being disagreeable and object without being objectionable Rom 12:9,10; 13:10; 1Pet 3:8; Eph 4:1-2, 31-32

CONCLUSION:

- A. Our lesson has been an effort to correct our minds first. May we all make the proper adjustment to maintain a good attitude from beginning to end of an investigation
- B. This done, there can be no doubt but that proper conclusions will be reached.
- C. Then we can dwell together in unity based on the truth of God's word.