

"ATTITUDES NEEDED IN CONGREGATIONAL WORK" - PROVERBS 23:7- “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”

INTRODUCTION:

- A. As Christians work together in a local congregation, the right attitudes are necessary in all things...we have been sanctified (set apart-for a very specific purpose), and there realize that:
 - 1. All the talent in the world cannot make up for wrong attitudes.
 - 2. But, with the right attitudes, our efforts in service to the Lord are enhanced and live up to their full potential
- B. In what areas should we be concerned about our attitudes?
 - 1. Two Weeks ago we studied **Our attitude toward God**
 - a. Reverence and Awe
 - b. Love
 - c. Faith and Trust
 - d. Thankfulness and Gratitude
 - 2. Today’s study deals with Our attitude **toward ourselves as individuals**
 - 3. Our attitude toward our brethren
 - 4. Our attitude toward the work we do together as a church - In a least these four areas, we must be sure to maintain the proper attitudes
 - a. And what are the proper attitudes? Let's begin with our STUDY today...

II. **ATTITUDES TOWARD OUR SELVES - HUMILITY OF HEART...** (mention the song - Humble Yourself in the Sight of The Lord...)

- A. The **Heart with which God Can Work - Matthew 5:5** (NKJV) — 5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.
 - 1. We **should walk with lowliness of mind - Ephesians 4:1-3** (NKJV) — 1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
 - 2. Every thing should be **done in one accord, with lowliness of mind - Philippians 2:1-4** (NKJV) — 1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.
- B. Seeing ourselves as God sees us - **this is A humble estimation** of one's self and is very important - **ROM 12:3, 16**
 - a. **Romans 12:3** (NKJV) — 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.
 - b. **Romans 12:16** (NKJV) — 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.
 - c. **Psalm 51:16-17** (NKJV) — 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.
 - d. The humility of Heart - we either have a Proud Heart” or A “Humble Heart”.
 - (1) **Luke 18:9-14** (NKJV) — 9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and

prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

(2) We are either, self seeking, self trusting, self serving - weak and carnal in heart like the Pharisee or:

(3) Humble like the Tax Collector - We seek after God, trust God, serve God and are strong & spiritual minded.

(a) There is a blessing in this heart - **James 4:6,10**

i) **James 4:6** (NKJV) — 6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

ii) **James 4:10** (NKJV) — 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

C. **Humility includes a willingness to serve, even to do "menial" tasks – JN. 13:6-17**

1. **John 13:6–17** (NKJV) — 6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?” 7 Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.” 8 Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” 9 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” 10 Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.” 12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

2. No ONE is TOO BIG to do LITTLE things!

a. **vrs 8** - Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”

b. There is nothing wrong with allowing others to help us out?

(1) A lesson that is difficult for me to learn.

D. "Show me a man who cannot bother to do little things and I'll show you a man who cannot be trusted to do big things." - (Lawrence D. Bell) - cf. **MATT. 25:41-46, 1 PET. 5:5-7**

1. **Matthew 25:41–46** (NKJV) — 41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ 44 “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

a. **1 Peter 5:5–7** (NKJV) — 5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty

hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

E. Are we humble enough to serve your fellow brother?

III. **TEACHABILITY... Some are just not teachable - they already know everything, have closed minds to new thoughts, and refuse to listen.**

A. **Requires Humility - Matthew 18:3-4** - 3and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4“Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

B. **Requires Wisdom - Proverbs 1:2-7** - 2To know wisdom and instruction, To perceive the words of understanding, 3To receive the instruction of wisdom, Justice, judgment, and equity; 4To give prudence to the simple, To the young man knowledge and discretion— 5A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,

1. To be **teachable is to be wise** – **PROV. 15:31-32**

a. **Proverbs 15:31–32** (NKJV) — 31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise. 32 He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, But he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.

C. **Teachability includes:**

1. **THE HUNGER - 1 Peter 2:2 cf Matthew 5:6**

a. **1 Peter 2:2** (NKJV) — 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

(1) **Matthew 5:6** (NKJV) — 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

b. An eagerness to learn and grow – **2 PET. 3:18** – “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

c. The ability to learn from correction, to profit from advice and criticism

2. The old as well as the young need a teachable attitude: **EVERYONE NEEDS TO BE TAUGHT.**

a. Children, Teens, Young Adults, Middle Age and Elderly alike.

(1) "Education is too good to limit just to the young." (Elton Trueblood)

D. **How teachable are we, when it comes to opportunities to study God's word? – 1 COR. 10:12** – “Wherefore let him that thinketh he stand take heed lest he fall.”

1. **Do we seek every opportunity to Study God’s Word?**

a. Do we approach bible study with:

(1) Reverence

(2) Love

(3) Humility

(4) Gratitude

b. Growing Our Faith

c. Learning to Co-operate

d. Disciplining ourselves in Self Control

e. And with all Patience ever learning.

2. Bible classes are not optional for the teachable heart of men ---- it is a feast of learning.

IV. **HONESTY TOWARD OUR MISTAKES...this is Evaluation - 2 Cor. 13:5** - 5Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

A. **Be careful** that we can only see the faults in others - but get angry when faults in us are pointed out - **Matthew 7:1-5** - 3“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the

plank in your own eye? 4“Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5“Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

- B. This includes a willingness to admit our mistakes - **JAMES 5:16** – “Confess your faults to one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
 - 1. Must be honest in our Evaluation of our:
 - a. Sins
 - b. Mistakes
 - c. Faith
 - d. Abilities
 - e. Limitations
 - 2. And a willingness to correct them - **Acts 8:22** (NKJV) — 22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.
 - a. Everyone makes a mistakes; a congregation that functions well, and grows is one filled with people who learn from their mistakes!
 - b. The fact that we are all sinners and in need of God’s grace, mercy and love = puts no one above another.
- C. The attitudes of humility, teachability, and honesty will certainly prepare us to be useful to the Lord. They will also have a bearing on our relationship with others in the congregation. Let's now focus our attention on...

V. In CONCLUSION:

- A. Ideal attitudes make for ideal working conditions among the members of a local church...
 - 1. Attitude improvement can be compared to the woodcutter sharpening his ax – **ECCL. 10:10** – “If the axe is dull and he does not sharpen its edge, then he must exert more strength.”
 - 2. **Ecclesiastes 10:10** (NKJV) — 10 If the ax is dull, And one does not sharpen the edge, Then he must use more strength; But wisdom brings success.
- B. If we want the work of the congregation to go smooth, hone our attitudes!
- C. Certainly the attitudes described in this lesson will help the cause of Christ in any congregation...
 - 1. They will improve our relation with God, ourselves, our brethren, and our work
 - 2. They will also make us "useful to the Master, prepared for every good work" - **2 TIM. 2:21**
 - a. **2 Timothy 2:21** (NKJV) — 21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.
- D. Are we developing the right kind of attitudes that prepare us for the work of the Lord?