The Old Paths

Volume 12, Issue 32 *October 9, 2005*

"Attitudes We Need To Avoid"

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Oftentimes, we see people who are guilty of wrong attitudes, which result in wrong actions. We who are Christians need to be vigilant, for we are not immune to such wrong dispositions. As we read the Bible, God records the actions of some who had wrong attitudes, and as a result, sinned. Let us consider the following.

Some Have A Proud Attitude.

Pride is one of the worst attitudes one can possess and it has raised its ugly head on many occasions in history. Pride is a dangerous attitude, and we are warned about it on many occasions in the Bible. For example, we are warned about pride in the book of Proverbs. "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate" (8:13). "When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom" (11:2). "In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride..." (14:3). "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (16:18). "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit" (29:23).

As we study the Bible, we are not only warned about pride, but also see several in the Bible who displayed pride. Consider Diotrephes who loved "to have the preeminence" (III Jn. 9). Because of his pride, he "receiveth us not." He not only used malicious words against John and others, but did not receive brethren, and "forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." This man was so lifted up with pride, that he was literally out of control. He would allow nothing and no one to question his preeminence he had in that local church. Friends, this is as wrong as it can be!

Other examples of pride include King Nebuchadnezzar, who lost his kingdom for a time because he thought he was a "self-made man." He was wrong (Dan. 4:30-37, 5:20). Ultimately, his grandson Belshazzar lost the kingdom permanently because of his pride (Dan. 5:22-31). Hosea 5:5-7 records that even God's people Israel were guilty of pride. As a result, God withdrew Himself from them.

God has no part nor lot with a proud man. One with pride cannot be God's child, for He gives grace to and exalts those who are humble (I Pet. 5:5-6). Friend, do you have a proud attitude? If so, you need to change, for God hates that attitude (Prov. 6:16-17).

Some Have A Covetous Attitude.

To covet is to have "avarice, i.e. (by impl.) fraudulency, extortion ... greediness" (Strong's). In fact, Paul equates covetousness with idolatry in Colossians 3:5. When one puts all his energy into obtaining/acquiring a thing, he is covetous. Some may be covetous toward money (I Tim. 6:10), toward a person (Ex. 20:17), toward their own interests (Eph. 4:19-20), toward recreation (I Tim. 4:8), etc. Anything that you allow to come between you and God becomes your idol. It is that for which you covet and devote yourself. If we are going to be God's faithful children, we must not be covetous.

Some examples of covetousness in the Bible include Achan who coveted after "a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight" and caused the Israelites to lose the battle against the people of Ai (Josh. 7:5, 18-21). The remedy was that he was to die, as well as his family, in order for the Israelites to be in good standing with God (Josh. 7:23-26).

We might also consider the covetousness mentioned in I Timothy 6:10. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Notice that those who would covet after money or property err from the faith. The NKJ says, "some have strayed from the faith in their greediness." The NAS says, "some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith." It is also important to note that this passage says nothing about a man's ability to keep the money he coveted!! One can be born "dirt poor", live "dirt poor", and die "dirt poor", and still lose his soul for being covetous!! It is a dangerous matter indeed when we think of those who covet after money or property. When people do not put things first in their lives, they are turning away from God and from His soul-saving word!

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Some Have A Self-Sufficient Attitude.

Especially is it true in this country that some have the attitude that they can do it all by themselves. Some never admit their need for God, but think that all things depend upon them and their efforts. We need to realize that we are not self-sufficient, but helpless. We could do nothing if it were not for God. We would not be here if it were not for God. Colossians 1:17 teaches that Christ "is before all things, and by him all things consist." Consist means "to set together, i.e. (by impl.) to introduce (favorably), or (fig.) to exhibit; intrans. to stand near, or (fig.) to constitute:--approve, commend, . . . make, stand (with)" (Strong's). The NAS says, "in Him all things hold together." In other words, were it not for our Lord, nothing would even exist! How dare we think we are self-sufficient in any way? How many times have we sang, "I Need Thee Every Hour"? Did we really mean that? Or, is our attitude toward Christ one of "don't call me, I'll call you"?

Some who had a self-sufficient attitude include the rich fool of Luke 12. Jesus, in speaking of him, showed that this man thought he had provided all of this for himself. Notice in Luke 12:16-21, that the personal pronoun "I" is used by him 6 times in this short account. He had not thought about God, nor thanked Him for the bounty. He was merely concerned for himself, and lost it all in a night!

The Christians James wrote to thought they were self-sufficient as well. James told them, "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil" (Jas. 4:13-16).

Their proud, arrogant boasting was evil in God's sight. They thought they were self-sufficient, could provide for their own, and did not need to include God at any point. They were wrong then, and we are wrong today if we think we do not need God. We do not know what may come tomorrow (Prov. 27:1). Therefore, we need to remember who holds tomorrow, and live for Him!

Some Have An Apathetic Attitude.

To show apathy is to not show interest or concern. Therefore, those who show apathy toward the Lord and His church show no concern or interest for the Lord and His church. This can do nothing but damage people spiritually. Yet, there are many today so caught up in worldly pursuits and in themselves, that they have no interest, nor concern for the things that are most important.

There are many apathetic people mentioned in the Bible. Consider the fact that Paul had to remind those "that are rich in this world" that they had a responsibility to the Lord and His cause (I Tim. 6:17-19). If they were not careful, they would only show their interest in material pursuits, and no interest in the Lord. Another who was apathetic was Agrippa. When faced with the greatest decision one can make in this life, he refused, saying, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). He was very aware of the doctrine of Christ (v. 26), but had no interest or concern in it, nor for his soul. In fact, there are many today who show that their interests lie in other things beside the gospel. When people show apathy toward the Lord and His church, it shows that we need to watch ourselves lest we also become apathetic (I Cor. 10:12, 15:33).

Conclusion

As always, we need to examine ourselves (II Cor. 13:5). Let us make sure we are not guilty of these wrong attitudes, for they will develop into wrong actions! In some, it is already apparent what attitude they have. Let us do our best to live by the Bible, to follow its precepts, and love the Author. If we are guilty of harboring any of the attitudes we have studied, then let us repent and turn from those things while we have the time to do so. May God help us all to have the right attitude, to live for Him, and look forward to Heaven when this life is over.

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