

Attitude Towards The World

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Matt. 16:21-23

The right attitudes are absolutely necessary. They are necessary for unity in a local congregation.

We studied our attitudes towards God, Jesus Christ, the gospel, the church, our brethren, and ourselves; now we shall study our attitudes towards the world.

I would like to recount an incident that happened several years ago.

Eastern Airlines Flight 401 was bound for Florida December 29, 1972, and had more than 200 people on board. The following information was gathered from the flight recorder.

During the flight a small light (front wheel landing gear) was out. The flight engineer saw it and began asking questions. Since everything else was okay, he decided it must be the bulb was burned out. So he set about to replace it.

Having some trouble he asked the co-pilot to help him. The pilot cancelled the landing, brought the plane up to 2000 feet, and began circling around until they resolved the problem. The two working together were unable to get the bulb changed, so the pilot put the plane in auto-pilot and came to help. Each of them had their own idea about how to fix the problem and an anxious discussion grew in their midst. They just had to fix that bulb.

Meanwhile, the plane was descending. The focus of the crew was on an inexpensive bulb, while a very expensive plane and 200 people crashed into the ground destroying all.

Peter, too, had this problem of being off-track. Matt. 16:21-23, *“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”*

Wouldn't you hate to have the Son of God say that Satan was within you?

But Peter's focus was selfish and misplaced.

2 Tim. 2:4, *“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”*

What Business Are We In?

Years ago, Bro. Howard McCay was at work at the college in Yakima, and he overheard his boss yelling at one of his co-workers, “What in the world are you doing, for heaven’s sake!” Bro. Howard did a lesson on that topic: “What in the world are you doing for heaven’s sake!”

This is our marching orders! This is our business!

- Matt. 28:19-20, “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*”
- Mark 16:15-16, “*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*”

We have been ordered by our Lord to go out into the world and make fellow Christians.

Reasons to evangelize.

To Follow Christ’s Example. Luke 19:10, “*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*”

Christ did not come to solve the political problems of Israel, nor to break the back of Roman tyranny, nor for bringing improvements in agriculture, trade, medicine, or education, nor for any other similar thing. He came to redeem men from sin.

John 3:16-17, “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*”

Paul said in 1 Tim. 1:15, “*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*”

Paul was certainly thankful that Christ saved him. John 20:21, “*Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*”

We have been ordered to go, as well.

We want to note that Jesus dealt with people personally. He told Nicodemus. John 3:3, “*... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*”

He taught the woman at the Well. John 4:25-26, *“The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.”*

He invited himself to the house of Zacchaeus. Luke 19:5, *“And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.”*

You might think that was pretty bold. Sometimes we need to be bold.

God had only one begotten Son and He was a preacher and teacher. We can evangelize at a personal level, as well. Not all teaching is to be done from the pulpit.

Evangelizing is urgent.

Souls that do not hear and obey the gospel will not be saved.

2 Thess.1:7-9, *“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”*

Brothers & Sisters, the receptacle for lost souls is horrible. It is a place of torment (pain, weeping, and gnashing of teeth). It is a place of darkness. It is eternal. Matt. 25:46, *“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”*

Every minute souls are dying — do we feel for them? Jesus saw the urgency of saving sinners. He died for them.

Paul felt the urgency. Col. 1:28, *“Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”*

Jesus has a message for us, as well.

Souls that do not bring the message will be lost also.

- Ezek. 3:16-20, *“And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if*

thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

- James 4:17, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

Thus, evangelism saves not only the sinner but the messenger, as well.

Evangelize To Meet the World’s Need.

There are some people who think everyone is going to be saved. How sadly mistaken and shocked they’re going to be! Matt. 7:13-14, “*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*”

Hell is not a popular subject in America today, but we cannot escape its reality — ignoring it will not make it go away! Jesus spoke often of hell and warned people of the danger of going there.

Someone may suggest it is not loving to speak of hell, but love warns of dangers — what is unloving is to know of a danger and remain silent about it!

Rev. 20:15, “*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*” That’s about a great a danger I can think of.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem, because the people would not accept him. Matt. 23:37-38, “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*”

Paul agonized over Athens. Acts 17:16, “*Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.*”

Where is our concern and agony for the lost? People without God are harassed, helpless, downcast and distressed. They are without hope and utterly lost in sin.

Sin ravages our country and our neighborhoods. It tears apart homes and lives and makes life utterly ugly. The blood of Jesus and the gospel is our only solution!

- Acts 2:40, “*And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*”
- Gal. 1:4, “*Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.*”

We should never hope for anyone to have some tragedy in this life. If it was within our power, we would do everything we could to prevent someone from...

- Loss of a limb, eye.
- Loss of a job.
- Loss of a house.
- Loss of a loved one.

Spending an eternity in hell is worse than all these things. We need to seek and save the lost, as did our Lord.

Evangelism is commanded.

Jesus’ purpose in coming and dying was to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1:15, “*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*”

All God’s saved are commanded to preach and teach. Mark 16:15-16, “*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*”

Paul understood the gospel to be the gospel of reconciliation (sinners reconciled to God). 2 Cor. 5:18-19, “*And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*”

The early church took the command of the Lord seriously. Acts 8:4, “*Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.*”

We should take His commands seriously, as well.

Evangelism makes us co-laborers with God.

2 Cor. 6:1, *“We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”*

He uses us to spread His gospel. 2 Cor. 4:7, *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”*

It is a great honor to work with God in this great effort. When we work for Him He works for us.

Do you feel good in working with God? Do you ever think about it? It should be something that we enjoy doing constantly.

Evangelism operates on the law of reaping and sowing.

Gal. 6:7, *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”*

The word is the seed. Luke 8:11, *“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.”* That seed must be sown for there to be a harvest.

Examples from Acts:

- 3,000 added. Acts 2:41, *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”*
- 5,000. Acts 4:4, *“Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.”*
- Multitudes. Acts 5:14, *“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”*

Unless we evangelize (teach the word to the lost), many will die that we could have helped.

Evangelize To Fulfill Our Inner Compulsions.

When the Sanhedrin commanded the apostles to quit preaching the name of Jesus, the apostles said in: Acts 4:19-20, *“But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”*

- It's like a woman who received an engagement ring, it is hard to be silent.
- It's like a young couple expecting a baby, it is hard to be silent.
- It's good news we have for the lost.

2 Cor. 5:14-15, *“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”*

When we become Christians we live for Christ. Rom. 1:14-16, *“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

Paul said:

- I am under obligation.
- I am eager.
- I am not ashamed.

Acts 20:24, *“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”*

Paul indicated that his service to God was more important than his own life. Do you have that kind of attitude?

To Make Disciples.

God not only wants us to teach and reach out, He wants disciples.

Disciples are people who follow Jesus and are interested in training others to do the same.

Are you a disciple? A mature, responsible, reproducing follower!

If you had a friend who wanted to become a Christian, could you teach him? 2 Tim. 2:2, *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*

Be ready always to give an answer.

1 Pet. 3:15, “*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*”

To do this we must study. 2 Tim. 2:15, “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”

Is our attitude like that of the rich young ruler? Do we want to serve Jesus, but not have to put ourselves out for Him?

Many hours are spent in this old world preparing ourselves for a good social life. What about our Christian life?

Acts 17:11, “*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*”

A good attitude is essential. Listen to the attitudes expressed in the following passages:

- 1 Pet. 3:15, “*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*”
- Col. 4:6, “*Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*”
- 2 Tim. 2:25, “*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth,*”

Conclusion.

Can Jesus count on you?

What is your attitude to evangelizing the world?

Will the generations coming on know the truth? Will our children follow Jesus?

Will our neighbors know we love the Lord and serve Him?

Will you have time for the Lord?

Will you go to heaven when you die?

