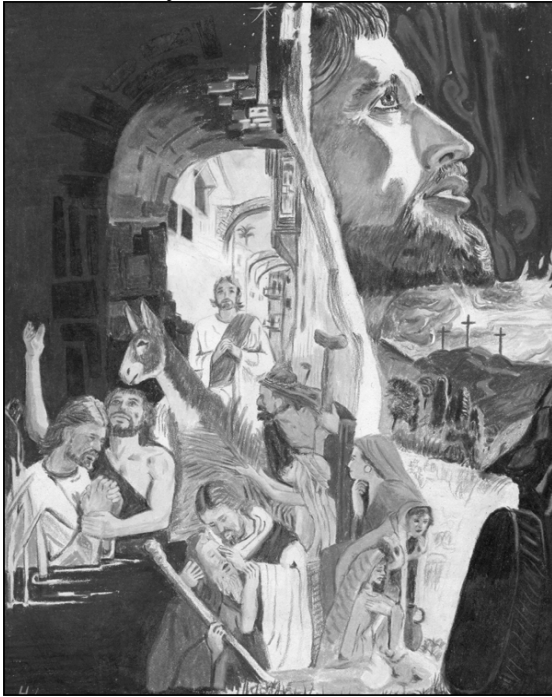


THE WORD – Part X

The Attitude of Christ



Webster's dictionary defines attitude as "1. The posture or position of a person showing or meant to show a mental state, emotion or mood. 2. The manner of acting, feeling or thinking that shows one's disposition or opinion." There are two professions that use the word attitude. One is aeronautics where the word attitude means the position of an aircraft in relation to a given point of reference. The other is in artwork where it means the posture, disposition or action in which a figure is placed. There are four places in the New Testament where the word is directly used, though translated differently: Ephesians 4:23, Philippians 2:5, 1 Peter 4:1 and Hebrews 4:12. The New

International Version translates the word spirit in Ephesians as attitude, though the actual word used in the Greek is pneuma, which is usually translated as spirit. In Philippians they translate the word mind (the Greek is phroneo) as attitude and in 1 Peter they translate the word ennoia, which means intent, as attitude. In Hebrews the writer pens these words: "The word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (NASB) The NIV combines the two words, thoughts and intentions as one and uses the word attitude, primarily because the word used here in the Greek is enthumensis, which means the deliberations, or thoughts and intentions of the mind.

I find it to be no accident that the New Testament writers often spoke about renewing the mind as having a different spirit (Ephesians 4:23) and willingly laying down one attitude of the human mind in order to have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). Peter writes: "Therefore since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose (here is our word ennoia which is translated as attitude), because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." We see here a basic blueprint that will help us to change on a daily basis from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of Christ. The writer to the Hebrews makes it clear that only the word of God is sharp enough to help us divide and discern between our ever-changing attitudes

of how we feel and what we think and line it up with how God feels and thinks. Now we can get an understanding of why Webster's dictionary defines the word attitude in the way it does. God, Almighty, in His fantastic mind, spirit and being, spread the galaxies like a master artist, positioning earth and each human being in relationship to another and their environment in order to occupy and change the earth and its inhabitants from the control of satan to the sustaining power of the kingdom of Christ. Love is the attitude or motivating factor in Christ's kingdom. He has designed faith as the key that unlocks the door and hope as the highway we travel on while ministering in this kingdom. He places us in relation to one another so that we can help each other through loving kindness, expose those parts of our attitude that have nothing to do with Christ and His kingdom. In love we can discern when sin's attitude is a part of how we think and when our enemy has infiltrated one of these attitudes. We can move through the power of Jesus' name and blood to expose and remove that enemy or habit or thought which blocks us from fulfilling our purpose in Christ's kingdom.

By soaking in God's word we get to see His feelings, attitudes and opinions on any given subject. And like Jesus said all throughout the Gospels, we begin to do only that which we see God, the Father doing. We begin to realize that all He does He does for love. Listen to what Nehemiah wrote concerning God's attitude about His people after they had miserably failed Him and His kingdom: "But they, our fathers acted arrogantly; They

became stubborn and would not listen to Thy commandments. And they refused to listen, and did not remember Thy wondrous deeds which Thou had performed among them. So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But Thou art a God of forgiveness; gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness; and Thou did not forsake them.” (NASB; Nehemiah 9:16, 17) Eventually God sent His Son, Jesus, the incarnate Word of God to show us exactly what His attitude is. When our music, our creativity and our professions in life do not reflect Christ’s attitude, we open ourselves up to destruction as Israel’s leaders did of old. There are many in religious circles that believe it is wrong to explore science and the arts. There are those outside of the church that feel that God is trying to stop all their fun or stifle creativity and scientific exploration. Both of these attitudes stem from a lack of knowing Christ’s mind and attitude. Who better to lead and guide us scientifically and artistically than the One that made the universe, while painting and sculpting it from thin air? (Psalm 102:25-27; Isaiah 48:13; Job 38 & 39; Proverbs 8:22-36) Since He planted a baby in a virgin’s womb I think He can solve a few DNA formulas. The issue is not who He is, but our attitude of who He is.

Imagine for a minute that you created the world and every living creature in it. Your holiness makes it impossible for you to speak with these creatures face to face, or else they will burn up on the spot. So instead

you send your Spirit and your Son to speak with them. But they have their own opinions and choose to ignore you and start tinkering with the world you created. What would you do? Try to talk with them some more? Try to reach one or two, or a handful of people in an effort to have them reach the rest? You know that their constant tinkering and outright violence is going to ruin their world. The problem, of course with our imaginary scenario is that it does not take into account the fact that God knows exactly what we will and will not do. He does not ask us to resolve the dilemma that this creates for our own minds, but to simply believe that He is. Once we believe and decide to change our thinking, then we find Him to be a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Whether it is for the sake of creativity or science, feeding a planet or putting humans in space, He will reward us with the answers that we need when we do things according to His position, opinion and attitude. In this way we keep the earth in perfect balance by doing no harm and furthering our environment’s health and wellbeing. I’m not sure exactly of all the harmful effects which abortion, sexual abnormalities, alcohol and drugs have on our planet, but these things certainly take a toll on our attitudes and how we treat one another. Life is cheapened and committing crimes against one another and the environment (including the animal kingdom) become easier to do.

In God’s loving mercy He shows us the way through His word and an ancient people (the Jews). We see the mistakes and successes

they made throughout the centuries. In reading God’s word we see a solid reflection of what we could look like (Jew, Gentile, Muslim and Christian) if we choose to change our attitude and become like that baby planted in a virgin’s womb so many centuries ago. When we acknowledge His supernatural power to change us and change our attitude, an amazing thing takes place: The miracle of a virgin birth takes place in our own lives. No, I don’t mean we have babies, but that a new life of purity is formed in us. Hope is made alive while holy love is no longer hard to act upon. We believe, and a life of faith and miracles awaits us. Will everyone accept this attitude change? Sadly, no. The word of God tells us very plainly that eventually those that do not accept meet an end of no faith, hope or love. God gives each and every one of us a certain amount of years on this planet to exchange our human attitude for Jesus’ attitude. What we do with God’s word is crucial. Don’t take my word for it, check it out for yourself. We send Bibles all around the world, free of charge with no strings attached. This holiday season let us send you a Bible. We will not try to contact you or harass you for donations. Email or send us an address where the Bible can be mailed to. Just click on the contact us link. For those of you that have a Bible but never get the chance to study it, open it up, you’ll be amazed at what you will find. Many blessings in Christ for a healthy and happy New Year. Log on next month for more.....

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