

# The New Self <sup>(3)</sup>

Our behavior is very often a direct reflection of our attitude. For example, when a child has an ice cream cone in his hand this child is usually happy. If that ice cream falls to the ground it is easy to see the child's behavior and attitude change. This can be seen in your own life as well. How is your attitude when a friend talks poorly of you? When you inherit a large amount of money? When someone pays a debt you owe? This last question usually produces a humble attitude for the person being helped. The best example of this is Jesus dying on the cross and paying our sin debt that we could not possibly pay.

## **Philippians 2:5 & 8**

**5 "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who...**

**8 ...Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."**

Remember: We can't always pick our feelings, but we can choose our attitude.

- Was Jesus humble or proud while He was on earth? \_\_\_\_\_
- Then what should our attitude be towards others? \_\_\_ Humble or \_\_\_ Proud

*Tip:  
Praying before  
or during a  
stressful event  
can really  
change your  
attitude about  
it.*

## **Mark 10:45**

**"For even the Son of Man (Jesus) did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

- From this verse, Jesus came to be served by all.  
\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False
- My attitude has been the same as Jesus.' \_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

Not only did Jesus have an attitude of humility about Himself, He also held this same humble attitude while serving others.

## **1 Peter 5:5**

**You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders: and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the**

*Humility* is not thinking poorly of yourself, but thinking realistically about yourself and others around you in light of what Jesus has done for us.

***proud, but gives grace to the humble.***

- What does God give to the humble? \_\_\_\_\_
- What does God do to the proud? \_\_\_\_\_

Today's society does not promote humility. Rather, it suggests that we look out for ourselves first even at the cost of others. What should our attitude be toward others?

***Philippians 2:4***

***"Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others"***

- You should look out for your own interests and maybe others interests if you feel like it. True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_

Our attitude is very important to God since it directly affects the way we relate with Him and others around us. This relation that we have with Him is important to Him, and our focus on others will direct our behavior.

***Focus***

People have a natural tendency to look out for themselves. The world teaches us this. However, Jesus had a radical view concerning the way His followers should view others. He tells us to look out for others *before* we look out for ourselves. We need to place the needs and wants of others above our own. As a believer in Jesus Christ our focus needs to turn away from ourselves and onto others.

One way we can look out for others is by lifting them up and challenging them to honor the Lord with their lives. We call this ***Encouragement***.

*Tip:  
Ask yourself the question, "What would make others feel more important?"*

***1 Thessalonians 5:11***

***Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.***

- Scripture is telling us to \_\_\_\_\_ one another.
- The purpose of encouragement is to \_\_\_\_\_ each other up.

One problem that many believers discover is that we are so programmed to push others down in order to lift ourselves up, that our focus is completely self driven. We are naturally selfish. God encourages us to turn from this old nature and focus on others first.

***Philippians 2:3-4***

***3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.***

- How are we to consider others? vs. 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- These verses encourage us to look out for “number one.” True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_

***Change***

Since your new life started you should have hopefully noticed a change in your life. This change can be anything from your thoughts, to your actions, to your ability to do things for others. As we discussed earlier, before we became a member of God’s family we did not please Him because our lives were centered around the sinful flesh.

***Romans 8:8***

***And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.***

- In the \_\_\_\_\_ we cannot please God.
- What does it mean to be in the flesh?

In this verse we see that we cannot please God when we are living for the flesh. In other words, when we are controlled by our own lusts and desires we do not please God. So is there a way to please God?

***Hebrews 11:6***

***And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.***

- By \_\_\_\_\_ we please God.
- Without \_\_\_\_\_ it is *IMPOSSIBLE* to please God.

We see that God is pleased with us through our faith in Him. As we grow in our knowledge and understanding of Him and His Son Jesus, we choose to either live our lives according His ways, or after the old ways of our flesh.

There needs to be a difference not only in our attitude and focus, but also in our actions. If we claim to be believers in Jesus – Christians, then we need to act more like the one who saved us.

God has a plan for each of us. This plan involves His love for us and our obedience to His word. It is good to know that **our obedience does not affect His love for us**, it is always there.

***Jeremiah 29:11***

***For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.***

- Have your plans always worked out for your benefit? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
- Does God seem to know what He wants to do with you? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

***Ephesians 2:10***

***For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.***

- What did God prepare beforehand for us? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why did He create them? \_\_\_\_\_

We can see from these verses that God has a plan, a calling, for all believers. Some of these plans can be to go into ministry, or to glorify God with whatever position you may find yourself in. However, to understand this calling we have to see

***Calling:***  
God inspiring you to do something for His kingdom.

through God's eyes. This may require us to change our thinking. Remember, many of us have lived so long in the world without knowing Jesus that His thoughts may seem strange to us.

Changing ourselves to be more like Christ pleases God and gives us a unique perspective of this world. You may stop seeing the world as you once did, and start seeing the world as Jesus does. It is a world that needs Him more than anything else. Becoming more like Jesus sets us apart from the sin of the world and sanctifies us unto God and the plans He has for us.

***Sanctification:***

Setting yourself apart, in order to be more like Jesus.

*Tip:*

*Reading your Bible and praying for guidance will affect the way you see the world, and may prompt you to act more like Christ.*

***Bad things happen***

At some point in the life of every human being the realization that life isn't a walk through a beautiful garden of opportunity occurs. Not every dream will come true, and it's a blessing if a person even sees one come to life. After watching just five or ten minutes of the news, we are bombarded with a hundred things that went wrong today. With all the pain that life can bring, where does God come into play? As we have already discussed, God does have a plan for us, however, sometimes people chose to follow their own plans and run against God's desire for their lives.

There are some people who will attempt to preach that if you please God, He will bless you and everything will go as you would like. They say that if you do certain things or give money, that God will rain flowers onto your life. However, there is a problem with this. **God is not a vending machine.** God does promise to bless us and reward us, but it may not always be in the way we think.

There is no promise in the Bible for an easy life. The Christian life is a way which has its own patches of hardships and storms, but what does that mean? Why is it, when we become God's children, that we still have to suffer through life's trouble? There are three things we, as Christians, have to remember about this life.

1. Bad things do happen, but God is there with us and will give us peace and contentment

**Romans 8:28**

**And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose**

2. God has a plan for our lives in this world; nothing can destroy His plans.

**Proverbs 21:30**

**There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the LORD.**

3. There is a better place to come

**1 Corinthians 2:9**

**but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."**

The thing we have to remember is that God will always be there. Remember, He promised to never leave you nor will He give up on you. You are now a part of His family, and He cares for you, and he wants you to be more like Jesus and let Him shine through you. A popular illustration of life's difficulties is a storm. Storms are frightening and can be dangerous, but God doesn't always stop the storms of life. Sometimes, He will just hold you through them. Because God doesn't stop life's difficulties from happening, it doesn't mean that He isn't there or has abandoned you. He wants us to trust and rely on Him. If we allow Him to work in us and listen to Him speaking to our hearts, we will grow in peace through these times. Look at the next verse and see this promise in action.

**John 14:27**

**Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.**

God is in control. We as Christians have the greatest hope in the world. At times, when life becomes difficult, we can become caught up in it and fall into despair. You may think that your life has just been a waste or that it is such a tragedy that so much trouble followed you, however, for a Christian there is good news. This life isn't the end of the journey.

### *Discussion Questions*

- 1. What is the difference between feelings and attitude? What can we do to affect change on them?*
- 2. One thing we can do right now to be more like Jesus is to encourage others around us. List some ways that you could encourage your family, friends and strangers around you.*
- 3. Have you noticed any changes since you first believed in Jesus? If so, what?*
- 4. How is sanctification important in what God is calling us to do? Do you feel God calling you to do anything specific?*
- 5. What would you say to someone who claims that they refuse to believe in God who made this life so unfair and hard?*
- 6. Define the following terms*  
*Unconditional:*  
  
*Humility:*  
  
*Calling*  
  
*Sanctification:*