

God's Word on Governing

A Study
Through Discussion

Part XII: Attitude Check

By Curran Tiffany

XII. ATTITUDE CHECK

"Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life."

-Proverbs 4:23

"For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts of lust, theft, murder, adultery...."

-Mark 7:21

"The inner world of the spiritual must govern the outer world of activity."

-Gordon MacDonald

It is time for a check of our inner attitudes, as we conclude our study of governing, with another look at this basic level of all government.

1. Attitude in the family

What are the first two admonitions under the general injunction to "be subject to one another"? Eph. 5:21 (vv. 22 and 28)

What attitude in God is pictured as that of the good father toward children? (Ps.103:13)

2. Attitude in the fellowship

Who is to clothe you with humility toward whom? (1 Peter 5:5)

Do you find your attitude sometimes generates "opposition"?

How does this attitude relate to government --mutual correction and direction--within the church fellowship? (Eph. 5:21)

Fear of whom is to motivate mutual subjection?

What attitude is to characterize those who lead in the church? (Mark 10:42-44)

3. Attitude in the workplace.

What attitude of the heart is to characterize your responding to leadership here? (Col. 3:22)

Do you allow a multiplicity of personal objectives to cloud the work time for which you are paid?

How may you school yourself to consciously view your efforts in the workplace as service to Christ? (Col.3:23)

Do you have distaste for (despise?) the very idea of someone having authority (“government”, “dominion”) over you? (II Peter 2:9-10)

What does Jesus say should be done with such wrong attitudes? (Mark 9:47)

4. What next?

Our first concern must be to fulfilling our responsibilities in our primary jurisdiction—self government.

The pattern of “self-government” which begins with your own self-discipline is the foundation of strength upon which families and companies and other “governments” may build their own stewardship. The more effective the self-government of any association of people, the more they demonstrate good stewardship of their liberties. Thus they may qualify for greater liberty at the hand of God who can grant them “favor” in the eyes of rulers.

We are not able, nor did God intend for us to pursue discipleship with Him alone, that is, without working with other disciples. We should meet regularly with one or a few growing believers for mutual sharing and encouragement in Christian growth. (Where your spouse is willing, begin with him or her. Otherwise choose a partner of the same sex.) Some additional verses showing that the Lord expects this sort of mutual admonition society in the church include James 5:16; Eph.4:25; Col. 3:16; Rom.15:14; Rom.12:10; Heb.10:25.

When we pursue sound self-government within the fellowship of believers, empowerment for more effective service follows. If we are good servants, God may “raise us up”. This is not to suggest that promotion is our aim in life. (Matt. 10:38-39; Mk. 8:34-35; Lk. 9:23-24.) He raises us up to entrust us with more of His works and service.