A SERVANT'S ATTITUDE

Luke 17:7-10
9/1/02

INTRODUCTION:

***As God's servants, we must have the <u>attitude</u> God expects.**

What type of attitude does God expect?

I. A <u>PATIENT</u> ATTITUDE (v. 7-9)

A. Through Unending Labor (v. 7-8)

B. Through Unpraised Labor (v. 9)

II. A <u>HUMBLE</u> ATTITUDE (v. 10)

A. Through a proper evaluation of <u>who you are</u> (slave)

B. Through a proper evaluation of <u>what you do</u> (service)

CONCLUSION:

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INTRODUCTION:
We are Servants of the Lord:

Everyone Serves Somebody

Jos 24:15 ¶ And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

You can't serve God and Self at the same time!
Matthew 6:24
No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Whom do you serve?

Matthew 4:10
Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and **him only shalt thou serve**.

As servants of God, many times we will perform a service and someone else will be thanked and credited for it.

Our natural reaction is to be on the verge of saying, "The credit belonged to me."

A small sign I read once comes to my mind regarding this: "There is no limit to the good that a man can do, if he doesn't care who gets the credit."

That's the attitude of a true servant of God.

Before we were saved, we were "servants of sin" (Jn. 8:24). Before we were saved, we were slaves of Satan, as puppets, blinded.

Rom. 6:17-18 - "But God be thanked that though you were the slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness!"

Rom. 6:22 - "But now having been set free from sin, and having become <u>slaves</u> of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life."

We have gone from:

1. Sin to a Savior
2. Spiritual poverty to spiritual riches
3. Spiritual blindness to the Light of the world
4. Fear to peace
5. The wrath of God to the grace of God
6. Death to everlasting life
7. Being an instrument of Satan to being an ambassador of Christ

We are now God's servants!
It is a blessing to Serve our Great Lord!

Some encouragement for weary servants:

1. ***Serving the Lord*…Returns the Greatest <u>Gratitude</u>**
   Hebrews 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:
2. ***Serving the Lord*…Fulfills Life's Greatest <u>Purpose</u>**
   1 Cor. 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.
3. ***Serving the Lord*…Meets People's Greatest <u>Needs</u>**
   2 Corinthians 5:18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;
   2 Cor. 9:12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;
4. ***Serving the Lord*…Taps into the Greatest <u>Power</u>**
   Col. 1:29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.
5. ***Serving the Lord*…Receives the Greatest <u>Honor</u>**
   John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.
6. ***Serving the Lord*…Pays the Greatest <u>Rewards</u>**
   1 Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
7. ***Serving the Lord*…Fills the Heart with the Greatest <u>Joy</u>**
   1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?
   John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

8. ***Serving the Lord*…Brings God the Utmost <u>Pleasure</u>**
   2 Cor. 5:9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

The issue I would like to discuss today does not deal so much with the WHY I should Serve, but the HOW. What should my attitude be as a servant? Attitude is vitally important. Attitude is everything!

READ Luke 17:7-10

***As God's servants, we must have the <u>attitude</u> God expects.**

What type of attitude does God expect?

I. A PATIENT ATTITUDE (v. 7-9)

A. Through Unending Labor (v. 7-8)

ILLUS: the hard-working servant

1. A servant doesn't expect to be served but to serve.

*Moody said: "The measure of a man is not how many servants he has, but how many he serves."

2. The ministry (whatever it is for you) is constant labor.

"A father works from sun to sun, but a mother's work is never done."

Jesus said: "I must work the works..."

Our work is not done yet! Despite victories in the past, keep going.

3. A servant gives untiring effort for his Master (v. 8)

Unending devotion, unending faithfulness, unending forgiveness -- CONTEXT (v. 3 - 5)

4. Our rest and reward is future. ("afterward ye shall eat and drink")

We may not always be rewarded in this life.

Jesus did not have a bed of roses. "I came not to be ministered unto but to minister..."

A king is usually catered to.

Christ's crowning day is coming. Phil. 2 - "Let this mind be in you . . ."

B. Through Unpraised Labor

1. We don't live for a pat on the back (If that is your motive for service [recognition by others] then you will only serve as long as you are getting it).

   ILLUS: A man who was known for his servant attitude was asked, "How do you know when you have a servant's attitude?" The reply: "By how you act when you are treated like one."

   Context v. 11-18 - Ten lepers cleansed - only one gave thanks.

   God's approval of your life is <u>not</u> determined by how things are going for you - That's pragmatism

   We <u>do right</u> whether the blessings are falling or not!

2. The Bible doesn't ever say God will <u>thank</u> us when we get to Heaven.

   Rom. 12:1-2 - "...This is your <u>reasonable</u> service."

   Our motive is the "well done" of Christ.

II. A <u>HUMBLE</u> ATTITUDE (v. 10)

"When you shall have done <u>all</u>"

--We <u>owe</u> our Creator - 100% is expected.

--No picking and choosing of what commands to obey.

--It's all or nothing for God.

A. Through a proper evaluation of <u>who you are</u> (slave)

"We are unprofitable servants"

1. "Unprofitable" = worthless; unworthy

   Unworthy to belong to the King of kings

   Unworthy to have the sacred task of being ambassadors

   *All we do is done by God through us. ("Without Me ye can do nothing")

   "What do you have that ye have not received..."

2. "Servants" = minister, slave ("bondslave" - Paul, Rom. 1:1)

   Paul to the Corinthians said, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." (I Cor. 4:1-2)

   Word "ministers" = lowest form of slavery

   Referred to the man who rode on the lowest level of the galley ship. On this ship were three levels of oars. This slave rode on the very bottom, through an unbelievable existence of pain and agony, of strenuous work and whippings on the bare back.

   "We may easily be too big for God to use, but never too small" (Moody) (SEE Mk. 10:42-45).

   God is more concerned with what we <u>are</u> than what we <u>do</u>.

   If you view yourself as an "unworthy servant" then you will have a humble attitude.

B. Through a proper evaluation of <u>what you do</u> (service)

"We have done" - achieved, helped, were useful -- in that which was our duty to do!

1. A servant is willing to do the lowest tasks (EX: Jesus washing feet - Jn. 13:1-20).

2. A servant will do his duty.

   With a devoted attitude:
   1. obligation
   2. faithfulness

   Solomon said that the conclusion of the whole matter is to "fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13).

   We are obligated, we ought, must, bound, indebted, to do what God expects in humility.

   a. If we could go back in time and ask the Apostles who lived and suffered and died for the cause of Christ, "Why did you do it?" --They would reply, "We have just done what was expected of us - we did that which was our duty to do."

   b. The early church martyrs who were beheaded, tarred and feathered burned alive . . . They would reply "We have just done what was our duty to do"

   c. Those suffering under communist control in other countries . . . They would reply, "We have just done that which was our duty to do."

CONCLUSION:

We are not sacrificing a thing when we humbly surrender our attitudes and actions to the Lord. It is what is expected of you.

Are you a servant with the attitude God expects? Ministering in every way possible, sweating, crying, striving, and enduring with patience and humility?

Remember the servant's attitude.

If we lived every second of every minute of every day, totally for the Lord, our attitude about ourselves ought to be, "We are unprofitable servants. . ."