

Attitudes Toward God

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Intro. There are many attitudes people have towards God.

- A. God the Father is looked upon in various ways.
 - 1) Sometimes with doubt.
 - 2) Sometimes as a cosmic killjoy who doesn't want man to have any fun.
 - 3) Other extreme: A supernatural vending machine who wants you to be healthy, wealthy, & wise!
- B. God the Son also looked upon in various ways.
 - 1) As a great teacher or prophet and no more.
 - 2) As a mythical figure but not literal.
 - 3) As anything BUT Lord and Savior of us all.
- C. God the Holy Spirit
 - 1) Some think of Him as some sort of mysterious ghost.
 - 2) Or as a spiritual gift-giving force who likes to "slay"!
- D. Let's see what God says our attitude towards Him should be.

I. We should have a dependent attitude toward Him.

- A. Our very life is dependent on Him. He created us after the same attributes that He Himself possesses.

Gen. 1:26-27 (read)

- 1) The triune God (plural) made man a triune being.
(Body, soul, & spirit)
- 2) We resemble Him in our very nature (not essence)
 - a. We are intelligent, willing and moral.

- B. He is our sustainer.

Acts 17:28 (read)

- 1) *"The expression "in him" evidently means by him; by his originally forming us, and continually sustaining us. No words can better express our constant dependence on God."* (from Barnes' Notes)
- 2) Often we want to believe our sustenance is by our own devices. We forget to acknowledge God.
 - a. **James 1:17** *"Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow."*
 - b. His light never dims nor do His blessings diminish.

II. We ought to think of Him as Father.

- A. It is a reflection of His love toward us.

1) **1 John 3:1-2 (read)**

- a. Should be awestruck when we consider what it means.
- b. **Vs 2** - He is saving up a surprise for us for later!

- B. We can enjoy a close, personal relationship here & now.

1) **Rom. 8:14-17 (read)**

- a. *"ABBA"* similar to our *"daddy"*
- b. Imagine: God giving us a term of endearment for Him!
- 2) He desires more than just legalistic obedience, He wants a relationship with His kids.
 - a. **Vs 16** - The Spirit He has given us bears witness with us that we are sons & daughters and heirs.
(If we are led by the Spirit)

C. Like any loving Father, He disciplines His children.

Heb. 12:7-13

- 1) How many times have we told our own children,
“*I discipline you because I love you!*”?
 - a. Same with our Father. **Vss 7-10 (read)**
- 2) Consider the word “*discipline*” Gr. “*paideia*”
 - 1) *The whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment). It also includes the training and care of the body*
 - 2) *Whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing passions.*
 - a) *Instruction which aims at increasing virtue (Thayer’s)*
- 3) It is all aimed at teaching us something, hence we are also called “disciples” (students, learners)
 - a. **Vs 11 (read)** The wonderful result of learning from our Dad.
 - b. **Vss 12-13** - We are disciplined to make us stronger and more stable.
- 4) We are disciplined in various ways:
 - a. By the study AND application of His word.
 - b. By more mature bros. & sis.
 - c. By suffering consequences of wrong decisions.
 - d. By persecutions to make us stronger.
 - e. The list can go on
- 5) He disciplines us to give us self control so we don’t get side tracked.
 - a. Undisciplined person is like the farmer who went out to gather eggs. Walking across yard to henhouse, noticed pump was leaking. Went to get a washer from barn, noticed hayloft needed straightening, so he went to get the pitchfork. He noticed the pitchfork needed a new handle, so he went to town to buy one. Obviously, no eggs got gathered!

III. We ought to love Him.

A. Loving Him is the most important thing we can do.

1) **Matt. 22:37-38 (read)**

- a. Heart - All our emotions & affections
- b. Soul - Our very lives
- c. Mind - Submitting our intellect to him, to learn from Him (Disciple)
- d. **Mark 12:30** adds “*with all your strength*” - All our abilities should be geared to serving Him.

B. If we truly love Him, then we will obey Him.

1) **John 14:15** “*If you love Me, you will keep my commandments.*”

2) **1 John 5:3 (read)**

- a. Many people complain that it’s too hard but the verse says it isn’t.
- b. With the right attitude, it won’t be burdensome but rather a blessing.

C. God could have made us robots without a will of our own if all He wanted was strict obedience.

1) He wants obedience AND love from a willing heart.

a. Samuel to Saul:

1 Sam. 15:22b “*..to obey is better than sacrifice.*”

b. It is the *quality* of our obedience that God looks at.

Is it forced or free?

c. **Eph 6:6** “*..not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.*”

2) Only obedient people will go to heaven.

a. **Matt. 7:21 (read)**

Conc. These are only a few of the proper attitudes we should have toward God.

- A. They all stem from believing that He sent Jesus to save us from sin and the horrible consequence: Hell.
 - 1) We must first realize that we need a Savior.
 - a. **Rom. 3:23** “*..for all have sinned..*”
 - 2) The payment for these sins against God is death
(Rom. 6:23) BUT “*the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus or Lord.*”
- B. What hinders you from accepting His gift?