

**Attitude #10 . . . Loving Servant**

**Matthew 5:13-16 Jesus said: "You are the salt of the earth; . . . You are the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."**

**As a new creation in Christ, I share with others the Good News of a risen Savior who makes His people whole.**

The life of a servant is a disciplined life. The discipline is not so much in the serving itself but in the resistance of self. We have a natural desire to be more concerned with ourselves than we do for any other thing or person. We are naturally self-satisfying, self-centered, and self-indulging. Self has always been placed in the number one position of life. Common sense tells us that we should be concerned for ourselves and most importantly the bible gives us the instruction to do so. We are told that our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19**) and we are to glorify God in our bodies. We are told to love our neighbor as ourselves (**Matthew 12:31**), which obviously implies there is no expectation of total self-hatred.

I think that God would have us find a balance in the Christian life where we are not so captivated by our own circumstances and desires that we miss our God given responsibility to serve Him by serving others. It might appear that serving God is separate than serving others but in reality, they go hand in hand.

**Matthew 25:35-40 - For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.**

There are ways that we can serve the Lord by serving others, but we also need to be sure of our motive.

**Colossians 3:22-24 - Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: 23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.**

One of the ways that we can serve the Lord is a way that includes every Christian. The Bible teaches us that every believer has been given "spiritual gifts." These gifts are described in the New Testament primarily in **1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4**. When a person is aware of their spiritual gifts, they will notice that they are better suited to serve the Lord within the areas of their "giftedness." We know that there are things that some Christians are more gifted to do than others but there are certain areas of life that give every believer an opportunity to be a blessing and encouragement. It takes little training and effort to get started and it can produce remarkable results. The area of life that I am referring to is our words....serving the Lord by our words.

**Our text for the lesson:**

**Proverbs 16:23,24 - The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. 24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.**

1. **A direct connection. The heart of the wise teacheth (to be prudent, circumspect) his mouth...**

The Bible teaches there is a direct connection between the heart and the tongue. What comes out of our mouth is what is embedded in the heart. Wisdom in the heart is the main matter; it is wisdom that directs us in speaking. It teaches the mouth what to speak, when to speak and how to speak, so that what is spoken is proper and true. Simply put, apply the heart to wisdom and the mouth will be the evidence of it.

**Matthew 12:34 - O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.**

**Proverbs 16:21 - The wise in heart shall be called prudent (discerning): and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.**

**Proverbs 15:28 - The heart of the righteous studieth (meditate, ponder, imagine) to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.**

**Proverbs 24:1,2 - Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them. 2 For their heart studieth (same word) destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.**

**Job's Commitment:**

**Job 27:3,4 - All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; 4 My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.**

We see from Job's testimony that this was something that he committed himself to do. When we commit to a thing it demands our attention and discipline. Job's commitment does not imply that this would be something that would always be easy for him; in fact, we all know there are times when it is anything but easy. Job's commitment was not a commitment that implies perfection, but it does imply improvement.

**2. A direct result. The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.**

**Psalms 49:3 - My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.**

**Proverbs 3:13 - Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.**

Solomon speaks concerning the result of his commitment. When he says the "**wise man teaches his mouth and adds learning to his lips,**" he speaks of his personal responsibility that will help bring about the positive result. In other words, these things just don't happen, they happen because of our effort and God's method. God's word gives us wisdom and understanding and the man that devotes himself to it will benefit from it. Solomon tells us that "this man **addeth learning to his lips.**" In other words, there is an increase in his learning and not a one day arrival of his learning. Learning is progressive and intentional; we will always have the opportunity to learn but we will never learn unless we take hold of the opportunity.

**3. A soothing comparison. Pleasant (kindness, delightfulness) words are as an honeycomb**

We all need them, and we all need to offer them. Words of godly advice, instruction and comfort are words with far greater advantage and value when they are words from God's word. Listen to what Solomon learned from his father and see if there is any connection.

**Psalms 19:7-10 - The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous**

altogether. **10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.**

We can be sure that Solomon learned these principles from his father David. David described the value of the word of God that we could also describe as "words from God." He placed their value above the most valued thing of his day, the value of gold.

Solomon speaks of pleasant words and Paul speaks of a contrast between corrupt words and words that edify or build up in the following verse.

**Ephesians 4:29 - Let no corrupt (rotten, putrefied) communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying (building up), that it may minister grace unto the hearers.**

**4. A desired necessity. sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.**

**Psalms 119:103 - How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

When the Bible speaks of the bones, it speaks of the strength of the body. This implies that pleasant words go beyond just making us feel good; it implies that they are good for us.

**Proverbs 15:23 - A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!**

We speak wisely when we speak timely. When we speak when we should and do not when we should not, we are being wise. When we speak when our words are needed we are being wise. Many good words have fallen short of the good they might have done when they were spoken at the wrong time. If we speak wisely and timely, it will be for our good and the good of others. We are never being more of a servant than we are when we are speaking kind words, good words, and profitable words to others. May the prayer of our heart and the fruit of our lives bear the words of the Psalmist when he said.....

**Psalms 19:14 - Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.**