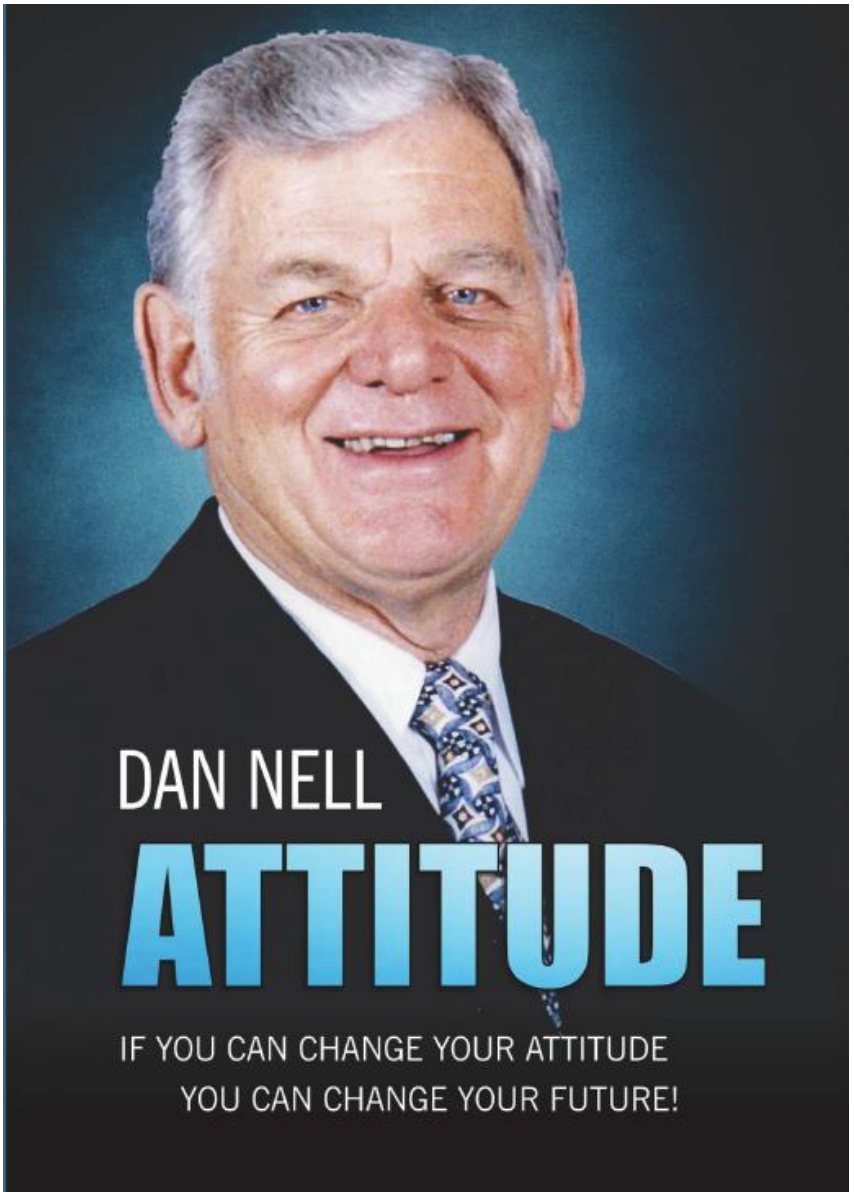




DAN NELL

ATTITUDE

IF YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE
YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR FUTURE!

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to explain what our attitude should be towards people and things. This is not a "self-help" book, but I hope it will provide guidelines concerning your attitude.

I was privileged to write many books before. I see this book on "Attitude" as one of my most important. The reason? Because it is about what you think and what you feel. The Bible teaches us that as a man thinks so is he. If we can change our mind we will be able to change our lifestyle. There is a positive and a negative way that we think and feel.

The best example of a good attitude is found in Jesus Christ. Therefore, we find in Philippians chapter one and two good teaching on attitude. The most outstanding verse is Phil. 2:5, "Let this mind (attitude) be in you which was in Christ Jesus."

The Author: Dan Nell was born in October 1937 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. At the young age of 19, he started his ministry as a youth pastor in July 1957 in Klerksdorp. In April 1959, he married Helene Basson in Bloemfontein.

"Through all these years until today, April 2017, I have come to realise that the Bible is a book about attitude and that I had to work on my attitude. Today I can say, "I am not perfect, God is still working on me. May the Lord help you and I in our striving to gain the attitude of our Master, Jesus Christ."

- Dan Nell, Jeffreys Bay, South Africa

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YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR FUTURE***

Dan Nell

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***THANKS
& APPRECIATION***

DEDICATED TO:

*everyone that desires the attitude of Jesus wherever they may find
themselves so that they can "Impact their world".*

APPRECIATION

*I want to thank each one that encouraged me to write this book.
Thank you to those who helped me edit my book.*

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT ATTITUDE IS AND HOW CAN THE RIGHT ATTITUDE HELP?

ATTITUDE – How you “Think and Feel”

THE Collins Dictionary says this about attitude:

“Your attitude to something is the way that you think and feel about it, especially when this shows in the way you behave.”

Your attitude is how you think and how you feel about people and things. Remember these words: How you “think” and “feel” describes your attitude.

In Philippians 2:5, the New King James Version says:

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

This verse in the Amplified Bible says:

“Let this same attitude and purpose and humble mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Let Him be your example in humility.”

Paul writes in Rom. 12:2-21:-

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given to me to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour giving preference to one another. Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live

peaceable with all men. Beloved do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine. I will repay,' says the Lord...Do not be overcome by evil with good."

Paul writes in Phil. 2:5 about attitude after he understood that we should not do things for self-gain, and that we should think more highly of others than ourselves. Also, that life is not all about us, but also for the interests of others (Phil. 2:3-4).

"For as a man thinks so is he!" (Prov. 23:7) As your attitude is, so will you be!

"Your attitude determines your altitude."

A Confession

"For more than 40 years I congratulated friends on their birthdays, but I confess that there came days that I felt to no longer do this, for those that never did the same on my birthday in all these years. But God spoke to me about my attitude and I confessed it before Him. I am now more enthusiastic than before to keep on contacting them and blessings them on their birthday and on their marriage anniversary."

Right Attitude – Right Integrity

Integrity is to choose what is right; this is what you are when nobody is watching you; it is to live that God and

man can trust you; it is to run after the best of God in every part of your life.

If your attitude is correct you will see yourself as a winner and not as a loser. Then you will believe what God promised us in Gen. 1:28 - to have dominion.

When we change our "thinking box" our actions will show it. Our keys to success are in our minds. Someone said:

"I want to see the future and live there."

What is more than blindness? It is to have sight without having a dream and passion for the future!

Paul Teaches The Philippians About Attitude

To study Philippians chapters one and two will be worth the effort. Paul showed what kind of attitude he had when he wrote to the Philippians in chapter one, verses 3-4

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for all with joy..."

You will have the right attitude if you are thankful for what God has done in your life, when you think of your brothers and sisters and pray for them with a joyful heart.

Paul writes in Phil. 1:12:

“But I want you to know, brethren that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel...”

To show that you have the right attitude will be when you are convinced that the things that happen in your life will be to the glory of God and the spreading of the gospel.

What is your attitude toward preachers? What will really show that your attitude is correct, is when you can say what Paul said in Phil. 1:15-18:

“Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill...What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.”

What was Paul's attitude concerning death?

Phil 1:21-24:

“For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labour; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.”

Paul teaches the church in Philippi to be content.

In Phil. 1:10-12 he writes:

“But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all times I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”

I had to learn what it means to be content. ***You don’t automatically receive contentment when you are born again - you need to learn and acquire it as a new habit.***

If you study Phil. 4:15-19 you will find that Paul had an attitude of thankfulness for the care that he had been receiving from them. He said that because they cared for him God will provide for them. In Phil. 4:19 he writes:

“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Christian confess Phil. 4:19 while they don’t care for others in need. But in this Scripture Paul encourages this church by letting them know that, because they supplied in his need, God will supply in theirs.

Should you live a life by giving to the need of others, you can depend on that God will give to you. In Luke 6:38 Jesus said these words:

“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For

the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

When "Dark Days" Come Our Way

Read: Acts 16:9-40

We read in this portion that Paul went to a place of prayer where women came together. Here he met Lidia that opened her heart for God's word. Her whole family was saved. But then a slave woman with a demonic spirit came and prophesied over Paul. This she did many days until Paul stopped her and drove out this evil spirit.

The people she worked for was upset and brought Paul and Silas to the judges. We read in Acts 16:20-21:

"And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, 'These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble the city; and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.'"

Paul and Silas were beaten and placed in the inner jail and fastened their feet in the stocks. It was real "dark days" for these two men. But what happened then? We read in Acts 16:25:-

"But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's chains were loosed."

Because Paul and Silas had the right attitude - even in the darkest part of prison - by praising God, their cell doors were opened but also those of the other prisoners. If we have the right attitude, as they had, we will help others to be set free from their darkness.

The earthquake awakened the keeper of the prison, and when he saw all the doors were open, he wanted to kill himself with his sword, but Paul stopped him in doing that. That same night he and his household were saved and baptized.

The next day the magistrate sent the police officers to set Paul and Silas free.

“But Paul said to them. ‘They have beaten us openly, ... and have thrown us into prison. And now do they put us out of secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out. Then they (the police) came and pleaded with them and brought them out, and asked them to depart from the city.’”

This made Paul and Silas more than conquerors. Thank God for Rom. 8:37:

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

The Life Application Study Bible states this same verse in the following way: “Believers have always had to face hardships in many forms: persecution, illness, imprisonment, even death”. These could cause them to fear that they have been abandoned by Christ. But Paul exclaims that it is impossible to be separated from

Christ. His death for us is proof of His unconquerable love. Nothing can stop Christ's constant presence with us. God tells us how great His love is so that we feel totally secure in Him. If we choose to believe these overwhelming assurances, we will not be afraid."

In my opinion, this means that our attitude plays an important role in what we choose to believe.

The words, "More than conquerors," describe one who is super victorious, who wins more than the ordinary victory. Your victory over "dark days" will be in your attitude when you can praise God in spite of what happens to you. This can only take place if you think and feel positive.

CHAPTER 2

LEARN FROM THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS

The Gospel of Matthew is Full of “Attitude”

Please go through this Gospel with me.

WHEN Jesus was thirty years of age, He walked a very long distance to be baptized by John, in the Jordan River.

Even if Jesus had no sin and did not need to repent of anything, He wanted to be obedient to His Father and be baptized.

At first John did not want to baptize Jesus because he felt unworthy in doing that. The attitude of Jesus is clearly stated in Matt. 3:15:

“But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him.”

With the devil’s temptation in Matt. 4, the attitude of Jesus was not to fall for any temptation. Every time Jesus was tempted He said:

“It is written...” God’s word is as a sword in your hand.

Matthew 5-7 is all About Attitude.

The heading of this portion in most English Bibles is:

“The Beatitudes.”

Through the years I taught my students it is “Attitudes-to-be.” The Gospel is a message of Attitude. I always have hope for anyone who has the right attitude – even if they should make mistakes.

What Do We Learn About Attitude in “The Beatitudes”?

- *Our Attitude when we are **persecuted** (Matt. 5:10-12).*
- *Our Attitude when we did something **good** (Matt. 5:16).*
- *Our Attitude when we must **reconcile** (Matt. 5:23-26).*

- *Our Attitude when we make a **promise** (Matt. 5:33-37).*
- *Our Attitude not to **pay back** someone (Matt. 5:38-42).*
- *Our Attitude toward our **enemies** (Matt. 5:43-47).*
- *Our Attitude when we **do good** to someone (Matt. 6:1-4).*
- *Our Attitude in **prayer** (Matt. 6:5-8).*
- *Our Attitude when we **fast** (Matt. 6:16-18).*
- *Our Attitude toward **wealth** (Matt. 6:19-21).*
- *Our Attitude toward the things we **see** (Matt. 6:22-23).*
- *Our Attitude toward our daily **need** (Matt. 6:25-34).*
- *Our Attitude toward **other faults** (Matt. 7:1-5).*

Matthew 8

In the beginning of the ministry of Jesus a leper came to be healed (Matt. 8:1-4). The leper fell on the ground and begged Jesus to heal him. He said:

“Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean. Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, ‘I am willing; be cleansed.’”

What is our attitude when we meet people in need? How do we think and feel in our hearts towards them? The same thing happened when Jesus healed the servant of a Centurion (captain) that was paralyzed Matt. 8:7:

“And Jesus said to him, ‘I will come and heal him.’”

The world will be a better place if we as Christians have this kind of attitude to reach out to the needy. Most of the time we want people to come to church so that we can preach the gospel to them. Most people don't go to church. We as the “church” should go to those in need.

Saturday mornings we visit our shopping mall. In our town they know that this is my “church”, where I meet with people, talk to them and even pray for some. One Saturday I dressed in a special way. My wife asked me if I am going to church? My answer was: *“No, I am the church therefore I want to dress like this.”*

Jesus is the Word that became flesh. The Message Bible says in John 1:14:

“The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.”

We should also move into the community.

Our Attitude Towards a Storm

Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25.

Jesus and His disciples were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, when a storm came, "...so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep."

His disciples awoke Him and He rebuked the winds and sea, and there was a great calm. What is our attitude (how do we think and feel) when we have to go through a spiritual storm? Just have the assurance that Jesus is *with you* in your boat, then you will have the strength to rebuke the storms in your life.

How do you understand Rom. 8:28?

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

When trouble comes over you, make sure that you think and feel as someone that believe in God. Someone that knows God will never allow that you be tested more than you can handle.

More About a Storm

In Matt. 14:22-33 we read the great story where Peter walked on water. This was also where Jesus slept in the boat while a storm brought fear in the hearts of the disciples. In verse 24 we read:

"But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary."

The wind was against them.

Perhaps you are in a storm today. Is your family experiencing the stormy winds of trials and tribulations? This is the time that your attitude should play a big role. How you think and feel about your circumstances is very important. Your attitude will determine whether you really believe or whether you fear. Remember that God did not give you a "*spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love and a sound mind*" (2 Tim. 1:7). The word "sound mind" means the ability to understand and make right decisions. It includes the qualities of self-control and self-discipline. Verse 32 says:

"And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased."

When you can get into your 'boat' with the right attitude, the wind *will* calm down!

Today we need people with the right attitude in parliament, in local government, in business, in sport, in the medical world, in universities and all parts of education. Yes, in all spheres of life we need people with the right attitude. They will help toward calming the storms of life and toward us having peace.

Are you one of these people that will live the "Jesus attitude" that we need today?

Our Attitude Towards People in Need

After Jesus healed two blind men He said in Matt.9:30:

“See that no one knows it.”

Every time when the Lord uses us to pray for someone and healing takes place, we must never allow pride in our hearts. God must always get the glory. Yes, you can witness when God did a miracle, but do not boast about it as if we did the miracle.

Jesus attitude when He saw the people as lost sheep.

Matt. 9:36:

“But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.”

The Dakes Annotated Bible describes compassion: *“It is characteristic of God and Christ and should be of believers. Compassion is the drawing and agitation of the innermost parts at the sight of any distressed or miserable object. It causes revolting action in the innermost being to bring deliverance from such unlawful and inhuman misery and suffering.”*

What is our attitude when we see the lost? What is our reaction when we see a drunkard unstable on his feet? Our attitude should be: “That could have been me, if God did not save me.” We should not judge anyone, but our hearts must cry out to God that they would be ready to meet God.

What Was Jesus' Attitude Toward Broken People?

The message Jesus brings is that our attitude toward those that are broken and hurt should be caring and not to break them down further.

We read in Matt. 12:20-21:

"A bruised reed He will not break. And smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; and in His Name Gentiles will trust."

The Message says in Gal. 6:2:

"Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed. Share their burdens, and so complete Christ's law. If you think you are too good for that, you are badly deceived."

In our local church, we appoint "caring shepherds" to reach out to those in need - first for our members but also for those in the community. They pray for the sick. When someone is in hospital, these caring shepherds will even supply food for that family for a week. They will encourage those that need spiritual help with God's word and with prayer.

Even if you are not officially appointed, you can still reach out to those in need - if your attitude is right.

We also read in Matt. 14:14:

“And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude, and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.”

Then Jesus fed five thousand men with five loaves of bread and two fish.

I wonder how many women and children were present on that day? Even today more women go to church. In those days there were no restrictions on how many children each family could have so there could easily have been more than 12,000 people present.

Today it is not easy to know who we must be good to, because of the wrong motives of so many. We must depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, because we have many unemployed people. If you want to be successful in what you do for the Lord, you should ask the Father to give you compassion for people.

For many years I taught believers to discover their ministry and also their gifts, but I would love to add one more gift, and that is “the gift of seeing the need”.

Our Attitude Toward the Sabbath?

Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5.

In Matt. 12:1-8 we realize what Jesus thought and felt concerning the Sabbath. We read that His disciples felt hungry and took some of the grain in a sown field to eat. The reaction of the Pharisees was: “Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!”

From verses 3 to 8 Jesus teaches us what our attitude should be concerning the Sabbath. The Sabbath should never stand in our way if we need to help someone in need. That's why He closed this conversation in verse 8 with:

"For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

In Matt. 12:9-13 we read of the man with the withered hand. Jesus was asked (verse 10):

"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

He then asked the man to stretch out his hand and it was restored as whole as the other.

Today there is a lot of division over the Sabbath and the law of the Old Testament. If you want good advice read the book of Galatians – this will help you understand that we are not under the law but under grace. Thank God for His grace!

Always remember what is written in Rom. 14:5:

"One person esteems one day above another, another esteem every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind."

Our Attitude Toward Negative Critique

Matt.12:22-32; Mrk 3:20-27; Lk 11:14-23.

In Matt. 12:22-32, Jesus healed a demon-possessed blind and mute man. Everyone was amazed but the Pharisees said that Jesus cast out this demon by the power given unto Him by the ruler of the demons (verse 24).

Jesus revealed the correct attitude toward their criticism and we read these words in verses 25-30:

“But Jesus knew their thoughts [their attitude], and said to them: ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?...But I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you...He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.’”

Whatever you do for God, be assured that you are doing it because God wants you to do it. Any negative critique should then have no influence in your life.

Therefore, I always have this saying: If you should speak the truth, then you don’t have to remember what you said.

Your Attitude Determines How You Speak

In Matt. 12:34-37, Jesus taught us this truth:

“...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. For I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

The meaning of “justified” is to declare righteous - in right standing with God.

The moment someone speaks you will know what kind of attitude is in his heart and how “clean” he is inside! In Prov. 18:21 we read:

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”

Test your attitude by the words that flow from your mouth!

Jesus also said in Matt. 15:11, 18-20:

“Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man...those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man...”

Our Attitude When Preaching

Matt. 13:1-30; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15.

In Matt. 13:1-30 we read about "The Parable of the Sower" and "The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares" where we can learn how we should behave when we preach God's Word.

We are only responsible to bring God's Word to the people but we are not responsible what they do with the Word. Some will believe by receiving the Word in good ground. They will produce fruit. But because others' hearts are not prepared' the seed will not be able to grow. By reading "The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares", we will understand that there is an enemy that will come to sow bad things in people's lives. Our attitude should be not to do things that will harm and to hurt the good seed sown in the hearts of people.

It will be a good thing if we understand what Jesus said in verses 27-30. In verse 30 Jesus said:

"Let both (the seed and tares) grow together until the harvest, and at the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into My barn.'"

We must never be guilty of harming the "wheat" by getting rid of the "tares" in people's lives.

When People Are Offended By Us

Jesus' own people in Nazareth offended Him.

We read about this in Matt. 13:53-56.

Matt. 13:57 says:

“So they (His brothers) were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, ‘A prophet is not without honour in his own country and in his own house.’”

No one enjoys to be cast out. But when people should offend you it is very important that you should test yourself how you think and feel. In this Scripture Jesus showed us the correct example.

What Do We Know About Jesus' Family?

When Jesus came again in Nazareth, some enquired about His family. In Matt. 13:55 we read:

“Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon and Judas [not Iskariot]?”

According to this statement, we believe that James was the elder brother of Jesus. In John 7, His brothers were critical toward Him and mocked Him why He didn't go to the feast of the Tabernacles in Jerusalem. In John 7:5 it says:

“For even His brothers did not believe in Him.”

Fortunately, according to Acts 1:13-14, the brothers of Jesus became believers. For our study, I am emphasising verse 14:

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”

I am convinced that Jesus’ brothers became believers through the signs and wonders He did, but also through His attitude.

It is generally accepted that James was the leader of the church in Jerusalem. According to Gal. 1:18-19, James was also known as an apostle. Thank God for the letter he left us what we now call, “The Epistle of James.”

CHAPTER 3

GOOD ATTITUDE WILL LET THE CHURCH GROW

How Did The Church Grow In Jerusalem?

THE Church in Jerusalem grew to more than 100,000 members. The first seven chapters in Acts are all about what happened in the Church of Jerusalem. On the first day, this Church grew with 3,000 members (Acts 2:41).

History tells us they stayed in Jerusalem and most of these people did not go back to their home towns long after this another 5,000 men were added (Acts 4:4). The women and children are not mentioned. Could it have been 10,000 women and 15,000 children?

And in Acts 5:14 we read:

“And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women...”

(Gladly they took notice of them this time.)

In Acts 6:7 we read:

“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

Where Did All This Begin?

Acts 2:42-47 tells us about this. God used to let His Church grow in Jerusalem. It is mentioned that they enjoyed fellowship, breaking of the bread and prayer. Wonders and signs took place. What they had, they shared with each other. Daily they visited God’s house and also visited each other and ate together. They understood what it was to give praise to God. Take another look at verse 47:

“...and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

Can you see? It was their attitude that counted!

We only think that mighty preaching and wonders will fill the church. (If this is true then the churches should all overflow?)

And please hear me, I am not against miracles.

I believe the right attitude will fill the church.

This is what happened in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 4

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE CAN BRING DELIVERANCE

The Attitude Of The Woman of Canaan

IN Matt. 15:21-28, we read of the gentile woman of Canaan whose daughter was possessed by demons. The attitude of this woman was the key to the deliverance of her daughter.

This is because, while she begged Jesus to help her daughter, we read in verse 23:

“But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying: ‘Send her away, for she cries out after us.’”

Jesus also declared that He only came for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He even said in verse 26:

“It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”

Read verses 27-28:

“And she said: Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master’s table. O, woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire. And her daughter was healed from that very hour.”

If our attitude can be like the attitude of this woman and we can hold on to God’s promises, we will see great wonders!

CHAPTER 5

BAD ATTITUDE WORKS LIKE YEAST

The Attitude of the Pharisees and Sadducees

IN Matt. 16:1-16 Jesus tells His disciples to be watchful regarding the attitude of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus said in verse 6:

“Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Attitude is like leaven. It is something small but the effect it has in bread, is big. Attitude works like that.

The Bible teaches us that as a man *thinks*, so he is. The only way you will find out how someone thinks, is when you *hear* what he says and sees what he does.

“Most things we fear in life, never happen!”

“Faith must be in your heart and in your mouth.”

“Faith opens the door but patience keeps it open!.”

CHAPTER 6

**MY ATTITUDE IF
I WANT TO FOLLOW JESUS**

**Our Attitude If We Want To
Be A Disciple Of Jesus**

JESUS gives the answer on this in Matt. 16:24-25:
"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save His life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.'"

The Message Bible translation of these verses reads like this:

“Anyone who intends to come with Me has to let Me lead. You’re not in the driver’s seat, I am. Don’t run from suffering; embrace it. Follow Me and I’ll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, My way, to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?”

It is a privilege to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Nobody must think it will be an easy road.

If my attitude will be His attitude, then self-sacrifice will be God’s way of finding myself.

CHAPTER 7

TEST YOUR ATTITUDE

Jesus' Attitude Towards Paying Taxes

IN Matt. 17:24-27, we read how Jesus paid his temple tax. The tax collectors asked Peter in verse 24:

“Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?”

Jesus had no problem in paying His taxes, even knowing of all the corruption of those working with the tax money.

The answer Jesus gave in verse 27 is profound:

“Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its

mouth, you will find a pièce of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

What a miracle! I never heard of a fish that had a coin in its mouth. But this fish was obedient to Jesus and swam with all the strength it had, to be in front of all the thousands of other fish, to get to the hook of Peter! This fish obeyed more than we do. Many times God must speak to us more than once before we listen and even then we do not necessarily obey!

In Matt. 22:15-22 we read again of taxes. This time Jesus used a Roman coin they called a denarius. The answer Jesus gave them in verses 19-21 is clear:

“Show Me the tax money. So they showed Him a denarius. And He said to them, ‘Whose image and inscription is this?’ They said to Him, ‘Caesar’s.’ And He said to them, ‘Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’”

Our attitude must be to pay our taxes (Rom. 13:1-7).

We must also realize that, because we bear the image of God, we must be willing to give what belongs to God.

What Should Our Attitude Be Toward Children?

In Matt. 18:1-6, Jesus was asked,

“Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus called a little child to Him, and said: “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (v.3-4)

Many times we neglect our children in church. We should not merely want to keep our children busy on a Sunday, so that we as adults can enjoy the service. It is our responsibility to nourish them with God’s word. Our children are not the church of tomorrow - they are the church of today!

Mothers brought their children to Jesus so that He may bless them. The disciples rebuked them, because they felt that Jesus was too busy to take note of the children. But we read in Matt. 19:14,

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’”

George Barna said that the church that ignore their children, did not miss the boat, but missed the ocean!

[George Barna (born 1955) is the founder of The Barna Group, a market research firm specializing in studying the religious beliefs

and behaviour of Americans, and the intersection of faith and culture.]

What is Your Attitude Regarding Forgiveness?

One of the best Scriptures on forgiveness is Matt.18:15-35.

This was my induction sermon in Bloemfontein in 1982. Normally a preacher does not preach a message like this at his welcoming service. But the Spirit of God led me to do this. Never did I know why.

Four months after this sermon the church members were still reconciling with each other and their families. There were families that had not talked to each other for five years! In that time our church grew with about forty new members per month.

Since 1982, I have learned that **"complete forgiveness" happens on three levels:**

The first thing to "Complete Forgiveness" is to get forgiveness from God. 1 John 1:7-9 explains that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness, but it says that we should confess our sins.

Then the second step is to forgive ourselves. There is a lot of Christians that struggle to forgive themselves, while Jesus already forgave them. To help these people I asked them to go in a room, lock the door, stand in front of a mirror and forgive themselves by talking to themselves. This worked every time!

The third thing what we should do to get complete forgiveness is to forgive others. On this Jesus gave a

teaching in Matt. 18. Read this chapter until you understand this truth, not just for yourself but also in order to help others. We forgive others, not because they deserve it, but so that we can be set free! In Luke 6:37 Jesus said:

“Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

It is not an easy thing for us to say we are sorry for the things we said or did. I forgive, not because someone deserve it, but I forgive because I want to be set free.

What is your Attitude Toward Divorced People?

Matt. 19:1-12 is a portion that is often misunderstood. I don't pretend that I have all the answers on this subject. Today we have so many divorced people in our community, but the question is: What is our attitude towards them?

The question the Pharisees asked Jesus was:

“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?” Jesus answered that God, in the beginning, made man male or female, and said: (verse 5-6)

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

The word "joined" comes from the Greek word "prokolian" and according Strong's #1347 the meaning is: *"To glue or cement together; stick to; join firmly. And this includes: faithfulness; loyalty and permanency in relationship."*

It boils down to this: If you marry you should not separate.

Then the Pharisees referred Jesus to the letter Moses gave for divorce. Jesus answered in verse 8-9:

"Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except from sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery, and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

Never forget that God said in Mal. 2:16:

"For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce..."

There is a very old question: "If anyone should marry a divorced person, is that not adultery?" I believe there is only one sin God does not forgive and that is the sin against the Holy Spirit as is written in Matt. 12:31-32.

Therefore, God forgives all other sins. Is that correct? Then He can forgive those that divorced. Thank God that He is righteous and just to forgive us all our sins and cast them away as far the East is from the West, according to 1 John 1:7, 9 and Psalm 103:12.

Divorce broke thousands of lives in our land. We must not break them more, but with love pick them up.

Our Attitude Towards Wealth

Matt. 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-30.

In Matt. 19:16-30 we read of the rich young man who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit the kingdom of God.

Jesus answered him that he should keep God's commandments. Such as: do not kill, do not divorce, do not steal, do not be a false witness, honour your father and mother, and to love your neighbour as yourself.

In Matt. 19:20-21 we read:

“The young man said to Him, ‘all these things I have kept from my youth, what do I still lack?’ Jesus said to him, ‘If you want to be perfect, go sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven, and come, follow Me.’”

This young man's attitude is revealed when he went away sorrowful because he had a lot of wealth which he was not willing to part with. Jesus reaction was that it is not an easy thing for people that own much to go into the kingdom of God. He then uses the example of a camel that can go through the eye of a needle in verse 24. Luckily Jesus adds these words in verse 26:

“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

“The eye of a needle” refers to the small door next to the city gates. In the evening the gates were closed for safety. But then there was a small door that could be used. If someone had a camel, they could enter by this door, but then the package of the camel had to be carried through this door, while the camel had to go through on its knees.

Any person, even if he is rich, can enter God’s kingdom but he will have to unload his “spiritual baggage” and most surely get on his knees in order to enter.

Any person that has the attitude to humble himself and is willing to get rid of the unnecessary baggage they carry, shall be able to enter God’s kingdom.

Luke 12:15 (AMP) says,

“And He [Jesus] said to them, Guard yourselves and keep free from all covetousness (the immoderate desire for wealth, the greedy longing to have more); for a man’s life does not consist in and is not derived from possessing overflowing abundance or that which is over and above his needs.”

The Message translates this verse as follows: “Take care! Protect yourself against the least bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot.”

Then Jesus told them the story of the parable of the rich fool. This farmer was a fool, not because he had a lot of wealth, but because he allowed his possession to possess him.

The Bible says in 1 Tim. 6:6-8:

“Now godliness with contentment is a great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.”

You may possess wealth, because it is not a sin to possess things, but your wealth must not possess you.

What is Your Attitude When You Need to Give?

2 Corinthians 9:7 says,

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”

The Greek word for “cheerful” is “hilarious” meaning to be exuberant and overflowing with joy.

This same verse in the Living Bible says:

“Everyone must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don’t force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the one’s God prizes.”

The same verse in the Amplified Bible says:

“Let each one give as he has made up his own mind and purposed in his heart, not reluctantly or sorrow-fully or under compulsion, for God loves (He takes pleasure in, prizes above other things, and is unwilling to abandon or to do without) a cheerful (joyous, ‘prompt to do it’) giver whose heart is in his giving.”

A farmer cannot make the seed to grow. All that he can do is to prepare the ground. He ploughs the land, plants the seed and cares for it by weeding and seeing that it gets enough water. After this the natural power works so that the grain grows.

I taught my sons: *“If you have a need, sow a seed.” You give yourself out of financial troubles.*

You must never get to the place where you will say: The church just asks for money. And even if you are disappointed with all the beggars holding their hands toward you - keep the right attitude. Be sensitive for God’s Spirit to lead you when you have to give. Looking at the beggar say to yourself: *“There I am going if it was not the grace of God.”*

Our Attitude When it Comes to Compensation

In Matt. 20:1-16 we find Jesus telling a story of the workers in the Vineyard that was hired at different times, but received the same amount for their work on that day.

Those that worked the whole day was angry because they got the same as those that worked for one hour.

The main message of this story is to remind us working for the Lord that He will decide what our reward will be!

Jesus once said in Luke 17:10:

“...when you have done all those things which you are commanded say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

I always thought my Bible School students: *“Whatever you do for God, do it for free. Someone will see what you are doing and pay you for that.”*

Col. 3:17 says:

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

My Attitude Toward My Position in Society?

Matt. 20:17-28; Mark 10:35-45; Luke 18:31-34.

In Matt. 20:17-28 we find a mother asking Jesus to grant that her two sons may sit on the right and left of Jesus in heaven. The answer to this wish was very clear (verses 27-28):

“And whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Jesus was willing to wash His disciples' feet! (Joh. 13)

Today we find so many that rather want to give someone's head a good scrubbing!

My Attitude Toward The Place of Worship?

Matt. 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-17.

Of course we understand today that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are “the church” of Jesus Christ. But I believe that our attitude towards our place of worship is also important to God.

In Matthew 21, Jesus went into the temple and chased everyone out that bought and sold. He even overturned the tables of money changers and those that sold doves.

The money changers were there to exchange money of those from other countries and regions - they bought doves for sacrifice with their own currencies.

Jesus' message to them was very clear:

"It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" (verse 13)

After the temple was cleansed, signs and wonders took place! We read in verse 14: "Then [after the cleansing of the temple] the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them."

It always works like this:

Cleansing must first take place before deliverance will come!

Are You a True Worshiper?

"To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God."

(William Temple)

God is seeking to find real worshippers. John 4:23-24 says:

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such

to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Prepare yourself in the week to be a real worshipper in spirit and in truth in your church on Sunday. Help the worship leader and his band to worship God.

Worship is not about you but about God. Someone complained about the singing and worship in his church. He received the following answer: "*The worship in church is not for you, but for God who we worship.*"

Don't let anything put you off to worship God. Not even children running around in the church service. Rather thank God for the energy they have.

Worship Is Our Reaction Towards the Love of God For Us

There are seven Hebrew words for worship

Israel knew exactly what they had to do when a certain word of praise and worship was read or heard. We understand worship the way we grew up. But if you understand these seven Hebrew words in the Bible about worship, it will help you to worship God in a better way.

The first word is “hallal”

This word we will find about 100 times in the Old Testament. One-third of them you will find in the Psalms.

Hallal means: to exalt; to brag; to boast; to jump with joy.

The word “Hallelujah” comes from this word. It has no language borders, and is used across the world.

The second word is “yadah”

“This is to worship God with outstretched hands towards Him.”

Why uplifted hands? (Have you done that?)

- Someone puts up his hand when he surrenders.
- Someone’s hands are lifted when they win, like a boxer.

We are more than conquerors and we have a reason to lift up our hands to God who gives us the victory.

The third word is “todah”

The meaning of this word is: *“Outstretched hands in adoration.”*

What does the Bible say about our hands lifted up?

Ps. 63:4 says:

“Thus will I bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.”

Ps. 134:2 says:

“Lift up your hand in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.”

Ps. 141:2 says:

“Let my prayer be set before You as incense. The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

In Neh. 8:5-6 we read:

“And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it [the law], all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. Then all the people answered, ‘Amen, Amen!’ while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.”

The fourth word is “*barak*”

“To declare God as the giver of all things.”

One of the outstanding portions in the Bible where the “*barak*” type of worship to God is found in 1 Chron. 29.

A “*barak*” offering to God includes the giving of our possessions. David gave to the Lord: 85 million dollars of gold and 145 million dollars of silver.

The fifth word is “tehillah”

The meaning of this word is: *“To worship God with singing.”*

Israel had 4,000 full-time worshippers (Read this in 1 Chron. 23:5). The singers built their homes around Jerusalem, so that they could be close to the temple. In Neh. 12:29, we read these words:

“...for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem.”

Word number six is “zamar”

“To play cords of instruments to the Lord.”

This was one way to express your joy and thanks to God.

In 1 Chron. 25:6-7 we read of 288 well-trained worshippers that worshipped God with their instruments.

The seventh word is “shabach”

The meaning of this word is: *“To shout for the Lord.”*

It is clear that we should worship God with our voices.

Heb. 13:15 says:

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

Ps. 34:1 says:

"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

There is power in "shabach"

This is how the walls of Jericho came down (Jos. 6:20).

Against what "walls" do you have to "shabach"?

It was with praise and worship that Jehoshaphat won the battle against their enemies (2 Chron. 20:1-26).

Ps. 100:4 we will understand better by looking what words were used in this text. *"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving* (todah = Outstretched hands in admiration) *And into His courts with praise* (tehillah = With song and instruments)

Be thankful (yadah = Uplifted hands) to Him, and bless His name." (barak = Praise Him with something tangible because He is the creator of all things.)

In the light of these Bible truths on the seven Hebrew words for praise and worship, I want to declare:

- *"I choose to worship God in spirit and truth.*
- *It won't be a problem to do this audibly.*
- *To lift up my hands will be my pleasure.*
- *When I give, it will be a part of my worship.*
- *I will cry out against all spiritual walls that must come down."*

The Invitation to God's Wedding Feast

By reading Matt. 22:1-14 (or Luke 14:15-24) we understand that everything is ready for the wedding feast of the bride of Christ. As in this parable all those invited are not enthusiastic about this invitation.

Today we are called to invite people. But our attitude must be willing to invite "the bad and the good" to God's wedding feast, as we read in verse 10. What is your attitude about this?

How do you understand what Jesus said in verse 14? It says,

"For many are called, but few are chosen."

In this verse, the Amplified Bible says:

"For many are called (invited and summoned), but few are chosen."

In the same verse, the Message says:

"That's what I mean when I say, 'Many get invited; only a few make it.'"

Don't read Jesus' declaration of the above without understanding verses 11-13. When the king came to the wedding feast and he found someone without a wedding garment, he could not understand how this man was allowed to enter at the door. Even those that were called "bad" received a wedding garment when they entered.

Each one that accepts God invitation to His wedding feast shall receive a spiritual cloak in exchange for his rags.

The Great Commandment

Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28.

Perhaps you don't have a problem with your attitude toward God to love Him with all your heart, soul and mind? But what do we do to love our neighbour as ourselves?

In Eph. 5:29 we read:

“For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it...”

We should more often read what is written in 1 John 4:7-15, because it is about loving God and loving people.

Verses 7-8 say:

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

Verse 12:

“If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.”

Verse 20:

“If someone says, ‘I love God’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?”

I want to believe that you love God. The question is if you love yourself? You can never love others if you do not love yourself.

What is Your Attitude Toward the End Times?

Matt. 24:1-44; Mark 13:3-35; Luke 21:7-36.

We must never stop believing that Jesus Christ is coming back again. Our attitude (how we think and feel) concerning the end times should be like people that call out for Jesus to come back to this world.

My mother-in-law used to say that if you are ready for the second coming of Christ, you are ready for anything. Our first attitude towards the end-times should be that nobody will mislead us (verses 4-5).

One of the outstanding signs of the end times is that the iniquity and sin will increase. Because of that the love of most will cool down. We must endure until the end. Thank God that the gospel will be preached to the whole earth; and the end shall come. This is very clear when we read verses 6-14.

Our question today is: When will Jesus come again? The answer to this Jesus gives in Matt. 24:36, 40-41, 44:

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only...Then two men will be in the field, one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and the other left...Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

In Matt. 25, Jesus teaches on the five wise and five foolish virgins. Five had extra oil in their lamps, while they waited for their bridegroom to come. Generally it is accepted that this “oil” refers to the Holy Spirit that we need to keep our spiritual lamps burning, while we are waiting for Jesus to come back again.

How “on fire” are you for the Lord and how is the “anointing” in your life? I have a desire for God’s anointing of His Spirit. I love what Psalm 92:10 says:

“You have exalted me like a wild ox; I have been anointed with fresh oil.”

And when you read further in this Psalm you will see what this anointing with fresh oil is meant for this Psalmist - for his eyes and ears; for his spiritual growth. It “planted” him in the house of the Lord. Even in old age he will bear fruit and also be fresh and flourishing (verses 12-15).

Is your light shining for the Lord? I read in Matt. 5:16:

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Our Great Commission is to Evangelise

In Matt. 28:18-20 we read:

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you: And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.’”

When it comes to evangelism, our attitude must be to fulfil the command of Jesus Christ, and that is to disciple all nations. This is a command and not a request. After we disciple people we must teach them to observe all the things Jesus Christ taught us. Thank God gave us the Holy Spirit to help us in this great word!

Acts 1:8 says:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and in the end of the earth.”

If you study this Scripture you will find that we should do these simultaneously. First in Jerusalem - this is our home town. Then to Judea - this is our region. But we must also go to the people in Samaria - this is the people we don't want to go to and are very different from us. The Jews and Samaritans were not friends with each

other. Sometimes God will send us to people and places we don't like. But He wants to use us to bring the gospel to them - whether we like it or not. This evangelism command ends with... "and in the end of the earth." May our attitude change toward this.

What Do You Do When You Are Degraded?

David is a wonderful example. This story is in 1 Sam. 17 where we read that Israel and the Philistines were in war.

There was a champion fighter with the name Goliath that asked for a man among the Israelites to fight him. For six weeks, Goliath challenged them in this manner.

The champion that won the fight will give his army the victory over the other army. Goliath was a huge giant - his height was more than three meters.

The weight of his breastplate alone was 57 kilograms. He had an iron spearhead that weighed seven kilograms. Goliath had a weapon carrier that walked in front of him to carry his shield.

David's father was Jesse. He had eight sons of which David was the youngest. Three of Jesse's son was in the army fighting against the Philistines. Their names were Eliab, Abinadab and Shammah. David's father asked him to take food to his brothers in the army. Jesse wanted to know how they were doing. David left his sheep in the hands of a keeper and left for the battlefield (1 Sam. 17:20).

When David got to the battlefield, he asked some of the soldiers about this battle. When Eliab heard that David was asking what the reward would be if Goliath was defeated, he chased him back home. David's attitude is clear when he answered Eliab with these words in verse 29: *"What have I done now? Is there not a cause?"* At this very moment Goliath came and shouted that Israel should give him a man to fight. According to verse 23, David accepted this challenge. All the men of Israel fled when they saw this giant appear.

When David heard what the price on the head of Goliath was, he was willing to fight Goliath. The prize was that King Saul will give him riches, he will give him one of his daughters as bride and his whole family will never have to pay taxes ever again. David loved this and it motivated him for the battle that had to come. The rest of the story you would know since your childhood. David accepted the challenge and overcame Goliath with his slingshot. Israel won the battle against the Philistines.

Your attitude will be a strength in you to overcome insults.

Lessons to Learn

- If David did not have Goliath in his life he could not become a champion. How do you think will you become a champion for the Lord?

- Saul and his men feared Goliath. David allowed no fear because he saw more than a giant - he saw a big God. The bigger your God, the smaller your giants.

Simei Cursed David

One of David's officers wanted to chop off his head. But see what the attitude of David was in 2 Sam. 16:10.

"But the king said, 'What have to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the Lord has said to him, curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?'"

*“The **will** of God will never take you
where the **grace** of God will not protect
you.”*

CHAPTER 8

A GOOD ATTITUDE NEEDS DISCIPLINE

**A Person With The Right Attitude is
Enthusiastic**

WE read in Rom. 12:11 in The Amplified Bible:
***“Never lag in zeal and in earnest endeavour,
be aglow and burning with the Spirit, serving
the Lord.”***

The Message uses words like:

***“Don’t burn out, keep yourself fuelled and
afame.”***

The Collins Dictionary says:

"Enthusiasm is great eagerness to be involved in a particular activity which you like and enjoy or which you think is important."

The Greek word for enthusiasm is "en-theos" and is a word used for God. I believe that the more you have of God in your life, the more enthusiasm you will have.

Enthusiasm will give you more energy, makes you bold and give you courage. Age may give you wrinkles on your skin, but if you lost your enthusiasm, you will get "wrinkles" in your soul.

Paul could call out in Phil. 4:13 (AMP):

"I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me – I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him who infuses inner strength into me."

Jeremiah said this when he got tired:

"Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.' But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut down in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not." (Jer. 20:9)

Thank God, His word will always bring enthusiasm in our soul!

When you forget the negative past, you will regain your enthusiasm.

How Is Your Attitude When You Have To Wait?

In Isa. 28:16 we read:

"Whoever believes will not act hastily."

One of my problems was that I believed but many a time I struggled to wait. To wait for someone is not an easy thing to do.

What do we do if we have to wait on the Lord?

Psalm 23 is one of the best-known parts in the Bible. There we read:

***"He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters."***

The devil doesn't mind that we run through "green pastures" but he does not like us to stay there. He will always see to it that we are busy with something so that we won't wait on God.

For the people in the East, meditation (to just wait) is something they do to clear their minds. Christian meditation is to fill our minds with the heavenly things.

Col. 3:1-2

"If you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

What is your Attitude Toward Prayer and Fasting?

In 1 Thes. 5:17, we read:

“Pray without ceasing.”

This is not that we should set ourselves apart and pray the whole day. However, what we should do is to live in relationship to God all day.

I don't believe that prayer is hard work. Then I would not have liked to do that daily. Our attitude towards prayer should be that we have respect for God. But I believe what Gordon Lindsay (the founder of Christ for the Nations Bible School) said:

“Every Christian should have a violent prayer every day.”

By saying this, I believe that we should have time in our prayer life that we will have a breakthrough.

I want to add that we should have special times of prayer. This is what I had in my time being a pastor in a church. Every Friday from 8:00 to 13:00, I separated myself and sought God in prayer. This was to also get the correct word for my church on Sunday. In this time I tried not to answer my phone and did not receive any person that wanted me to see me.

Why do we always have to fight the devil when we want to pray? Why should we often cry when we pray? Yes, there will be times to shed tears in prayer because we have compassion for someone and when we pray for the lost.

People talk of their fights with the devil every time they pray. We are in a spiritual warfare (Eph. 6), but we shouldn't be in a fight every time we pray. The devil is overcome by Christ.

Prayer is something that we should enjoy because we are talking to our heavenly Father. Just as you like to talk to friends when you visit them, because you love them and have respect for them, so should prayer also be. You must talk to God and time should be no factor.

Prayer is something we should teach ourselves to do. And you learn it the more you practice it. Actually there is no other way even if you should read the best books on prayer. You will only know how to pray if you keep on doing it.

Thank God, the Holy Spirit teaches us how to pray, because in ourselves we do not pray as we should. (Rom. 8:26)

What About Fasting?

To fast is when you abstain from food (or should I say the normal way of eating) for a day or more, to seek God in prayer. The normal reason someone will fast is when they are trusting God for something specific.

In the Bible we read of the following people that fasted:

Moses said to Israel in Deut. 9:9:

“When I went up into the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water.”

When Bathsheba’s child was dying David prayed and fasted.

We read in 2 Sam. 12:16:

“David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.”

Read the rest of the story until verse 20.

To rescue Israel from destruction Esther sent a message to the Jews with these words in Esther 4:16,

“Go gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night and day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king which is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”

God heard Israel and saved them, while Haman was judged to die, because he was the man that influenced the king to destroy Israel.

I want to ask you that when you should fast, don’t fast without drinking water.

When Daniel realized that the 70 years of Babylonian captivity was over, he earnestly prayed to God and fasted. He also confessed the sins of his people, but also his own. We read of this in Daniel 9.

Jesus fasted for forty days! Matt. 4:1-2:

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty day and forty nights, afterward He became hungry.”

If Jesus needed to fast before He entered the time of being tempted by the devil, you and I also need to fast so that we can overcome the temptations against us.

Nobody Is Too Old to Fast!

We read of Anna in Luke 2:36,37:

“Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess...and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day.”

Take note of the plural in the words “fastings and prayers”, because she did this often.

Paul also fasted. (Acts 9:9 and 2 Cor. 11:27) Other great spiritual leaders fasted, such as Martin Luther, John Knox and John Wesley. Wesley would not want to

ordain someone in the Methodist church that did not fast Wednesdays and Fridays.

I don't want to give teaching in this book about fasting. Today there is a lot of contradiction concerning fasting.

But I want to underline that we should examine our attitude concerning fast, because it has spiritual values.

What is your Attitude About Studying?

To study is one of the best ways to renew our minds as we read in Rom. 12:2:

“...be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

Myles Munroe said that a book is frozen thoughts. You put it into your “microwave” (your brain) and heat it up to enjoy it. I want to encourage you to read good books. The most of my life I was a lazy reader. You will be surprised if you could hear all the arguments I had why I did not have time to read books. Today I thank the Lord that He gave me the desire to read, more than just my Bible.

But please, don't waste your time reading books that are not worth reading. Remember that every writer leaves a spiritual impact in what they write. Be warned that there is a “spirit” in a book that can influence you. Think about this.

The best book to study is the Bible. Study it by reading it.

Ps. 119:11

“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”

2 Tim. 3:16

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Discipline yourself to read the Bible, and keep on reading until it talks to you personally!

What Is Your Attitude About Yourself?

Discover what controls your life, and take a clear decision how you must think and feel about that issue or possession in your life. You have the power to decide what is wrong and what is right.

May I give advice?

- Work on an attitude of simplicity.
- Only buy what you can (and will) use.
- Reject anything that may enslave you.
- Develop the habit to give things away. Many things we own we do not need. Stop gathering things.
- Stop wanting to have the newest on the market.
- Enjoy things without owning them.

What do you think of yourself?

How do you see the sickness that came so suddenly of you or your loved ones? If you see it like a giant and yourself as a grasshopper you have lost before you began.

Your Attitude Will Determine the Level of Your Faith

If the Israelites did not walk in unbelief, it would have taken Israel only 8 days to get to the Promised Land. But ten spies with the wrong attitude hindered them to possess their Promised Land. After forty days, we find that ten of the twelve spies had an attitude of: "There are giants and we are like grasshoppers..."

Your Attitude Can Open Doors

We read the following about Caleb in Numbers 14:24,

"But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit [attitude] in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it."

[Emphasis mine.]

The attitude that was found in Caleb was outstanding - that's why it was mentioned in the Bible. God was pleased with him and promised that he and his offspring will inherit Canaan. Can you see how doors will open if you have the correct attitude? Caleb was the one that

believed God can do anything and help them overcome their enemies. Your attitude will open doors for you and your family to come. Only you (and God) know what kind of attitude is in your heart. Be honest with yourself and if you find that everything in your life is not to the glory of God, take a decision to change.

When you change your thoughts, your whole life will change. Then you will insure your future and those of your generation. If your attitude is correct, doors will open for you.

What is Your Attitude Toward Submission?

Submission will set you free from always having it your way. Submission will make the dreams of others to become a reality. Mark 9:35 is a great truth. This is where Jesus said:

"If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

1 Peter 5:5-6 says:

"... Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

To whom must we submit ourselves?

- We must submit ourselves to God (James 4:7).
- Submit yourself to God's word.
- Submit yourself to your family. Listen to them.
- Submit yourself to your brothers and sisters in the church.

When You Have To Serve?

Someone said:

"As the cross is the sign of submission, so the towel is the sign of service."

Jesus set an example by washing His disciples' feet. We read about this in John 13:14-15. And in Matt. 20:26-28 Jesus said:

"...but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

If you want to decide when you will serve, you are in control. But if we decide to be a servant, we give up all our rights to be in charge. Service is a way of life and not only an act or doing something.

How do you understand Luke 17:10?

“So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

When You Have To Listen?

It is very important to listen to other people - and look them in their eyes when they talk to you. It is the wrong attitude to look another way while someone is talking to you. If we can learn to listen to other people we will also be able to hear God speak through them to us.

When Attacks Come?

When attacks come, our reaction is to defend ourselves and to humiliate those who attack us. The Bible teaches us something different as we find an example in 2 Kings 6:8-23. The story is about the prophet Elijah that revealed to the king of Israel that attacks would be coming against them. The king of Syria brought his officers together and asked them who of his people was on Israel's side (verses 11-12).

There they told him that Elisha even knew what he said in his bedroom. He was furious and sent a big army to capture Elisha. The servant of Elisha was shocked when he saw the army around their city and asked Elisha what they should do?

The answer he received was in verse 16:

“Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

Elisha prayed that the enemy would become blind and led them to Samaria where Israel’s army surrounded them. The king of Israel asked if he should kill them? The wonderful attitude of Elisha was that he stopped the king of Israel to harm the enemy.

The climax of all of this we find in verses 22-23:

“But he answered, ‘You shall not kill them. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them that they may eat and drink and go to their master. Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master...”

Don’t try and destroy those that want to harm you.

Believe that “Goodness and Mercy” Will Follow You

Psalm 23:6

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life...”

God’s favour will allow you to be treated in a very special way. When you know that God’s favour is resting on

your life, you will experience blessings that will come over you. People will be good to you because God's goodness and favour will keep on following you and even overtake you.

Have you felt God's favour in the supermarket or in a shop where you were blessed? The salesmen just gave you extra discount on something? This was not just your lucky day - it was God's favour. Or on an airport and even in the airplane when you were upgraded to a better seat? I remember the day when the staff of an airline blessed me with a birthday party somewhere in the middle of Africa. They gave me cheesecake and flowers. I felt so special. That is favour.

What Is Your Attitude Concerning Death?

The day when my brother phoned me and told me that our dad died, Psalm 112:1-7 came to my mind:

"... Blessed is the man who fears the Lord...He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord."

For almost one year, I went to a Frail Care to pray for a man that was dying. When I left, a pastor's wife that work there, walked with me to the front door. And she said: "Why do we cling to this life, while the only way to heaven is to die?" When I was driving away I pondered on these words.

Phil. 1:21-23:

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labour; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

Jesus said in John 11:25-26:

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Psalms 116:15 says:

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

What is Your Attitude Concerning Truth?

Jesus said in John 8:32: ***"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*** The word "know" comes from the Greek word "ginosko" meaning to "perceive, understand, recognize, and gain knowledge."

Always test how you feel and think about truth

- When truth comes to you, it always comes negative.
- I was raised in the church and was challenged when I had to repent of my sin and receive Jesus as my personal Saviour. The reason was that I had been living a lie, believing that because I was accepted as a member of my church, I was on my way to heaven.
- If your attitude is to always speak the truth, you will find that you don't have to even remember what you said.
- What is your attitude concerning forgiveness?
- Remember: If you decide not to forgive, it is like drinking poison, hoping that someone else will die instead.
- There is something as "normal fear" - that's why you jump out of the way of a big truck! But the most things we fear, never happen!
- There is power in agreement. The two that should agree in life is man and wife (Matt. 18:19).
- Never fight with darkness. Just put on the light!

Do you know why I give grace? Because I need grace!

A D D E N D U M

A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

A Practical Example of a Good Attitude

I am not an All Black fan. But what had happened just after the last game between New Zealand and Australia on Twickenham on the 31st October 2015, gripped my heart.

Sonny Bill Williams is an All Blacks rugby player and also a heavyweight boxer. Born on 3 August 1985, he was then 30 years old. He weighs 108 kilograms and is 1.94 meter tall. He and Alana has three sons: John, Denise and Niali.

Sonny Bill's attitude towards one of his fans on Twickenham, just after the All Blacks won the Web Ellis Trophy, was remarkable. That was the moment when a 15 year-old-boy, Charlie Lines, ran to congratulate Sonny Bill Williams with their achievement.

A security guard tackled this young boy before he reached Williams. Sonny Boy Williams picked up this boy and took him to his father. It was then that he put his golden medal around the neck of this young boy with these words: *"I am sure that he'll remember it. I'm happy that he has it because I know that he will really appreciate it. When he's older, he can tell the story to his children."*

The Attitude of The Shunammite Woman in 2 Kings 4

The prophet Elisha visited Shunem often. There was a house where he stayed over to eat and rest. This is where we read of this woman and her attitude. One day this woman said to her husband:

"Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lamp stand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there." (2 Kings 4:9-10)

Elisha was so glad what she did for him that he wanted to know what he could do for her. Could he give a good word for her to the king? However, she told him that she was satisfied.

The lesson I learn in this story is that this woman had an excellent attitude and was someone that was content. Through his servant, Elisha found out that she had no

son and that her husband was old. This is when Elisha prophesied over her:

“About this time next year you shall embrace a son.” (verses 14-16)

At first she could not believe this, but a year later her son was born.

When this son was a young man he went with his father to reap the harvest. Something went wrong with his head and he got very sick. He had to be carried to his mother but died in her lap. His mother laid him on Elisha's bed, took a donkey and went to see Elisha. At first her husband tried to stop her on her trip to Elisha, but she replied: *“It is well.”* This shows again the attitude of this woman (verses 19-24).

Her attitude shows that she never lost hope and that she was determined. I love the words in verse 24:

“Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant. ‘Drive, and go forward, do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you.’”

She found Elisha on the Mount Carmel. To think she had to climb this mountain to get to Elisha! This is determination!

This is what the right attitude does. When Elisha asked her about her family she answered that all is well with them. Through all this that happened to her she never lost her faith and hope. What came out of her mouth

was nothing negative but speaks of someone with the right attitude.

We read in 2 Kings 4:27,

"Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, 'Let her alone, for her soul is in deep distress, and the Lord has hidden this from me, and has not told me.'"

There are times that God does not reveal everything to us.

This Shunammite woman told Elisha what had happened with her son and that he had died. The Elisha sent his servant to go and put his staff on the dead son. But she was desperate and would not leave Elisha. Elisha went with her to her son. I love this kind of attitude of this mother.

In the meantime, Gehazi came back with the news that nothing happened with her son. He said: "*The child has not awakened.*"

Elisha went in the room and closed the door behind him. He then three times lay on the son.

We read these striking words in verses 34-35:

"And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the

child became warm. He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes."

The Shunammite mother bowed before Elisha and picked up her child, giving praise to God. The attitude of this woman should be an inspiration to us!

Think Differently and Change Your Attitude"

~ Riaan Gouws

There was a "spinach fairy tale" during World War II. Because meat was scarce, the Army Generals convinced the soldiers that spinach was just as good as meat. The soldier's attitude changed towards spinach and they enjoyed it. Only years later it was discovered that this was a myth.

I Have the Mind of Christ

There is a big difference between believing in Jesus and believing as Jesus did. Sometimes we will enjoy freedom during the church service, but to walk in freedom outside the church service is not easy if our thinking is wrong. Our mind must be changed to be like the mind of God. His plan for us is the truth about what we are. And this truth will set us free.

John 8:31-32:

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'"

If you "abide" in Christ it means "to continue without fading or being lost" or in other words "ongoing". It also means to have victory in all areas of your life. It means to believe what God made you to be and to have no other thoughts but only those of God.

2 Cor. 16-20 (AMP):

“So from now on we regard no one from a human point of view [according to worldly standards and values]. Though we have known Christ from a human point of view, now we no longer know Him in this way. Therefore if anyone is in Christ [that is, grafted in, joined to Him by faith in Him as Savior], he is a new creature [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]; the old things [the previous moral and spiritual condition] have passed away. Behold, new things have come [because spiritual awakening brings a new life]. But all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ [making us acceptable to Him] and gave us the ministry of reconciliation [so that by our example we might bring to Him], that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting people’s sins against them [but canceling them]. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation [that is, restoration to favor with God]. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His appeal through us...”

A new heart brings a new mind

Sin is the detour that was not meant for us.

Live from heaven to the earth and not from the earth to heaven. Live with a godly view of who you are.

Romans 12:1-2 (AMP) ***“Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies***

[dedicating all of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship. And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed and progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you]."

You are no more a normal human being. Because Jesus lives in you, **YOU ARE DIFFERENT!**

Our feelings are rooted in our convictions.

HOPE

Where Do My Negative Thoughts Come From?

Proverbs 29:18 (MSG)

"If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves. But when they attend to what He reveals, they are most blessed."

We Must See What God Sees Rom. 15:13

"Oh! May the God of green hope fill you with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!"

Without hope you will not have faith and without faith this world will be a bad place to live in.

My position now is the result of my previous mindset.

My future is depended on how my mind will change.

Believe that your future will be a blooming one.

Believe it, say it and live accordingly- then the promises of God will become a reality for your life. You can change your future by changing your thoughts of today.

Rom. 12:11-12 (AMP)

“Never lag in zeal and in earnest endeavour; be aglow and burning with the Spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoice and exult in hope, be steadfast and patient in suffering and tribulation; be constant in prayer.”

What area in your life is under the influence of a lie?
Break the lie by thinking the right way!

Make this statement:

- “I have the mind of Christ.”
- “Through the grace of God. I can renew my thoughts.”
- “God supplies me with hope.”
- “My future will be a blooming one.”