

## **Attitudes of the Spirit** **7-20-14 PM**

Matthew 19 introduces two of Jesus' hard teachings. One is on marriage and divorce, the other pertains to our attitudes towards worldly things. When we consider the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:20, Luke 18:18), we sometimes fail to see that this was a man who was obedient to the law of his covenant. He kept the commandments, something which we too are obligated to do (John 15:10). What the purpose of the correct was by Jesus was that even after being obedient to the law, his attitude towards worldly things was inhibiting his salvation. Is it possible we too obey the commandments of the law of Christ, but our attitude inhibits our salvation?

How can we find the proper attitude? One search of the Scriptures notes the constant reference to fruit being a necessity of salvation. Specifically, Galatians 5:22-25 speaks about the fruit of the spirit. For the purpose of our lesson, we will call these the attitudes of the spirit, and we will consider the negative/opposite attitudes as those things, like the rich young ruler and his money, that we need to give up in order to follow Jesus.

**Love - Selfishness** - We must learn to deny ourselves to come to the cross. Selfishness is placing our selves above others.

**Joy - Grumbling**: We see this fault in the Israelites of the Old Testament. Constantly they grumbled and complained of their conditions, provoking God's wrath.

**Peace - Anger**: Scripture tells us that we can be angry, but do not sin (Ephesians 4:26). We are told not to allow anger to dwell in us (James 1:20, Colossians 3:8).

**Patience - Intolerance**: A constant admonition to the Christian is to be patient with others, even those who are in error (II Timothy 2).

**Kindness - Mean spirited**: The greatest form of wisdom is kindness (James 3:17-18). Yet it is a virtue lost in much of the world today. We ought to be the first to demonstrate kindness to others.

**Goodness - Wickedness**: Perhaps here we speak to our worldly engagements. We are told to refrain from being partakers in the wickedness of the world, but to dwell on what is good in the world (Philippians 4:8)

**Faithfulness - Faithlessness**: How much do we trust in God? When we worry about what will be in our lives, we are demonstrating an absence of faithfulness. How does it appear to the world when we worry despite the promises of God (Matthew 6:25)?

**Gentleness - Harshness**: Jesus was a perfect demonstration of all of these virtues, but gentleness seems to be a constant character of His conduct.

**Self-Control - Instability**: When Paul preached self control to Felix, he became frightened and sent Paul away (Acts 24:25). Emotional instability is a contradicting virtue that, like the rich young ruler, we need to put away.