

The Doctrine of Mental Attitude

Our first point was our definition. Our mental attitude is where we develop proper motivation and it also where we do most of our sinning. These mental attitude sins include arrogance, pride, jealousy, implacability, bitterness, vindictiveness, inordinate ambition and inordinate competition, all motivational sins, and sinful thoughts such as fear, guilt, worry, anger, judging, hatred, even murder. These sins can destroy character, and our lives and we deploy the Ten Problem Solving Devices provided by God to overcome these. Next, we must understand the difference between the human soul and the human spirit. Heb 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active [it's alive and powerful] and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit," There is a Biblical distinction made between the soul, where the mental attitude resides, and the spirit, where the ability to have fellowship with God resides. God wants our mental attitude not for the sake of cramming it with information but to open our eyes in spiritual realms that we have never dreamed of and which are even beyond human comprehension.

Eph 3:18 "may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth," The inner man or the human spirit that is given at the moment of salvation, it is not the soul. It is true that God is after our heart and He wants us to think "His thoughts," divine viewpoint, but that is not His ultimate goal for our lives. We have seen that His ultimate goal is to have a personal relationship with Him that even goes beyond our capacity to understand even in our mental attitude. The goal is to have a personal relationship with God that goes beyond our capacity to understand. The mental attitude is not that which triggers or stimulates a response from God, it is that part of our human nature that allows us to comprehend and perceive the fact that He has been working in our lives, without us understanding and perceiving the fact that He has been. Our mental attitude is not the inner man of Rom 7:22, it is our human spirit "For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man," It is the human spirit not the mental I.Q. of the "soul life" of man Eph 3:16 "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;"

In the original creation of man, the human spirit was received along with the human soul when man received the "breath of lives," Gen 2:7. Original man was created trichotomous, Gen 2:7, that is he had a body, soul, and spirit. In Gen 2:7, "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. " The Hebrew word here is in the plural and means the breath of lives, which refers to soul and spirit. It cannot refer to the body because there is no life in the body. In the womb of the woman, the body has life but that is biological life which is an extension of the mother's life. There is no self-life or soul-life in the body which is the reason why once the soul and spirit leave the body, the body remains in the ground dead. For the unbeliever, his soul goes to Hades, but his body remains in the grave. For the believer, the soul and spirit go to Heaven, but the body remains in the grave. When the fetus emerges from the womb, God creates soul life and imputes it to biological life. After God created the man and the woman, He gave them a command.

Gen 2:16-17 "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die." "shall surely die" is the Hebrew phrase "muth tamuth." First "muth" translated "dying" a reference to spiritual death, And then God repeats the same verb, this time "tamuth." In Hebrew, the repetition of the verb gives great strength to the verb, so it is usually translated "you will surely die." In fact, "surely" is added by the translators to translate the doubling of the verb. However, there are two deaths that are involved here, and the correct translation is "dying thou shalt die" or really "dying spiritually you shall die physically."

The wages of sin is spiritual death not physical death, as a result of being a sinner and having a sin nature eventually we die, and that's the second death, physical death. To say the wages of sin is physical death is a denial of the salvation work of the Cross. God would not allow His Son to go through the excruciating pain of the Cross if the wages of sin was physical death because we all die physically. The Lord Jesus Christ was still alive physically when he said, "tetelestai".....it is finished. The payment for sin was complete, and The Lord Jesus Christ was still alive mentally, which is a part of his soul life, and still alive physically. At that moment on the Cross it was His Spirit life which died. Therefore, in the garden, the deception from Satan and the loss of their spiritual relationship with God is found in Gen 3:1-4 "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, Indeed, has God said, You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'? And the woman said to the serpent, From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said to the woman, You surely shall not die!" Actually he said lo-muth te-muthon, dying, you will not die.

Gen 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened [the mentality of your human soul will take over rather than your human spirit], and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." This is why even in the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union before the Church-age, the Lord told Nicodemus that he must be born again, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit.

Gen 3:6 "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate." In the next verses the eyes of their soul without the guidance from their human spirit were opened and they knew that they were naked, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden because they were afraid. He wasn't afraid of the voice of God before, but he is now. Something died in Adam and the woman when they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that caused them to be filled with fear. It was their human spirit and therefore their ability to have fellowship with God. There are two categories of spiritual death. Real spiritual death, which is separation from God in a state of sin. This applies to man and happens at the moment of physical birth. Substitutionary spiritual death, which is separation from God in a state of perfection and impeccability. This applies to saving work on the Cross by the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are seven results of Adam's original sin in the garden.

1. At the point of his original sin, spiritual death resulted and Adam lost his rulership of planet earth to Satan. **2.** When Adam died spiritually, he entered into a state of total separation from God. There was nothing he could do to regain his relationship with God. God did all the work, He came to Adam in the garden, He provided the solution for spiritual death. **3.** In spiritual death, Adam became dichotomous, having only a body and soul. **4.** Adam's original sin originated the old sin nature, which is genetically perpetuated to the entire human race. **5.** It was the beginning of personal sins in the human race, perpetuated from generation to generation by the billions. Spiritual death was perpetuated in the human race, Rom 5:12-21. This is why the unbeliever is dichotomous, 1Co 2:14, Jude 19; and why the believer is trichotomous; 1Th 5:23; Job 32:8; Phile 25; 2Co 7:13; Heb 4:12. **6.** The status of total helplessness to enter into a relationship with God on the basis of any human good, any human merit, or anything we can do, all of which is classified as dead works. **7.** The incarnation and Hypostatic Union is a direct result of Adam's original sin, whereby our Lord Jesus Christ entered the world at the First Advent to provide the solution to spiritual death through His efficacious substitutionary spiritual death, His saving work on the cross Rom 5:12 "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered the world [Adam's original sin], and death [real spiritual death] through that sin, so [real spiritual] death spread to all men because all sinned [when Adam sinned]."

The human spirit was lost and the old sin nature resulted from their separation from God. As a result, their offspring, the human race, are always physically born dichotomous, having no human spirit. Gen 5:3 "When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image." This means having a body and soul only but then also having an opportunity as Adam did to exercise volition to believe in saving work on the Cross by The Lord Jesus Christ and become born again. When anyone believes in Christ, the omnipotence of the Spirit restores the status quo of trichotomy which was Adam before the fall. In regeneration, the Holy Spirit creates a human spirit for the imputation of eternal life, Titus 3:5, and for understanding the things of God, 1Co 2:9-14. We all possess a mentality at the moment of physical birth, therefore the opportunity to increase our mental attitude, however, it is the spiritual birth when the human spirit is imputed to us which is now linked up with the soul that is the location of the inner man that the Bible talks about.

This brings us back to the Garden of Eden having the same opportunity that Adam and the woman had to have fellowship with God before the fall except, our opportunity is even greater, we can never die spiritually. The human spirit is the immaterial part of man designed by God to convert, to store, and to utilize spiritual phenomena. Things are taking place in our human spirit that our soul, our mentality have no idea of, not as of yet, that is. But, as we grow in God's grace and knowledge, we begin to realize all of the fantastic changes that are taking place in our inner man, where our true spiritual life is, and where in Rom 8:29, we are being conformed to the image of God's Son. Learning the doctrine of the mental attitude is to realize the work that is going on in the depths of our spirit. Rom 8:26 "And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do

not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;" Too deep for words because it takes words with which to think and therefore this is even "too deep" for our thinking or our mental attitude. Rom 8:27 "and He [God the Father] who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the [Holy] Spirit is, because He [God the Holy Spirit] intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." This is why Psa 37:4 says "Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart."

It is true that God may plant desires within you. He does plant motives within the heart of a believer without violating your free will. Paul had such a thing happen to him when he cried out, in our corrected translation of Phi 1:23 "In fact I am hard-pressed from the two alternatives [a reference to living and dying in verse 21], because I have the desire to depart and to keep on being together with Christ, for that is better by far;" Remember, this is the same Paul who also cried out under the influence of his love in Christ for his Jewish brothers, Rom 9:3 "For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Paul expresses contradictory feelings, and yet they are perfectly reconciled in the depths of the human spirit. There is something going on there in the depths of our spirit which never changes and that many times we cannot even comprehend. 2CO 4:16 "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day."

There is deposited within you a desire which originates in God, a desire which is for God and for the best for His Kingdom. A believer who has been victimized and becomes bitter, a believer who has known disappointment because of the behavior of another believer, or even someone in the world, and is resentful, a believer who has been disappointed with God because of what He has done or has allowed to happen, and is unhappy with God and thinks that God is unfair, is not in a state where his will is in conformity to God's. Rather he is in a state where self is originating and controlling the desires of the heart. We do not always understand the will of God, but to trust His sovereignty completely is another matter. When the believer relies on just his mental attitude or his mind on what God should be, and then when God does not act according to his expectation, he will suffer disappointment and operates in those mental attitude sins noted earlier. As the believer deepens in his devotion and dedication to Christ, outward things caused by persecution, injustice, and even what is perceived to be the unfairness of God and the displeasure of God are things no longer perceived nor reacted to. The delegation of divine power to every Church-age believer is manifested and experienced when Bible doctrine is metabolized and deployed on the Forward Line of Troops (FLOT) of your soul. It is here that the greatest battles take place. The Church Age believer must know when to use offensive action and when to use defensive action in the Christian way of life. God has delegated this divine power through thought, through mental attitude understanding the thoughts of God. There is no substitute for perception and metabolization of Bible doctrine. The delegation of divine power to every Church-age believer is manifested and experienced when Bible doctrine is metabolized and deployed on the FLOT line of your soul. As we have seen this is a military acronym for the forward line of troops which protect the soul. These problem-solving devices are

important because they give us the power and the ability to handle any problem in life. God has provided for us in grace everything it takes to transfer what is written in the Bible to the human spirit and then to the soul. All forms of worship are a concentration test and whether you like it or not, all life demands struggle. Those who have everything given to them become lazy, selfish, and insensitive to the real values of life. That which cost little is less valued. We should try to become a person of values rather than a person of success and that begins with mental attitude. Whether it's concentration on doctrine, the communion service or in prayer, it's all a part of the same thing, thinking. As you develop these spiritual habits of thought and concentration, there is a spiritual life that awaits you that goes beyond your understanding. God has chosen to reveal his thoughts to us by means of the Spirit of God.

Co 2:12-14 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world [the I.Q. of the world, the cosmic system] but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things [invisible assets] freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words or interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual persons. But a natural man [the soulish person, unbeliever or believer minus doctrine] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised [discerned in a manner caused by the filling of the Spirit]."

Now, this cannot just refer to an unbeliever or to a believer who is just minus the filling of the Spirit because you can learn doctrine even if you're not filled with the Spirit. You can understand and comprehend doctrinal thoughts even though it is not converted from gnosis to epignosis or to spiritual phenomenon. The ultimate goal is not learning doctrine, nor is it works or even applying doctrine. The ultimate goal is to have a personal relationship and fellowship with God. The goal of changing our mental attitude is to draw us closer to God. As we are kept dependent upon God, we will grow in His grace and knowledge which will lead us to a submissive, yielded life to him. We will have the attitude that our Lord had in Heb 10:9, "I come to do Thy will, O God," not, "What's in this for me?"

How far are we willing to go in submitting our life to God? Far to many so-called normal Christian today are being deceived when it comes to salvation, the filling of the Spirit, living the spiritual life. 1Jo 5:18-19 "We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." What are our limitations of obedience to God and His plan for our life, what could make us quit and lose our dedication and devotion for Christ? What are the ends of abandonment that you would be willing to go to, the ultimate willingness of surrendering your plans and goals and dreams, for God's will for your life?

If a person has given his life to his Lord, it would be conflicting for the one who places his whole happiness, his whole being, in the hands of God alone, that they could continue to have a list of desires for their own happiness and wants. If we live for God because of true love for God, just because we love Him, we place all our happiness in God alone.

Love alone should cause us to surrender up our will to the Lord. If it is not love that produces submission, eventually that wrong motive will be revealed.

When the believer relinquishes his soul, his will, his all to his Lord, and desires nothing of himself and desires only God for the sake of God, that is the beginning of experiencing the life of God in the soul. Here is a state where there is no satisfaction for self as the final goal, the glory of heaven is not the motive, the blessings and rewards are not the motive. If I love God alone, I will desire God alone.

We must love Him without any end in view and even without expecting any emotional feeling present to strengthen us. We must love Him with total disregard to dry-spells and to times of abundance.

In Joh 14:15, our Lord said "If you love Me, you will keep My commands." This is not the Ten Commandments because there are over 400 in the New Testament. However, we need to focus in on the word love which in the Greek here is agapao not phileo, agapao refers to a mental attitude love. The point is that when it comes to our mental attitude, love for God, this alone should cause us to surrender our will to Him.

There is a love for God that is also very personal, it is called phileo love. Joh 16:27 "for the Father Himself loves you [phileo's you, loves you personally], because you have [phileo'd] loved Me personally, and have believed that I came forth from the Father."

The goal of agapao love, this mental attitude love, is to lead us to a phileo love or personal love for God and for The Lord Jesus Christ. This is why 1Co 16:22 says "If anyone does not [phileo] love the Lord, let him be accursed. Maranatha."

Phileo love is actually a greater love in the sense that when it is directed toward God it is a more personal love developed from the mental attitude of agapao love. This is why Peter became grieved when our Lord gave him that test in Joh 21. Here we see the contrast between agapao love or the mental attitude love and Phileo the personal love. This is very vital if you are going to live the Christian way of life and enjoy the truth that sets you free. The average believer doesn't rightly divide the word of truth, they become confused concerning the way that they should love according to the Bible. The problem is there is no knowledge of the original language and why God the Holy Spirit chose to use two different words for love when He inspired men to write the Bible,

Let's look at this passage in the original language: Joh 21:15-17 "So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me more than these? He [Peter] said to Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You. He said to him, Tend My lambs. He said to him again a second time, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. He said to him the third time, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [phileo] Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, Do you love [phileo] Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You. Jesus said to him, Tend My sheep."

The question is this: If God the Holy Spirit supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture to put His complete message to mankind recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, then why use two different words? There are two different meanings that He originally intended, if that's true, then why did the translators translate two totally different words, phileo and agapao, the same?

Actually, in the Greek language there are four basic words for love. The most popular one is the word agape or agapao which refers to an impersonal love or a love from the mental attitude. Then there is phileo love or a personal love which connoted personal attraction. This love can be good or bad depending upon where it is directed.

Then there is stergo love which means to feel affection for someone, especially parents or children and even for animals, it means to be lovingly devoted. Rom 12:10 "Be devoted [philostorgos] to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;" This too can be good or bad depending upon where it is directed. The final type of love is eros love, that state which we call "being in love" or "the kind of love that lovers are in".

We need to see the importance of understanding the mental attitude that we are commanded to have toward God which is the mental attitude of agapao love. Agapao love is not a feeling or an emotion, it is a system of thinking that produces the greatest virtue of all, 1Co 13:13, proceeding from the mind, Phi 2:2. When it is directed toward God, agapao love serves as motivation, 2Co 5:14. This is the love commanded of husbands in Eph 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;"

A mental attitude of respect not personal love. This is why as a part of the first commandment we are commanded not to love God personally but to have a fear or respect or love for Him. In fact, even when the Ten Commandments were given in Exo 20:3-17, there's no command to love God in there. To have given a commandment to love God personally would have been a violation of both the unbeliever's and believer's free will.

Agapao love is a mental attitude love of appreciation that may result in phileo love, personal love for God. Agapao love is the ability to love and respect someone you do not see, 1Pe 1:8 "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory," When you start to love someone you have not seen, it is because you have lined up with their thinking. In Gal 5:22, agape love or this mental attitude love is the production fruit of the Spirit, In Rom 5:5 agape love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

So in the passage we have been noting Joh 21:15-17 The Lord was asking Peter if he had that impersonal unconditional virtuous love, which emphasizes the virtue of the subject and not the object. And Peter knew and understood what the Lord was saying. The Lord was saying you cannot serve Me without this virtue or this impersonal unconditional

virtuous "agape love." However, when virtue love is directed toward God ultimately it should lead to phileo, a deep personal love for God. This is why Peter became upset when the Lord kept asking this question. In verse 15, the Lord used agapao, He didn't use phileo. The Lord said "do you agape-love Me more than these"? He [Peter] said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You." Peter is a little disturbed. Peter used phileo which means I keep on loving you personally because of who You are. Our Lord said do you have impersonal unconditional love for Me, and Peter said, "Lord you know I love you personally."

As a result of his answer Peter receives a command! He [the Lord] said to him, "Tend My lambs." This is a command for all pastors to produce the action of the verb which is to feed new believers. "lambs" refers to baby sheep, analogous to the new believers. The Lord is saying to Peter, "if you really love me personally you're qualified to feed new believers" Peter is commanded to feed the Lord's lambs if he really loves the Lord. When the Lord asked Peter if he loved Him more than these, there is a very important principle here.

No man can function as a pastor-teacher with his eyes on people. The motivational virtue for the gift of pastor teacher must come from personal love for The Lord Jesus Christ. He said to him again a second time, "Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." In verse 16, the Lord gives him a second command. "Shepherd My sheep." The word "shepherd" means to rule or clobber which is how the pastor-shepherd must function with some. The word sheep means the sophomores in the Christian life. These are the ones that have a little knowledge of doctrine and think that they have a lot. Here authority of the pastor now becomes a major issue in the believer's life.

In verse 17, we have a final question and command. He said to him the third time, "Simon, {son} of John, do you love [phileo] Me?" This time our Lord switched from agape to phileo. Peter was distressed because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

The Lord was making a point not only for Peter but also for the benefit of all future pastors in the Church-age. The word for "tend" is bosko which is the command to moderately and prudently feed His humble sheep which is a reference to the seniors or the mature believers. All you have to do for mature believers is teach them doctrine. In the sophomore stage as in verse 16, you have to use that stick a shepherd carries to guide them.

The shepherd has to whack the sheep at times to keep them from running off the cliffs. The pastor doesn't do that literally, he does that with his communication of doctrine. Once a person becomes a senior, he has developed enough humility to be teachable. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.