



LIVING LIBERATED

**Are we bound forever to vices,
bad habits, addictions, and
other sins that shackle and put
us in bondage?**

**Today we can learn HOW to free
ourselves from that bondage by
the power of Jesus Christ!**

Steve Flatt

Freedom From Harmful Attitudes

BibleWay Publishing

Topical Bible Studies

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Freedom From Harmful Attitudes

Picture the face or the name of the person that you admire most in life? Can you get that face? Get that name? Now, what is the single most reason that you admire that person so much? Boil it all down. Reduce it to one word if you can. Did you think of loving, honest, faithful, unselfish, loyal, caring, happy, kind or humble? I could go on. The interesting thing about all these words is they all describe attitudes. Isn't that fascinating? All of those are attitudes. Did you choose appearance, ability or intelligence? I doubt that many, if any, did. Doesn't that tell you something?

Jesus tells us about human attitudes in the "Good Samaritan" parable. "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" (Luke 10:30-36)

Jesus shows us in this parable three very basic attitudes:

1. What is yours is mine and I'm going to take it.

Somebody had that attitude in the parable can you figure out who? The thief or the thieves, the ones who found the man, beat him, took what he had and left him for dead. We know this about him. His attitude was "what's yours is mine and I'm going to take it." Frankly most of the people don't have that attitude. Oh, it's prevalent in this world. Folks with that kind of attitude are like the old dog that had the bone. He went to a lake looked over and saw his reflection. He saw what he thought to be another dog with a bone in his mouth and he wanted that one too. So, he let go to begin to bite at the other dog and what happened? He lost the bone he had. "What's yours is mine and I'm going to take it."

2. What's mine is mine and I'm going to keep it.

It's interesting to me that Jesus talks about a priest and a Levite, both religious men. They were probably going from Jericho to Jerusalem to do service in the temple. The priest and the Levites one week out of every year had to perform temple service. They had to do all the duties and prepare the sacrifices. To go along this route was not an unusual thing as Jericho is not very far from the Jerusalem, and many priests lived there. They saw this man beaten, bleeding, and robbed, but they chose to pass by on the other side.

Now there could have been one other thing at work here. You see if a priest or Levite were heading toward the temple to perform a service, the last thing that individual would want to do would be to become unclean. According to the Jewish law, if you were to touch a corpse, it would make you ceremonially unclean. They may have been in a hurry with important work to do. They could have even thought about the risk of becoming ceremonially unclean. This man may either be dead, or he may die in my hands. So, rather than risking becoming unclean they went on their way. "What's mine is mine and I'm going to keep it."

These are the kind of person folks who goes through life hurting no one, breaking no rules, and making no enemies. In fact, that's the kind of person who goes through life determined to leave things just like they are. They won't bother you and don't want you bothering them. They do not consider those who went before and prepared the way. Somebody invested yesterday in what they enjoy today. When you've got an attitude of "What's mine is mine and I'm going to keep it" you just want to be left alone. No, you are not a society drainer. But you're not giving anything to anybody either.

Years ago, when I was a young teenager, I would spend a week every summer with my grandfather on the farm. Some of the greatest lessons I've ever learned in life have been those weeks out on the farm because I lived in the city, a suburban kid. One time I was with my granddaddy Flatt, we called him "Pap" was planting fruit trees. They were just little tiny saplings, it was a hot day, it was a lot of work and my granddaddy was almost 80. I said, "Pap what on earth are you planting those fruit trees for? You're not going to live long enough to ever eat one apple off that tree." He looked at me and in his own humble way, he taught me one of the greatest lessons about servant hood I've ever known. He said, "Now son, I'm not planting these for me. But much of what I've enjoyed on this farm is here because somebody else did some work before me. I'm not naive enough to think I'll pull an apple off this tree, but that's not the point, life didn't begin with me and life doesn't end with me." He said, "If my life is really going to be useful, I'll leave something here that somebody else can enjoy."

So, it's not enough to say, "What's mine is mine and I'm going to keep it."

3. What's mine is yours, and I'm going to give it.

The Bible says that the Good Samaritan saw the victim and had compassion on him. He carried him to an inn, he paid for his care and said I'll come back by to check on him to see if I need to do anything else.

All three of the main characters, the Levite, the Priest, and the Samaritan had something in common. Don't think that only certain people can have certain kinds of attitudes. They had a lot in common.

a. They saw the same problem, a man in need lying there bleeding.

Many people say "I don't do much, I give much, because I don't have much opportunity." It's not the exposure to the need that makes a man or a woman a good servant. It is the attitude. It's not the person who has the most opportunities, who becomes the greatest servant.

b. They all had something else to do.

It's not how much time you have in your schedule that dictates whether or not you reach out and touch your fellow man. It's the person who has the best attitude. Some of the best stewards that I've ever known were also the busiest people. You see it has nothing to do with your agenda. It has nothing to do with your schedule. It has nothing to do with how much opportunity.

c. They all had reasons not to help.

They needed to do some work. They didn't want to risk touching a corpse. But listen to this. The Samaritan had the most significant reason of all for not helping. It was the enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans. The Jews hated the Samaritans. They called them to their faces, dogs. For that Samaritan to look over and to see that Jew bleeding there, it wouldn't have been at all unusual for a man who had gone through the kind of isolation and persecution Samaritans have gone through to say, "Look who the dog is now." Or, if he had a particularly bitter spirit to just go ahead and finish him off. But you see that's the beauty about attitude.

- His attitude helped him overcome his prejudice and it's the only thing that will. You and I have prejudices. We develop them as we go through life and the only way they'll be conquered is by attitude.
- It helped him conquer his convenience. See none of us want to have our convenience rattled. But, the attitude on the part of that Samaritan made him give his donkey, his money, his time and all because he had the right attitude, not because he had more availability or more time, but because he had the right attitude.

Four observations

1. Your attitude is more important than your abilities. That was proved in the person that we admired the most. We admire the person most who has the right attitude. Attitude is the way we influence this world not by looks or our brain. Every person has something to give to his fellow man and something to give to God. Don't think: "I have nothing to give God" because you might also be thinking "God has not given me anything." That's paramount to blasphemy.
2. Your position doesn't count anything next to your attitude. The classic example is right here in this parable. The first two men were religious men. There was a Levite and a Priest. If anybody was trained to help people, it was them. If anybody had gone to school to learn to devote their life to people, it was the Priest and the Levite. Isn't it fascinating that the people who were trained the most, qualified the most, and schooled the most, helped the least?
3. Your attitude is more important than timing. In this parable the Good Samaritan had the poorest timing of all. You see if that beaten up Jew was half dead when the Priest and the Levite passed by, he was probably three-fourths dead by the time the Good Samaritan got there. But it didn't stop him from serving. Don't look for a time to have the right attitude. Have the right attitude and let time work itself out. Remember the purpose of this parable was for Jesus to respond to the question, who is my neighbor? Jesus says your neighbor has nothing to do with proximity, neighborhood associations, or timing. It's whoever has the right attitude to help.
4. A right attitude is active. Which of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers, the expert in the law replied, the one who had mercy on him? Jesus told him, go and do likewise.
 - a. Look around to see who needs help
 - b. Eliminate your excuses
 - c. Help them "Just do it."

Amazing Grace Lesson #1106

Questions:

1. Match the character(s) with the attitude by circling the appropriate letter.

- a. What's yours is mine and I'm going to take it.
- b. What's mine is mine and I'm going to keep it.
- c. What's mine is yours and I'm going to give it.

1. Levite and Priest attitude

2. Robbers attitude

3. Samaritan attitude

2. What attitudes did the Priest, Levite and Samaritan have in common?

- They all saw the same problem
- They all had something else to do
- They all had reasons not to help
- All the above
- They did not have anything in common

3. Your ability is more important than your attitude?
 True
 False
4. Your position in life is just as important or even more important than your attitude.
 True
 False
5. Scheduling your time to accomplish the most is very important and has a higher priority than attitude.
 True
 False
6. A right attitude is active
 True
 False
7. Which of the three men in this parable was “a neighbor” to the injured man?
 Priest
 Levite
 Samaritan

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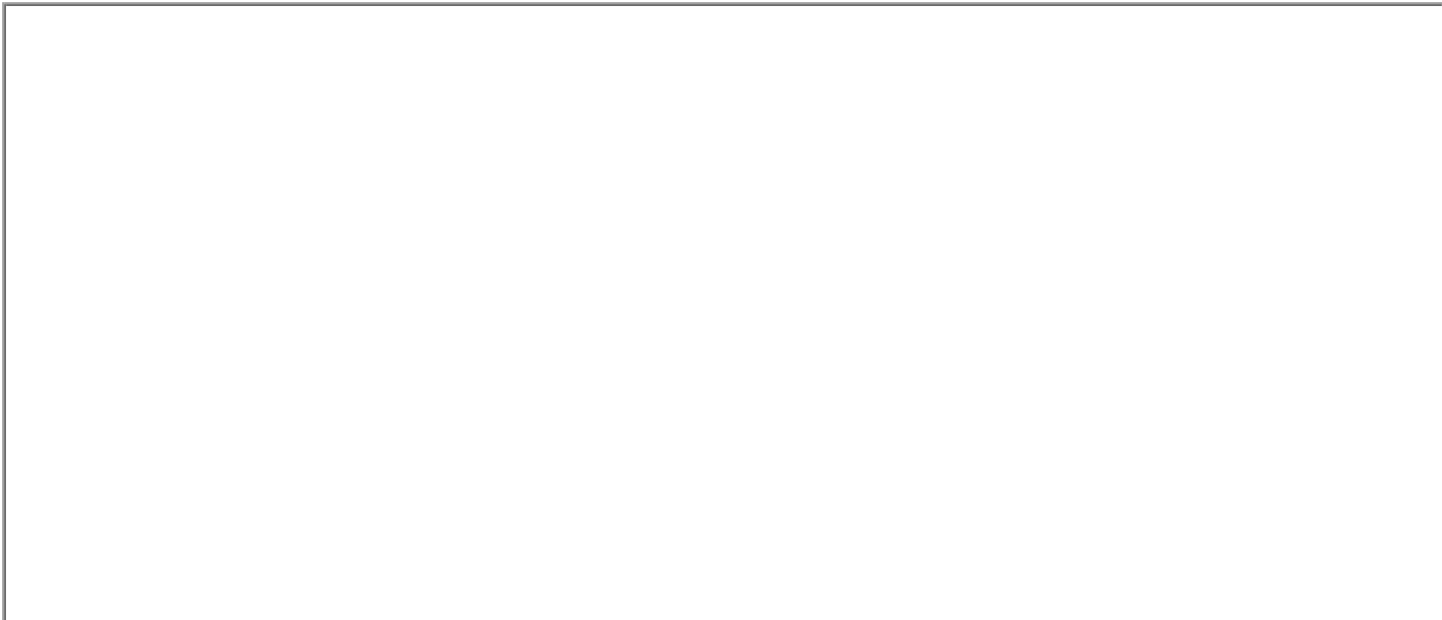
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