

Sunday, May 10, 2026 am

WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER (11)

Attitudes and Actions

Continuing our 2026 theme, this lesson is one that in one way is agreed upon by my most Christ followers. In essence one might say, when you have a proper attitude, it will lead to proper actions. Even advocates of OSAS (while not directly tying it to salvation) will tell you that you need to obey what the Bible tells you to do.

But lets take a closer look at how attitudes and actions are joined together. And notice some misconceptions that some advocate.

I. Attitudes and actions are joined together

- a. Attitude matters to God – while the Bible nowhere uses that phrase, you find in from beginning to end.
 - i. Psalm 100:4, *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.*
 - ii. The actions of Eve and Adam in Genesis 3 reflected an attitude toward God that led to rebellion and everything else.
 - iii. Consider the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was often contrasting outward appearance with attitudes from within.
 1. E.g., He begins with 8 attitudes we need – the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12);
 2. He speaks of godly examples and His mission to fulfill the LOM (5:13-20).
 3. This is followed by contrasting the strict interpretation of the Law with the motives behind it (Murder/anger – 5:21-26; Adultery/lust/MDR – 5:27-32); Oaths (5:33-37 – let your yes be yes...);
 4. He speaks of loving your enemies (5:43-48);
 5. Doing charitable deeds – 6:1-4 – not to be seen by men;
 6. Prayer – 6:5-15 – visible vs. within;
 7. Fasting – 6:16-18 – not external but inward.
 8. Judging righteously - 7:1-6 – not judging according to appearance, but with humility and fear, cf. John 7:24.
 9. We could keep going, but the point is Jesus was teaching that while your actions matter, OS DOES your attitude.
 - iv. John 4:24 – as Jesus spoke about worship He said it must be done “in spirit and in truth.” Cf. 2 Corinthians 9:7 – giving, 1 Corinthians 11:26-29 – the Lord’s Supper is to be taken in a worthy manner, 1 Corinthians 14:15 – singing and praying with the spirit and understanding.
 - v. James 1:2-3 – even as we face trials of life, our attitude matters.
 - vi. Exponentially we could consider specific examples and passages that show that God cares about our attitude.
- b. The heart is at the foundation of everything we do
 - i. Our heart (not the blood pump) is related to our spiritual lives and our attitude.
 - ii. Proverbs 4:23 - Keep your heart with all diligence.
 - iii. Out of the heart proceeds who you are – Matthew 12:34-35 – a good man brings forth good things.
 - iv. Matthew 22:37-40 – greatest command – love God with all your heart...
 - v. cf. 1 Samuel 16:7 as Samuel is sent to anoint David. He was told not to look at outward appearance for God looks at the heart. Many years later David would encourage his son Solomon to remember this. 1 Chronicles 28:9, *“As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD*

searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

- vi. Ephesians 6:6 – speaking of bondservants, but applying to all of us Paul noted our need for *sincerity of heart, as to Christ, not with eyeservice as men pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.*
- c. Action is about what you are doing – we frequently emphasize obedience.
 - i. Romans 6:16-17 – you are a slave to the one you obey...you obeyed from the heart...
 - ii. Hebrews 5:9 – He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him
 - iii. John 14:15 – Jesus noted, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” Our attitude affects our actions. See also 1 John 5:3, “*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments...*”
 - iv. Luke 6:46 – *But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?*
 - v. Psalm 119:30, *I have chosen the way of truth (faithfulness – ESV, faithful way – LSB); Your judgments I have laid before me.*
 - vi. James 1:22-25 – *be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves...*”
- d. When attitudes and actions do not align there is usually hypocrisy and corruption – cf. Matthew 23:25-27 – whitewashed tombs. Outwardly they appeared beautiful, but inwardly they were corrupt and unclean. The history of Israel demonstrates this. Isaiah 1:10-17,
- e. Why attitude matters
 - i. Because we follow the example of Jesus – He was not only obedient in action but in attitude as well - Hebrews 5:8, Philippians 2:5 & 8). We seek to imitate Him. 1 Peter 2:21ff. If you are not serving God both in action and attitude, you are NOT imitating Christ.
 - ii. It will affect the degree to which you work – attitude is what leads to working with the whole heart. When one is not fully committed, the quality of work often suffers. Saul failed to completely destroy the Amalekites.- 1 Samuel 15:22-23. Amos 6:1, “*Woe to those who are at ease in Zion*”
 - iii. It will affect how you treat others – again, why are you willing to help someone? Is it out of genuine love (caring) or “have to”? Ephesians 4:31-32 – put away and put on.
 - iv. It will affect your inner being – when you really don’t want to do something, you may be sullen, bitter and outright miserable while doing it. OR, you can accept who you are and your task a do it with grace and gratitude – “by the grace of God I am what I am” – 1 Corinthians 15:10. Philippians 2:14-16 – do all things without complaining... Psalm 51:6, *Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.*
- f. Summarizing attitude and actions, we can see that actions are outward obedience, attitude is inward obedience. Truly God has joined them together. 1 Peter 1:22- you have purified your heart in obeying the truth...

II. When attitude and actions don’t merge.

- a. There are many beliefs that pit proper attitudes and actions against each other.
- b. “*As long as I am sincere*” – attitude trumps actions. Is sincerity enough?
 - i. First, let me emphasize sincerity is important. We have established that in speaking about attitudes. Matthew 5:8 – the pure in heart will see God. Without sincerity, it is very unlikely that you will obey with a whole heart.
 - ii. We have examples of sincerity that was not enough.
 1. Cornelius – Acts 10:1-2, 11:14 – He was sincere, but it was clearly not enough.
 2. Saul, in persecuting Christians was sincere – Acts 26:9, 23:1 – he had always lived with a good conscience. He did what he THOUGHT was the right thing to do. Galatians 1:14 – he notes that he was exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers. BUT Saul (Paul) was wrong and corrected by the Lord.

3. Proverbs 14:12 – there is a way that seems right to man... Consider the unnamed prophet (man of God) sent to Jeroboam in 1 Kings 13. He was told to not eat or stay, but rather to go home. But an older (and likely lonely) prophet lied to him. He believed the older man and it resulted in him dying because he disobeyed God’s instructions.
- iii. Psalm 139:23-24, David said, *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.*
- c. **“I don’t want to do that, but God says I have to”** – Actions with improper attitudes
 - i. There are many that will do what God says, but reluctantly. They REALLY don’t want to do it. In body they are there, but in mind they are not.
 - ii. Example: This is the “I have to go to church” mentality.
 - iii. Malachi 1:10-13 – their service was “have to” service. “O what a weariness” they cried. God was insulted.
 - iv. Paul demonstrates the attitude we must have – Philippians 3:7-11 – Paul lost everything but didn’t care because his life was first about being found in Christ and attaining to the resurrection of the dead.
 - v. Also consider Jesus Himself – Philippians 2:5ff – He walked away from heaven. Hebrews 12:2 tells us that with joy He endured the cross (not the torture, but the goal).
 - vi. If we find serving God a drudgery, our lives will be miserable. 1 John 4:18-19 – we love Him because He first loved us.
- d. **“I have checked all the boxes”** – action trumps attitudes.
 - i. While we may deny it, there are some who by their actions believe they have earned their salvation.
 - ii. The Pharisee who went to the temple to pray – Luke 18:10-12 - He bragged about how wonderful he was. And it was a major flaw of the religious leaders Jesus dealt with.
 - iii. This is the point of Ephesians 2:9 – *“not of works lest anyone should boast.”* You CANNOT ever earn your salvation. BUT that does NOT negate obedience. 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.’*
 - iv. Philippians 2:12 calls for us to work out our own salvation WITH fear and trembling (attitudes). Do what you are commanded to do, but the proper attitude must accompany it.

When it comes to attitudes and actions? Which is more important? In this lesson we have seen that both are equally important. They complement each other because God HAS joined them together.

There is a song we sing from time to time, “None of self and all of Thee”. It describes different levels of attitude and obedience. It begins with me thinking about myself, but it ends with the understanding that it really is ALL about serving Him. The song is impactful because it describes the faith of one as it grows from infancy to full and complete maturity in Him.

Does God have the place He deserves in your life? Think about it!

Part 2 -

III. Attitudes that enhance obedience

- a. Faith – Proverbs 3:5-6
- b. Faithfulness -
- c. Reverence (Godliness) – Eusebia –
- d. Submission – surrender. Selflessness.
- e. Determination - Colossians 3:2 – set your mind on things above.
- f. A willing heart –
- g. Gratitude – 1 Thessalonian 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6-7
- h. Humility – James 4:6
- i. Love – we love Him because He first loved us. The love of Christ compels us. John 14:15- if you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 2 John 6 – this is love, that we walk according to His commandments...
- j. Hope
- k. Patience
- l. Self-control

[5 Levels of Obedience Tool - Discipleship.org](#)

[7 Ways To Build A Godly Mindset | Teresa Devine](#)