

Attitudes... What Is Yours?

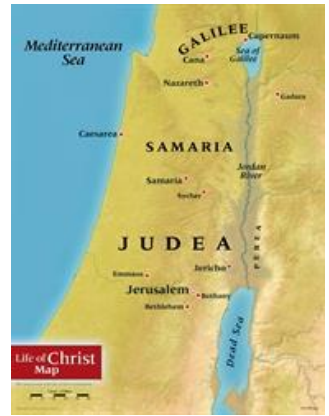
Sunday, June 30 at 9:00 † Monday, July 1 at 7 PM

Third Sunday after Pentecost / Second Sunday after Trinity – 2019

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: As we think about the church year, Jesus has †lived, †died, †been raised, and †ascended. **Now**, *during this time of the church year*, we return to various accounts of Jesus' earthly ministry and teaching – *prior to His saving work*. Today's text includes six attitudes... *some are good and some are not!* As we think about the attitudes of others, *let us also think about our own!*

1. **Jesus... Regarding His Mission:** ⁵¹ **When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up [into heaven], he set his face to go to Jerusalem.** // That verse marks a turning point in the Gospel according to Luke. Earlier in Jesus' ministry, He was †teaching, †casting out demons, and †healing the sick; then, *when He was transfigured*, He received encouragement from Moses and Elijah. Now here, in **Luke 9:51**, Jesus knew it was time to go to Jerusalem for His †death, †resurrection, and †ascension! Since those things would complete His soul-saving mission, Jesus, *with the right attitude – the right way of thinking*, was determined to complete His work!
2. **Some Samaritans... Regarding Jerusalem:** ⁵² **And [Jesus] sent messengers [apparently James and John] ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him.** ⁵³ **But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.** // Picture a map of Israel in Jesus' time: the region of

Galilee in the north, of **Samaria** in the middle, and of **Judea** in the south. Jesus traveled from north to south, so His journey passed through Samaria. Even though Jews and Samaritans had tensions between them, it was not enough to prevent Jews from traveling through Samaria. The group included Jesus and many disciples, so that is why advanced preparations were necessary. But why the rejection by the Samaritans? They had heard of Jesus and His miracles; however, He passed right by their place of worship on Mount Gerizim – “acting as if their worship amounted to nothing” (Lenksi, 554), so they refused to receive Jesus! Those Samaritans had wrong information, which resulted in a wrong attitude about Jesus!



3. **James and John... Regarding Those Who Rejected Jesus:**
⁵⁴ And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” ⁵⁵ But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶ And they went on to another village. // Since James and John “saw” what had happened, they were most likely the ones who had been sent ahead to make the arrangements. Then, returning to Jesus, they told Him about their plan to consume them with fire. They probably expected Jesus to agree; however, He looked them square in the face and sharply scolded them! But why? The focus of Jesus’ first coming was His work to save; **when He comes again** He will welcome all who have received Him, but send away all who have rejected Him! *James and John had the wrong attitude.* For us, let us not

condemn those who reject Jesus, but ✦pray for them, ✦continue to share God's Word with them, and ✦be patient with them!

Note: "It seems evident that the three brief incidents which now follow are grouped together because of their similarity, not because they occurred in close succession..." (Lenski, 558-559).

4. **Disciples... Regarding the Difficulty of Following Jesus:** ⁵⁷ As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." // Wow, what a great offer made to Jesus: "I will follow you wherever you go." In other words, I don't care ✦how far away You are going or ✦how difficult the journey may be or ✦how much suffering I must endure, *I will follow You!* HOWEVER, *we all know that SAYING is easier than DOING!* Take note that Jesus did not decline the wonderful offer, *but He did cause the man to think about the difficulties* – how Jesus' accommodations were less than the average fox or bird. Jesus wants all of us to seek first His kingdom, *thus to live under His rule and reign*, and endure whatever difficulties may come to us as a result. The man had the right attitude, *but did he actually follow?*
5. **Disciples... Regarding Following Jesus Now:** ⁵⁹ To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." // In that scenario, Jesus was leaving, *moving on*, and asked a particular man – *right then and there* – to leave everything behind and follow

Him. However, the man's father had just died, *so he sought permission from Jesus to go and bury him*, and then he would follow. The request seems very reasonable, *but Jesus wants all of us to make a sharp contrast between physical things and spiritual things*. Jesus' words imply that the man's father died in his sins, so – *with no more opportunity for his salvation* – the man should let other unbelievers bury him, while the man focuses on spiritual things – *by proclaiming the kingdom of God!* Also, if he goes back among his unbelieving family, *they may talk him out of following Jesus!* Jesus called for the man to change his attitude; did he? How is He calling us to do the same?

6. **Disciples... Regarding Putting Jesus First:** ⁶¹ **Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home."** ⁶² **[But] Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."** // First, the word "**looks**" is a present participle, so the meaning is not looking back once or once in a while, *but constantly looking back*, and here, *looking back to the people in his life*. Paul expressed the right attitude with these words, "**...forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13-14 ESV)**. What did the man do? What is our attitude about looking back... pressing on?

This Week's Challenge: Wherever we need an attitude adjustment, *let us be open to it and pray that God would grant it!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Lord, grant us a right attitude in all things!

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