

CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCRIPTURES

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 15:1-9**. From Roy H. Enoch (12-05-1993).
- B. In a lesson entitled, THE MIND OF X, we looked at some of the attitudes that are described in Phil. 2:5-11.
 - 1. Today, we want to focus more specifically and look at the attitude that X had toward the Scriptures or inspired writings.
- B. We want to study X's attitude toward the Scriptures in two ways:
 - 1. His attitude was different from the Jewish teachers of His day.
 - 2. We want to look at five areas to describe His attitude.

I. JESUS' ATTITUDE WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER JEWISH TEACHERS.

- A. It was common for Jewish teachers to ignore what inspired writers had to say.
 - 1. The teachings of God's prophets were often difficult to practice since they required men to change their lives.
 - 2. It was easier to ignore some teachings and to interpret others in a more popular way.
 - 3. Therefore the Jews wrote many commentaries and these were studied and taught more than the Law and Prophets themselves.
- B. It was common to seek for deep, hidden meanings, or figurative, symbolic meaning, rather than take the plain instruction.
 - 1. In the "sermon on the mount" Jesus mentions many of the common interpretations of the Jews, and then tells them what the teachings of God really was.
 - 2. Jesus described the process in our text: Mt. 15:3-6.
- C. It had become common for the oral traditions and commentary of the Rabbis to be given equal weight to the Scriptures.
 - 1. At first there was reluctance to write down the oral traditions, but before the birth of X, they began to write them down to preserve them.
 - 2. Two literary forms were used in writing down the traditions.
 - a. The MIDRASH was a commentary on the text.
 - b. The MISHMA was a topical arrangement.
 - 3. There were two types of content:
 - a. The HAGADAH was non-legal material.
 - b. The HALAKAH discussed legal matters.
 - 4. The following quotation on HALAKAH tells us much about the Jewish attitude toward the Scriptures in the days of Jesus:

"It had an authority equal to that of the law of Moses. Because of its explanatory nature, it was sometimes even more highly esteemed. The source of HALAKAH was not confined to the Scriptures. Tradition or custom could give the force of HALAKAH to any teaching." [H.E. Dana and R.E. Glaze, Jr., INTERPRETING THE NT (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1961), p. 22.]

This was the approach of the Pharisees.
 - 5. Among the Sadducees, it became common to ignore the Scriptures as having any relevancy to their day.
 - 6. The Alexandrian Jews were inclined to the allegorical method of interpretation where they symbolized what they wanted to.

II. JESUS SHOWED THE IDEAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCRIPTURES.

- A. He **BELIEVED** the Scriptures.
 - 1. He believed that they were from God (Mt. 5:18).

- a. He taught that God spoke through Moses (Mk. 7:9-10).
- b. He taught that God spoke through David (Mk. 12:36; Psa. 110:1).
- 2. He believed the Scriptures were true and accurate (Jn. 17:17).
 - b. He refers to creation and the first couple (Mt. 19:1-9).
 - c. He refers to Noah and flood in Mt. 24:37-38.
 - d. He says that the ten commandments were from God. Mt. 15:14
 - e. He confirmed the miracle of manna (Jn. 6:49).
 - f. He based His prediction of His resurrection on the fact that Jonah was swallowed by a great fish (Mt. 12:39-00).
 - g. He mentioned that Elijah raised a child from the dead (Lk. 4:25-26).
 - h. He says that Naaman was cured of leprosy (Lk. 4:27).
 - i. He continued to say in His teaching: "It is written."
- B. He **KNEW** the Scriptures.
 - 1. David Roper says that while in Australia, he studied for many months with a man immensely ignorant of the Scriptures. He discovered that the man had studied for several years to be a minister in the Church of England. He asked what he had studied for all those years and was told, He had learned to conduct the ceremonies of their denomination. This was much like the Jewish traditions in Jesus' day.
 - 2. He knew where to find passages of scripture (Lk. 4:16-18; Isa. 61:1,2). Without chapters and verses, one had to know the scroll well to find the passage near the end.
 - 3. He could also quote passages from memory.
 - a. A Jewish boy had to learn the scriptures and a trade.
 - b. Jesus did both well.
 - c. I have read that one cannot teach in a Muslim mosque until he has memorized the Koran. How many preachers would we have if our knowledge of God's word was to be that thorough?
 - d. Some will pay \$50 for a year of the *TV Guide*, but will not pay \$50 for a Bible that will last for the rest of their life. Why? They use the *TV Guide* more in a year.
- C. Jesus **RESPECTED** the Scriptures.
 - 1. He believed that they were a REVELATION from God to enlighten us about God and ourselves.
 - a. Although the Jews often allegorized and misused the Scriptures, Jesus explained them in simple, practical ways to change our lives.
 - 2. He treated the Scriptures "naturally" as we would do w/any literature. He used logical applications that were in harmony w/ the language and intent of writer.
 - a. He was familiar w/ the original Hebrew and Greek translation.
 - b. He often told who wrote the passage, to whom and why.
 - c. In dealing with Scripture, He observed all the basic rules of language.
 - d. We need this "common sense" approach today.
 - e. Amos R. Wells wrote a poem entitled, "Read It Through" and it has these lines that describe the "Bible study" of too many:
 - You who like to play at Bible
 - Dip and dabble here and there,
 - Just before you kneel a-weary,
 - and yawn out a hurried prayer;
 - You who treat the Crown of Writing
 - As you treat no other book--
 - Just a paragraph disjointed,

Just a crude impatient look. . ."

- f. A man brought a friend in the hospital a gift-wrapped book of short stories and humorous stories, said "you will enjoy this book: you can open it start reading anywhere." The friend said, "Oh, I already have a Bible."
- D. Jesus **OBEYED** the Scriptures.
 - 1. His obedience was voluntary.
 - a. He began His ministry after his baptism and temptation with all power and authority (Lk. 4:36; 5:24).
 - b. The OT Law was 1500 years old when He came. (The Sadducees said that old things were outmoded.)
 - c. He came to bring a new and better law (Jn. 1:17).
 - d. If any was justified in not keeping the Law, it was X.
 - 2. His attitude toward and teaching about the Law is found in Mt. 5:17-20.
 - 3. His attitude toward Scripture is reflected in Mk. 14:49.
- E. He **SHARED** the Scriptures.
 - 1. Jesus defined spiritual greatness (Mt. 5:19).
 - a. Jesus shared the Scriptures publicly and privately.
 - b. He taught them **WHAT** the Scriptures said.
 - c. He **APPLIED** the Scriptures to their lives.
 - d. He **CORRECTED MISUNDERSTANDINGS** about the Scriptures.
 - e. He recruited others to teach also.
 - 2. The real test of love in our lives is what we do (1Jn. 5:3).
 - a. Do we tell others what the Lord has commanded (Lk. 10:2)?
 - b. Do we help others handle the word aright (2Tim. 2:15).

CONCLUSION.

- A. The attitude of X toward the Scriptures:
 - 1. He believed them.
 - 2. He knew them.
 - 3. He respected them.
 - 4. He obeyed them.
 - 5. He taught them.
- B. What is our attitude toward them? Where do you stand in this list?
- C. Do you need to make greater progress today?
- D. Let us imitate the Lord.