

## CHAPTER 5

### PRIORITY OF GOD'S ATTRIBUTES Least Attribute is Love

**Having an understanding of God's Priority of Attributes is most helpful in understanding His dealings and teachings TO US.**

#### Nature of **BEING A GOD** = Characteristics

We confess at the outset that we are talking about God. To be a God it has traditionally been accepted that a God has certain **CHARACTERISTICS** by being in the nature of a God.

These six characteristics are sovereignty, immutable, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and spiritual.

#### Nature of our Creator God **RELATING TO MAN** = Attributes

**ATTRIBUTES**, as different from Characteristics, are Attributes by which He may relate to His Creations. For instance, created man cannot relate to God in His characteristics that only a God has, but a man can relate to four such concepts as Love, Truth, Holiness, and Wisdom, since these are more related to a man's instinctive God-given understandings, that we may know Him.

But God's Attributes are only possessed by God. No natural LOST man possesses:

1. total selfless **LOVE**,
2. exclusive reality **TRUTH** as known only by God,
3. moral pure goodness perfect **HOLINESS** as defined by God, nor
4. highest **WISDOM** of all application of all Attributes contingently and simultaneously.

#### The Priorities of His Attributes

So that His four 'primary' Attributes of Love, Truth, Holiness, and Wisdom will be clearly understood, we also wish to add another observation, that is priorities.

**It is because of a lack of understanding of the priorities of His Attributes that, perhaps, many lack understanding of God and His doctrines (teachings) today.**

Again, this is "something NEW" that we think has never been done with this subject. Who has ever said one is more important than another? Perhaps, many. And most likely in these evil days, His "Love" is extolled the most, making it MISTAKEN FOR human natural self-centered love.

Actually, His Love is the least in His priorities of Attributes, according to His Word.

But who has proposed an order of priorities among them all according to the Bible's description of Wisdom's perfect administrations in any instance?

We shall endeavor to prioritize them now, in accord with His perfect Wisdom, only as expressed in His Eternal Word of scriptures given to us.

### **LOVE is LEAST ATTRIBUTE** selflessness

Love obeys Truth only, teaches Truth only, is servant of all Truth only, and such Love of Truth protects the flock.

### **TRUTH DEFINES LOVE**

**"Love rejoices in Truth."** Why? Because without Truth to define it, to interpret it, to protect it, to guide it, to channel it, "love" can become a demonic snare and delusion to us. Truth, God Himself (John 14:6), defines His Love. And this, His Love, is totally different than human love.

"Loving God with all your heart, strength, and mind, and then wanting and helping your neighbor to likewise do the same (as yourself)" is God's definition of Love. Sin is us not fulfilling our created purpose of totally serving God.

Love is serving God, according to His Truth. This understanding comes from the teachings of God's Truth from God Himself (Jn 14:15 and 15:10). Truth Himself has defined His Love, by His Life and teachings (doctrines). A man that Loves God, Loves, seeks, and serves His Truth and Holiness first and foremost with all his heart.

**Placing a so-called "love" above God's Truth and Holiness, is demonic deception !!** There is much of this today.

"These things saith He that is Holy, He that is True, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name," Lord Jesus Christ, Phil 2:10-11 (Rev 3:7-8).

**"If ye continue in My Word, then ye are My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free"** (John 8:31-32). Ultimate freedom from sin may only be achieved by total unconditional surrender to Truth. Love is simply defined as serving Truth. Truth defines Love. And God's Love is action according to His Truth ONLY. Love rejoices in Truth. Without God's Truth, God's Love cannot be known.

In fact, our personal conversion, our personal continuous turning from ourselves as a slave to serve our Lord, seeking His forgiveness and restoration of us to Himself, is the only unconditional aspect of our salvation known to the scriptures or in our hearts. It is the unconditional total surrender of ourselves as slaves to Truth, personified in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Show me a professing Christian, who seeks Truth above all other things in life. I will declare him, without any doubt, an honest and true Christian.

## **LOVE OBEYS TRUTH ONLY**

Christ stresses that our obedience to Truth determines our Love to Him and His Love to us.. John 14:21-26 says,

"He that hath my commandments, and is keeping them, he it is that is **Loving Me**: and he that **is Loving Me** shall be Loved of My Father, and I will Love him, and will manifest Myself to him. **Judas saith** unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, **If a man is loving Me, he will be keeping My words: and My Father will Love him, and We will come unto (pros) him, and make our abode with (para) him.** He that Loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and **the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me.** These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, **He shall teach you all**

**things**, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

**It is obedience to Truth that counts, first and foremost**, not many words expressing our love. Love without obedience to Truth is nonexistent. It is demonic deception, as Judas was told, Jesus manifests Himself to us IF we love Him, and He only recognizes our Love by our obedience to His Truth. Love without obedience to Truth does not exist.

Obedience to Truth determines whether we have Love or not. Paul taught "obedience of faith" (Rom 1:5 and 26:16). **Faith** is (=) **the Mind of Christ (Truth)** in us through the Holy Spirit, being led by the Holy Spirit as sons of God (Rom 8:14).

**"But ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye are knowing all things.** I have not written unto you because ye know not the Truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the Truth" (1 John 2:20-21).

"He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4).

All men, whether born-again or unregenerate, shall ALL be impartially judged for hell or Heaven dependent upon our personal obedience to Truth only. It is grace **through faith**, not grace only, and unto good works (Eph 2:8-10).

Christ is the **cause**, grace is the **Method** (plan), and faith is the **means**, good (God-good) works is the **result**, and the final **goal** of Perfection in Eternal Life in Heaven is achieved. And each of these is caused and achieved only by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 5:29 says, "And shall come forth; they that have done good (agathos, God-good), unto the resurrection of Life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." And all the scriptures of OT and NT say this same thing.

Love's obedience to TRUTH ONLY involves TWO very serious DEMANDING considerations.

**(1)** So we had better know what **FAITH** is !! YOUR personal salvation depends upon your "obedience of faith" (Rom 1:5 and 16:26) to produce good works. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom 14:23). "Without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Heb 11:6).

The WORD of TRUTH clearly teaches what faith is. It is time you WAKE UP !! LEARN WHAT **FAITH** IS !! See Appendix A and Chapter 12, page 187.

**(2) THE MIND OF TRUTH** Himself, only functions according to the **PRINCIPLES OF THINKING** upon which HE CREATED ALL MEN'S MINDS, so that they could understand HIM from the creation of the world, being clearly revealed to them, "so that they are without excuse" (Rom 1:20).

This function of the MIND OF GOD, as far as man is concerned, is according to "logic," employing inductive thinking only with concepts. Otherwise, nothing of God could be possibly understood by man. ALL THE TIME PROVEN PINCIPLES OF LOGIC MUST BE OBSERVED TO UNDERSTAND ANYTHING OF GOD'S WORD, OR GOD'S DEALING WITH MAN. All things of God in relation to man are ALL "LOGICAL." See the two types of thinking in the world. The thinking of satan and demons, and the thinking of God and His children in Appendix E.

## **LOVE TEACHES ALL TRUTH ONLY**

John 21 gives an example of one who said much about his love for Jesus. But when it came to obedience, it was not there. When the pressure came, his resolution collapsed and he denied his Lord. After the resurrection of Jesus, our Lord confronted Peter lovingly, but in Truth:

"... Simon, son of Jonas, Lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I Love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs..... Feed my sheep..... Feed my sheep....." (John 21:15-17)

How do we express Love of the Lord Jesus according to the lesson of this confrontation? By feeding His sheep, as He also commanded in the great commission, by teaching His people and training them in the whole counsel of God, "teaching them to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt 28:20).

In Acts 20, we find a good example of an apostle who obeyed the great commission. He says nothing about Love to the Ephesians in this passage. But he exhibited the supreme Love of any disciple toward the Ephesians. What did he do for them? Did he say, I love you, I love you, I love you? No! Paul declaring his Love to the Ephesians, says,

"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27).

Paul in Gal 4:15 says, "Speaking the Truth in Love." **Love is the manner and method of speaking Truth OF GOD, FIRST** and foremost, **in the Love OF GOD, ONLY** and foremost.....NOT IN A SENTIMENTAL DEMONIC FLESH LOVE OF MAN'S FEELINGS.

At the beginning of Galatians, Paul said TWICE FOR EMPHASIS, "though we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal 1:8).

He was placing Truth ONLY as supreme and stating the Truth in the Love of God Only, not some human and demonic sentimental concern for peoples' feelings. God's Love serves Truth of God, nothing of man, and if we don't place Truth of God as supreme, any expression of love is nothing more than demonic human sentimentality and lust for acceptance or some self-promotion.

An obvious sign of demonic teachings on "love" in these last days, is teaching that our human love for others is greater than Truth (doctrines) of God. As usual satan tries to misquote or redefine scripture to deceive us.

The second commandment is to love our neighbor "as we love ourselves." What are we doing with our selves in the first and greatest commandment? We are serving God's Truth, God's Love, God's Holiness, God's Wisdom.....nothing of, by, or for man. So love your neighbor as yourself, means getting your neighbor to also be serving God's Attributes with all his strength, mind, and heart. Anything less is not Loving God first and foremost.

## **LOVE IS THE SERVANT OF ALL TRUTH ONLY**

"Love rejoices in Truth" (1 Cor 13:6). "As Christ also Loves the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph 5:25), He gave to the church,

"Some Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:11-13).

God's desire for us in our Living on earth is to come to a unity of the faith, and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man. And you will notice that this is accomplished, not by Love only, but by men of the church declaring and teaching doctrinal Truth Only to the assembly of Christ. God's Love serves doctrinal Truth first and foremost. Truth, first and foremost, is God's means of bringing us all into the unity of the faith.

A unity based on the love of us for one another, rather than ALL Truth, doctrinal exactness, is demonic and false. The new commandment given to us by Jesus, that we love one another (John 13:34), is after all, one doctrinal teaching of Truth.

**There is no teaching whatsoever in the New Testament suggesting that Love is more important than doctrine or Truth.** Love leaves no Truth (doctrine) out. He says, "I will worship toward thy Holy temple, and praise they name for Thy Loving kindness and for Thy Truth; for **Thou hast magnified Thy Word (of Truth) above all Thy Name**" (Psa 138:2).

**"The Word is the Truth of You."** [[ Jn 17:17, in Greek means the Word (logos) is exactly the equivalent of the Truth of You. ]] This specific use of the "the" with the verb "is" in Greek is seldom found in the entire New Testament. Little wonder that He magnifies His Word (= Truth) above His Name.

This unique Greek expression is not found in the multiple areas of "God is Love" (1 John 4:8 and 16). Significantly, 1 John 4:7 says, "the Love is out from within the God;" it does not say "the Love is the God," making God and Love totally equivalent. God is more than His one Attribute, Love. It is interesting that Truth, Love, Holiness, and Wisdom are Attributes of God, but only His Word (logos, communication, used alternately for his Word and for Christ Himself) is exactly equivalent to His Truth.

And significantly, 1 John 5:6 says, "and the Spirit is the witness bearer in that the Spirit is the Truth." So the scriptures clearly are telling us that His Word = His Christ = His Spirit, and are each exactly the equivalent ( = ) of His Truth. How wonderful and assuring !!. There need be no misunderstanding.

Apart from his martyrdom, in death or living, learning and following and teaching the doctrines (Truth teachings) of his Creator God is the highest expression of Love a man can give to His Lord.

**LOVE OF TRUTH PROTECTS THE FLOCK FROM ERROR**

We are immersed in a world of demons, satan's world. Demons have access to all of us through (1) our fallen flesh natures, and our souls (mind, emotion, and will), and (2) our lack of understanding His Word of Truth. How is the true assembly in our Lord to protect itself, individually and corporately? How can we evaluate any success in ministry?

Our Lord repeatedly taught, "Beware of false prophets that come to you in sheep's clothing" (Matt 7:15); "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt 16:6 and 12); "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt 24:4, Mark 13:5, Eph 5:6, 2 Thess 2:3, 1 John 3:7). In summary, **Beware of their doctrines, teachings, falsely given as Truth !** When Christ presented Himself to the world, He said,

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law" (Luke 12:51-53).

From His teachings, how much value, do you suppose, does Christ place upon doctrines, teachings of Truth? It is His purpose to teach Truth, which will divide, His true disciples from the false. **Division is His purpose, and teaching Truth is His method** to separate the true from the false, the wheat from the chaff.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor 6:17-7:1).

Paul repeatedly taught this as well. In Rom 16:17, Paul said,

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and **AVOID THEM**. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom 16:17-18)."

**Take heed unto thyself**, and unto the **DOCTRINE**; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim 4:16).

If we honor and selflessly Love the Lord Jesus, we will watch for anything which may destroy His Truth (doctrines) as reality known only to Him.

**A good way of life or good doctrine is always contaminated by a bad environment or bad associations.** A mere association of the good with the bad will never make the bad thing better. The good gets worse; the bad does not improve. It is the same with a rotten apple in a barrel. The bad one never gets better, but the good ones go rotten. "Be not deceived: evil works (dead works) associates are corrupting kind morals" (1 Cor. 15:33).

Is it right for doctrinal purity to be blatantly submerged for the sake of worldly expediency or ecclesiastical unity? Surely this is a total denial of the Holy Spirit's Word through the Scriptures. And it is **treason to Christ**.