

HOW IS YOUR ATTITUDE?

Philippians 2:1-6

INTRODUCTION: We, as Americans have been led to believe that if we keep climbing the ladder of success, at the end of that climb is joy, soul satisfaction, peace and the good life. However, if all that is true what happens to our joy, soul satisfaction and peace when jobs are being lost, the market is down and interest rates are going up.

I. PROGRESS—UP—UP—UP

God's Word would encourage us to question the American dream of always wanting more of everything. We find many warnings in the Word of God about the dangers of constant striving for more. Our Bibles tell us that prosperity destroys far more souls than adversity does. 1 Timothy 6:6-10. As we gain in material treasures here it makes it much more difficult to keep our eyes on storing up treasures in heaven: Matthew 19:16-26. As we gain worldly wealth and power, the Word of God warns us that we are entering into dangerous territory. We begin to think that anything or anyone who stands in the way of our achieving success in this life is not worth keeping because we come to believe we cannot have both worldly success and loving relationships. Our Lord Jesus warns us that chasing the American dream may just cost us our eternal soul: Mark 8:36-37.

II. DEMOTIONS ARE NOT ALWAYS NEGATIVE!

It is not always a bad thing when the graph of our financial progress goes down. Having a reversal at work or even in your family life or even in your health can move us up in our dependence on our God. Sometimes as your finances go down your family life may go up. Sometimes our God may even give us a series of demotions to get us to just the right place He has for us so He can greatly use us: Remember Joseph—the favorite son. Joseph—sold into slavery by his brothers. Joseph—falsely accused and jailed. Joseph—prime minister of Egypt! The greatest example of taking a series of demotions to get ahead in God's plan for His life would be our Lord Jesus Christ: Philippians 2:5-7. Jesus—God in heaven. Jesus—born as a baby boy on earth. Jesus—worshipped in heaven becomes a servant on earth. Jesus—eternal God dies on a cross: Philippians 2:8. But because Jesus willingly took the demotions His Father asked of Him He was highly exalted by God: Philippians 2:9-11.

III. WHY WAS JESUS WILLING TO BE DEMOTED?

Why did Jesus choose voluntarily to demote Himself from heaven to the earth; from being all powerful to being a helpless infant; from being worshipped by angels to being cursed by men and even by His Father in heaven? Jesus took all those demotions because of one little four letter word: L O V E! Our God loved us so much He asked His Son to take a series of demotions: John 3:16. Why are we as believers in Jesus Christ willing to take demotions? 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. It is a parent's love that causes them to willingly pass up promotions for the good of their family. Christians take many demotions over the years to advance the Kingdom of God and the good of others: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Many don't realize that to have strong families and strong friendships it takes a sacrifice of time and effort for the good of others. Many wonder why their church life does not fulfill them. Could it be because of a lack of demotions? As we chose to demote ourselves the same way our Lord Jesus did we truly experience the way of the Master: Acts 20:35. This is truly the way of the Kingdom of God: Isaiah 55:8-9; Luke 9:22-24. Serve someone this week who does not deserve it: Romans 5:8.