

Attitude

My wife gave me a poster many years ago. It's a little faded now, but still nice to look at. It shows a lovely orange flower and some greenery, all covered with drops of dew. Its caption says, "Let each morning remind you that the Lord has blessed you with a beautiful new day."

I used to pick up a friend each week to go to prayer breakfast at our church. Sometimes the weather was nasty, and he'd complain about it. I would think of my poster, and I'd answer, "It's a beautiful day." For me, every day is a wonderful and beautiful gift from God, whether it's raining or snowing or a humid 98 degrees. Since I started looking at that poster, I've had many years of nothing but gorgeous days.

A few years ago there was a TV commercial for a retirement home in which an elderly lady said approximately this: "When I get up in the morning, I can decide whether I'm going to have a good day or a bad day. Today I'm going to have a good day."

And the Apostle Paul put it this way:

"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength." —*Philippians 4:11b-13.*

How about you? Do you always decide to have a good day, or do you sometimes choose to have a bad day?

Do you carry around a load of hurt and anger and resentment? Do you try to "get even," or wish you could? Or do you quickly forgive someone who lets you down or hurts your feelings?

Do you complain about your "bad luck," or the things that have been done to you by others or "the system"? Do you envy others who are better off than you are? Or do you thank God for your many blessings, and strive to do the best you can with what you have?

Do you worry about things you can't change? Or things that might go wrong, but probably won't?

I'll tell you another little story. When I was twenty, I was working in another state, far from my parents' home. My dad was sick and they were struggling to make ends meet, and I spent a lot of time worrying about things that I could not do anything about. I wound up in the hospital with an ulcer. It was one of the best things that ever happened to me, because I learned from that experience that worrying does not do anyone any good, least of all the person

who worries. Sure, there are times when I can't help it; I worry in spite of knowing it's useless and harmful to my health. But for the most part, I always try to fix the things that can be fixed, and avoid worrying about the rest.

What about depression? Are you often "down in the dumps"? Depression can be a serious illness, and if you really suffer from it you should seek medical help. But if you're just "down" because you choose to be, for whatever reason, you may be able to pull yourself out of it by changing your attitude.

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than success, than what other people think or say or do.

It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our attitudes.

— Charles Swindoll

Here are quotes from two great American philosophers:

People are as Happy as they make their minds up to be! — Abraham Lincoln

You can't roller skate in a buffalo herd, but you c'n be happy if you've a mind to.
— Roger Miller

For the first quote, Lincoln was probably echoing some philosopher from an earlier century. It doesn't matter — I suppose he believed it, or he wouldn't have said it. And the second quote is kind of kidding around, but it expresses the same truth. If you choose to be miserable, you certainly will be, but if you decide that you are going to be happy, no matter what, you will spend much less time being miserable.

It seems to me that adversity usually changes a person, for the better or the worse. Incarceration not only takes away freedom, it also takes away hope. With a rotten attitude and little hope for anything better, a person who does jail time can become bitter, disillusioned, angry, antisocial, a sure bet to get into more trouble once he's outside again. Or, by adopting a positive attitude, focusing on what he or she has instead of what he or she does not have, a person can learn and be strengthened by the experience. This is possibly what happened to the Apostle Paul during his times in jail and all of his other troubles.

My brother-in-law gradually lost his eyesight, and finally was totally blind by the age of 18. He became diabetic at about age 45, and developed crippling arthritis just a few months before he died, almost 20 years ago. This man might have been miserable, but he wasn't. He was positive, cheerful, interested in many things, and pleasant to be around. He had learned to concentrate on what he had, rather than what he didn't have.

In my teen years I knew a woman who, as a young girl, had had some crippling disease that left her unable to walk. She lived alone, and moved around her tiny apartment by scooting a wooden chair on noisy little wheels that didn't turn very well. But she was always up-beat, always smiling, always delighted to see us. Anyone who came to visit her was blessed by it as much as she was.

And there was the man who had lost both legs, at mid-thigh, during World War II. He was a small man to start with, and with both legs off there wasn't a whole lot of him left. But he smiled and laughed as

he scooted around on a little wooden platform with casters under it. Would he rather have had his legs back? Of course he would, but he made the best of what he had, and got on with his life.

Here are some of the benefits you can realize from having a positive attitude:

1. You'll look better. A smile and a good word are much more appealing than a sour countenance and a grunt. I know a young man who's always grouchy and rarely smiles. I love him, but it's hard to like him very much. Negative people are hard to like. If you're positive, other people — and you, yourself — will like you more.

2. You'll be healthier. Many diseases are at least partly psychological. When you act like you feel good, you generally do feel good.

3. You will please God. The Bible says that God loves for us to be cheerful givers, and He is not talking only about money. By being positive, you bless those around you.

4. Regarding hope — trust God. He's got your back. Like Paul, you can live victoriously even in bad circumstances. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to Him, and He will direct your paths."

So make up your mind to develop and maintain a positive attitude. Here's how:

First, buy into the idea. Chuck Swindoll is a wise man of God. Read what he wrote about

attitude, in the box on Page 1.

Next, admit that you need help. God will help you develop a great attitude, if you will ask Him, and if you'll let His Spirit guide you.

Watch your mouth! When you find yourself being negative — complaining, gossiping, criticizing — stop it! Apologize if necessary, and try to do better. Look for opportunities to say something positive — a word of praise or a "thank you" — and do it.

Be quick to forgive, and ask others to forgive you when you have hurt them. The Bible says, if you won't forgive others, God won't forgive you. Don't risk that!

Try being positive. You'll like it! God bless you!

Brother Roland



The Beatitudes are sometimes called the “BE ATTITUDES.” You’ve seen them before:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. — Matthew 5:3-11

Did you know that there are other “beatitudes” from the Old Testament?

I have paraphrased some of these, but not changed their meaning.

Blessed are all who take refuge in the LORD. — Psalms 2:12

Blessed are those whom God chooses and brings near to live in His courts! They are filled with the good things of His house, of His holy temple. — Psalms 65:4

Blessed are those who dwell in the LORD’s house; they are ever praising Him. Blessed are those whose strength is in Him, who have set their hearts on His paths. They go from strength to strength. — Psalms 84:4-5,7

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim the LORD, who walk in the light of His presence. They rejoice in His name all day long; they exult in His righteousness. — Psalms 89:15-16

Blessed are those who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right. —Psalms 106:3

Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart. They do nothing wrong; they walk in His ways. — Psalms 119:1-3

Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD. — Psalms 128:1-4

Blessed are the people whose God is the LORD. — Psalms 144:15

Blessed is the man who seeks Wisdom and keeps its ways. Whoever finds Wisdom finds life and receives favor from the LORD. — Proverbs 8:32-35

The LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him! — Isaiah 30:18

If you have questions or concerns about the Bible or the Christian life or any related subject, you can send them to me, and I will try to address them on this third page of the “Good News Guide.” If I can’t answer a question adequately, I’ll ask for help. I can’t promise every question will get a satisfying answer — there are many questions that we won’t have answers for until we’re in Heaven with Jesus, and maybe not even then. But I’ll certainly try. I hope the answers to your questions will be a blessing to others who may have the same questions and concerns. Send them to me at this address:

Brother Roland, P O Box 14, Fayetteville, PA 17222

Attitude

Attitude is largely about deciding ahead of time how you are going to handle negative emotions like stress, anger, disappointment, embarrassment, rejection, hopelessness, and even fear. Take anger, for example. You can decide whether you will let anger grow and take control of your actions, or set it aside and deal rationally with its cause. **Your attitude is up to you.** Enjoy the puzzle.

Puzzle:

C R I T I C I S M F H T S T B R R S E A Q J B Y M Y H X Q I X C S
H H J U X W K V N R R N R D O J G J L D F T U Y T O S X U V A S O
I J E J F P I V O U Z E D U T I T A R G I S D Y F I A U K F E L Q
H Q G A T Y T A I I W M E J E I N T W W S E R Q J J S F O N R S V
G V E K L N P A S S U T Q D Z C C O O P E R A T I O N O H L X I B
T F L E A I P P S V F N V G O V N B D E O E W E I D R S R O A L B
O E P B E P N E E O I I C H X M U A H W E T C A N O I T P E C E D
N Q F K R C N G R B P O E E J N N T R V O N V J M F H P M A N F J
D W F O P I D G P I E P U L Q M F F J D E I D U L S V C D T Q E K
Z H V R P S I W E C M P L P E V O L U T N S H E W S W S Y S S A G
M A A P U V S J D U B A J F R A R J B V M I S R E E T O N I J G B
L D A G E S T E R A R S F U N B G L I J N D H L I N J F I R H E U
W H I N O S T N N N W I H L I I I Z L G J O I F I R X V B H E R E
Y L E O S E R R E I C D F N K W V R A X S M I A J E B M J C Z N U
X S J P Z N D E A M L Y S E F I E Y T G S S L T Q T U P A N O E A
S E G R K G Y L J T N D M S O R N C I T J P E H A T R E D I I S O
T H E E U N O L U E I O N S D D E D O Q M Y S N Q I P M T E A S E
N D T J M I U Q P J C O I E I Z S X N O N A T Y I B L A O P J M X
E X N U Y L N R R R A T N S I V S T C E T L U E E P L I P O A L E
M B F D V L A C J S U I I D U R I K Q I S K B Q N O M L M H M C T
H G N I V I G S K N A H T O B L F T S K T S B R S J A U S U N G W
S Z P C S W M W E L C O M E N U L F A Y U A O I E U O R R A H L N
E U O E A P P R E C I A T I O N A I E G Q D R G S V Z Y T G Z Z X
R Y T I L I M U H G E A R Z K C S N S Y E N N E O Z E P M X G O G
F S S E N I L R U S N W X H T Z E U S I A N N J Q S E N E E V Q C
E A Q X L I E I M G A Z D I R R N M N Z D U E P D C S A G Y N Q H
R G S F C Y L E E T T H O U G H T F U L N E S S C D G I L E K T N
N Z E J M T Q R I X B N G Y B M O E W D X J S A E X U K P M J D J

Words:

Bad Attitudes

ANGER
BITTERNESS
COMPLAINTS
CRITICISM
DECEPTION
DENIAL
DEPRESSION
DISAPPOINTMENT
DISILLUSIONMENT
DISINTEREST
FRUSTRATION
GOSSIP
GRUMPINESS
GUILT
HATRED

HINDRANCE
HUMILIATION
ISOLATION
JEALOUSY
NEGATIVISM
PREJUDICE
REJECTION
REVENGE
SELFISHNESS
SHAME
STUBBORNNESS
SURLINESS
UNFORGIVENESS
WORRY

Good Attitudes

ACCEPTANCE

APPLAUSE
APPRECIATION
APPROVAL
COOPERATION
EAGERNESS
ENERGY
ENJOYMENT
FORGIVENESS
FREEDOM
FRIENDLINESS
GENEROSITY
GRATITUDE
HAPPINESS
HEALING
HELPLESSNESS
HOPE IN CHRIST

HUMILITY
HUMOR
JOY
JUBILATION
KINDNESS
LOVE
PEACE
PRAISE
REFRESHMENT
SATISFACTION
SMILES
THANKSGIVING
THOUGHTFULNESS
WELCOME
WILLINGNESS
ZEAL