

THE LAW OF ATTITUDE

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Your Attitude Determines Altitude

Over the years I have witnessed the impact of “Attitude.” I have observed the positive impact of the right attitude as it has built up families, churches, communities, and athletic teams but I have also witnessed the wake of destruction left behind by a bad attitude. Years ago, Zig Ziglar made this observation,

“Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.”

John Maxwell shared the reality of this principle as it played out in his own life during his high school years in basketball. He was a great athlete and he played on a talented team but the team had a rotten attitude when it came to playing together and making the right sacrifices for the team. He observes,

What started as a bad attitude in one or two players made a mess of the situation for everyone. By the time we were in the thick of our schedule, even the players who didn’t want to take part in the rivalry were affected. The season was a disaster. In the end, we finished with a mediocre record and never came close to reaching our potential. It just goes to show you, rotten attitudes ruin a team.¹

The truth is that your attitude always impacts your life. A good attitude will influence your life in a positive manner especially in the areas of family, faith, work, and community. Each of us have witnessed the impact of a positive attitude as well as the devastation of a negative attitude. Each of us have also allowed a bad attitude to exhibit itself in our own life no matter how hard we have tried to hide it. Dr. Caroline Leaf observes,

Attitude is a *state of mind*—a thought plus its attached emotions—and it influences what you say and do. If the attitude that is activated is negative, then the emotional response will naturally be a negative or stressful feeling. If the attitude is positive, the feeling will be peaceful. The truth is that your attitude will be revealed no matter how much you try to hide it.²

¹ John C. Maxwell, *Motivated to Succeed: Inspirational Selections from John C. Maxwell* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006).

² Caroline Leaf, *Switch on Your Brain: The Key to Peak Happiness, Thinking, and Health* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013).

The point is that each of us will have difficult days and we will encounter difficult people, which can compel us to react with a bad attitude in the minutes, hours, or days that follow. This is one of the reasons why we need to heed the charge given by the Apostle Paul as he declares,

1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14 – ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing...¹⁴And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

Some days this is easier said than done so we have to ask the Big Question:

How Do I Develop and Maintain a God-honoring Attitude?

Three Steps to a Developing and Maintaining a God-Honoring Attitude

There are three basic steps that will help us follow in the footsteps of Christ and become imitators of His attitude. The Apostle Paul reminds us of the necessity of this principle as he states,

Philippians 2:5 (HCSB) – Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus...

Step #1 – Surround Yourself With the Right People

1 Thessalonians 5:11 – ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing...

It has been observed, “You are the average of the five people that you spend the most time with in your life.” This is based on the law of averages which is the theory that the result of any given situation will be the average of all outcomes. When it comes to relationships, we are greatly influenced by those closest to us. It affects our way of thinking, self-esteem, and decision-making process.

One of the first steps that you need to accomplish in developing and maintaining a good attitude is to surround yourself with people that will love you enough to build you up, encourage you, and recognize the value that you bring to the family or workplace. John Maxwell once observed,

If you want outstanding results, you need good people with great talent and awesome attitudes. When attitudes go up, so does the potential of the team. When attitudes go down, the potential of the team goes with it.³

- **Attitude in Action** – Choose to spend more time this week with those that help make you a stronger Christian and begin limiting time with those who only cause frustration and anger.

Step #2 – Implement the Forgiveness Factor

Many times individuals are deeply wounded by the actions and words of others. This can have a negative impact upon your life in many ways from causing an increase in stress to overwhelming you with sadness. Sometimes an individual is moved to anger or a desire to seek revenge but the Lord calls us to apply a different attitude that brings glory to Him. The Apostle Paul records this principle as follows,

³ John C. Maxwell, *Motivated to Succeed: Inspirational Selections from John C. Maxwell* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006).

Colossians 3:12-13 – ¹²Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Harboring unforgiveness will cause much greater harm to you than to others. Research has shown,

Researchers at Hope College in Michigan have found that when we mentally replay a hurtful memory or nurse a grudge against a person who mistreated or offended us, the body reacts with a stress response...If we imagine granting forgiveness instead – or simply picture how that person might have felt or what might have contributed to the hurtful behavior – physical stress indicators remain fairly steady.

Willingness to forgive lowers your heart disease risk.

Developing a capacity for forgiveness can help keep small disappointments from developing into big ones.⁴

- **Attitude in Action** – Show forgiveness this week to those who hurt your feelings and wound you. Pray for the Lord to give you the courage and strength to show the same grace that you have been shown by the Savior.

Step #3 – Turn Your Attitude Over to the Lord

The final step that we examine is discovered in dealing with the struggle between control and surrender. Every individual wants to feel like they are in control of something in life especially when life seems to spiral out of control. This is one of the reasons why the Lord compels His followers to take make the right decision and turn control completely over to the Lord in life. The author of Proverbs 16 observes,

Proverbs 16:1-3 (NLT) – ¹We can make our own plans, but the Lord gives the right answer. ²People may be pure in their own eyes, but the Lord examines their motives. ³Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed.

- **Attitude in Action** – Choose surrender over control this week. As you feel your anger rising or your frustration growing then seize the moment and turn it completely over to the Lord.

Conclusion

Turn your upside down moment's right side up as you go through this week. The Lord is in control and He will provide everything that is needed for His followers to be victorious over trials and temptation that come your way. If you were blessed by this blog then share this and other free resources with your friends. Also check out the free resources section for updated information @ www.TimLueking.com

Question

What are other ways you can maintain a good attitude this week?

Share your thoughts and answers with me on facebook, twitter, or email!

For more information about this blog and other free resources, visit my website

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⁴ Downloaded from <http://harvardhealth.staywell.com/viewNewsletter.aspx?NLID=30&INC=yes>