

COGVA
Camp Meeting 2020
COGVA Men's Fellowship Conference
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July 29, 2020

“Developing and Maintaining a Healthy Attitude”

Introduction:

The Apostle Paul, when writing to the Church at Philippi, placed before those Christians an **Attitude Indicator**. “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).

The Apostle Paul records these words in Romans 12:1-2, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

I. **“What does the Bible say about Attitude?”**

- Writing from a prison cell in Rome, the Apostle Paul wrote the following about the Christian's attitude. “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ” (**Philippians 1:27**).
- No matter what unexpected disruptions, frustrations or difficulties come our way, we are to respond with a Christ-like attitude. We should be standing firm and striving for the faith. Paul also encourages us in **Ephesians 5:1** to be “Imitators of Christ as dearly beloved children”. As children love to imitate what they see and repeat what they hear; we also are charged to imitate and model Christ's behavior and to be clear reflections of the Lord (**Matthew 5:16**).
- Jesus maintained a perfect attitude in every situation. He prayed about everything and worried about nothing. We, too, should seek God's guidance about every aspect of our lives and allow Him to work out His perfect Will. Jesus attitude was never to become defensive or discouraged. His goal was to please the Father rather than to achieve His own agenda (**John 6:38**). In the midst of trials, He was patient. In the midst of suffering, He was hopeful. In the midst of blessing, He was humble. Even in the midst of ridicule, abuse and hostility, He “made no threats ... And did not retaliate. Instead He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly” (**1 Peter 2:23**).

- When Paul writes that our “Attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus”, he had summarized in the following two verses the characteristics of such an attitude: selflessness, humility and service. “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of other” (**Philippians 2:3-4**). In other words, the attitude a Christian should reflect is one that focuses on the needs and interests of others.
- Paul speaks more about this Christ-like attitude in his letter to the Church in Ephesus: “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true Righteousness and Holiness” (**Ephesians 4:22-24**).
- Each time we try to control our circumstances, our future, and the people around us, we’re only demonstrating that we want to be a **god**. Instead, He wants us to become like Him, taking on His values, His attitudes and His character. **Ephesians 4:23-24** states that we are meant to “be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true Righteousness and Holiness”.
- Finally, we must always keep in mind that God’s ultimate goal for His children is not our comfort, but the transformation of our minds into the attitude of godliness. He wants us to grow spiritually, to become like Christ. Christlikeness is all about transforming our minds. Again, Paul tells us, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s Will is – his good, pleasing and perfect Will” (**Roman 12:2 NIV**).
- It is God’s Will that we develop the kind of mindset described in the Beatitudes of Jesus (**Matthew 5:1-12**); that we exhibit the Fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**); that we emulate the principles in Paul’s great Chapter on Love (**1 Corinthians 13**); and that we strive to pattern our lives after Peter’s characteristics of an effective and productive life (**2 Peter 1:5-8**).

II. **Why Attitude is Everything?**

- An individual with Godly love does not seek his own glory or praise or content for his own way. He is careful not to hurt or to destroy the influence of others. He is concerned about the influence of others if this love is working as it ought to in his life. There are positive, constructive attributes of this kind of love. We read in **Philippians 2:3-4**, “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness

of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interest of others.”

- Also, **Hebrews 13:1** says, “Let brotherly love continue.” I believe that **LOVE** is truly the need of the hour. A true child of God should never have a part in working against someone. No, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are prayer, love and understanding.
- We have a choice in the way we perceive whatever is going on. We have the power to choose whether we think the glass is **half full** or **half empty**. Having a positive attitude is something we should strive for each day. It isn’t something we are or not, it is something we achieve as we mature in Christ.
- Godly communication requires that we turn from evil and do good in our walk and in our words. In **1 Peter 3:11**, we read, “He must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.”
- The Bible says in **Isaiah 1:18**, “Come now, and let us reason.” **WE NEED EACH OTHER!**

References: The Bible and John Maxwell, “The Winning Attitude”