

## A Matter Of Attitude

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As I was thinking about this new school year and laying plans for what I wished to say to my staff I began to think about attitudes. It is something that we all have control over and yet how often are we controlled by an attitude. You wake up in the morning and something unexpected happens to you and you have the choice either to let it bother you or to let it go. Many of us may let it bother us and that attitude will set the tone for our entire day. Our children read us like books to see if we are in a good mood or not and that determines how they will treat us. Imagine if God used this strategy on us to determine his relationship with us each day!!!! It is important that we all take the time to think about our attitudes and look at how we are influencing people, such as our family, friends, and students each day.



I began to realize that it is my responsibility as an administrator to set the tone for the school year but it is also important for each day. Taking time each morning, upon waking, to nourish myself spiritually so that I can face whatever comes my way with a positive attitude will change me as a person. I was talking to a parent the other day and she told me that when she wakes up she goes out into her garden and while tending her plants spends time being refreshed by nature and her commune with God. She has a well-worn Bible that accompanies her and she lets the Holy Spirit lead her to the scripture lesson for the day. She says that when she has this special time it changes her attitude for the day and gives her peace and serenity. We all may not have a garden to commune in each day, but we could set aside a special place where we could spend quality time with God and His Word being refreshed and setting our attitudes for the day.

A positive attitude is catching and soon you will see that others will catch your enthusiasm and your day will be different. I have a picture in our staff room that shows a drop of water hitting a water surface and as the drop lands it causes a ripple effect so that the whole surface is affected. So it is with our attitudes, they can cause positive ripples or negative ripples that will affect that day and many days to come. As a teacher we have an awesome responsibility to show the character of God to our students and through us they will see what living a Christian life is all about. If we are short tempered and hasty with our words this will portray the wrong image of Christ and will definitely affect the attitudes of those children we come in contact with, as well as have far reaching affects. My daughter relayed an experience that happened to her while in the lower elementary grades that still bothers her to this day. I am sure that the teacher has no memory of it but that teacher's attitude had a large negative ripple affect, that I am sure was not intended.

I believe that the devil tries very hard to get us into negative thinking so that we lose sight of what we, with the Lord's help, are trying to accomplish. It is therefore very important that we accentuate the positive and filter out the negative. Philippians 4:8 says "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of a good report...think on these things."

"A faith that is committed to success in the pursuit of an excellent and noble idea will require fine tuning. Fine-tuning happens as you develop the practice of filtering the thoughts that come through your mind. Gradually your conscious level will rise as it relates in sensitivity to what is positive and what is negative, what is good and what is evil, what is productive and what is counter productive, what is constructive and what is destructive, what is healthy and what is unhealthy. Your faith will be strengthened or insulted on a daily basis by the thoughts that enter your mind. You can choose many of your thoughts by selecting the reading materials the television programs, and the deliberate exposures that you choose to encounter.

Still, there are the thousands of unsolicited stimuli that hit the course of a single day. Consequently, a filtering system must be built into your mind that screens out the negative while allowing the positive to pass through, Philippians 4:8 gives you the blueprint for establishing a mental filtering system." Robert Schuller, *Tough Minded Faith for Tender Hearted People*, p58

"When you have developed a filtering system that gets rid of the negative thoughts and focuses on positive thoughts, you are on your way to having positive attitudes. God desires that all of us keep focused on Him so that He can lead us through whatever happens to us each and every day and we can have a positive attitude. A positive attitude is always worth catching and can make a big difference to our day, our week, our year and our whole life. There are three steps in maintaining a positive attitude: (1) Make a contract with yourself to stay focused on the positive, (2) Take an attitude check- constantly check with yourself to see if your attitude is worth catching, (3) Always have something to look forward to. Enthusiasm=Energy. Create exciting momentum in your life." (Joan Lunden, *Making the Most Out of Every Day (Regardless of What Life Throws You)* p22

"The good news is, that the bad news can be turned into good news when you change your attitude."  
*Robert Schuller*

"An optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity; a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity." *Sir Winston Churchill*

"Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you...as by the attitude you bring to life."  
*John Homer Mills*