

THE MAGIC WORD “ATTITUDE”

INTRODUCTION

I hope you have your notebooks. I hope you have a list of friends with whom you are going to share this lecture. Today we want to share a lecture on “The Magic Word.” And that magic word is, ‘attitude’. Attitude opens new doors.

Let us just think about a few obstacles. What are some of the comments you sometimes hear? “Why do people have a poor attitude?” Ever heard something like that? “Why can I not get members to do anything?” Ever heard something like that? “Why have my children turned out the way they have?” “Why have I not gotten the breaks, or had luck like others did?” Have you ever felt like that? David felt like that. He wrote a Psalm about how good everything goes for the unbelievers, and how bad everything went for himself. “Why do people not accept me for what I am? They should know that I am doing better than other people, and that I am more intelligent and more spiritual. Why do others not like to talk to me?” Such questions as these are heard every day. Both young people and adults are bothered by them. In this lecture you will have the opportunity to find some answers.

Let me tell you something -- Many of these problems are self-inflicted problems. They are the result of a poor attitude. It is important that students not only do right, but do it with the right attitude. Proverbs 4:23 says:

“Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.” (NKJV)

We can paraphrase that a little bit, so that we can understand that in our modern language. We can say, ‘guard your heart’, or ‘protect your heart’. Your heart is your very innermost being. It is where attitudes begin. Guard it *“with all diligence”*, for out of it comes the issues of life.

I. DEFINITION

Let us look at the definition of attitude. What is attitude? Attitude is a position or bearing. That position or bearing indicates an action, feeling or a mood. Let us concentrate on those three key words: **actions, feelings, moods**. Actions, feelings and moods in one person, trigger actions, feelings and moods in another person. And so we create a chain reaction. This is very evident in some of our marriages. A negative action or mood from the husband, creates a similar action in the wife and then it is transferred to the children, and the day or the week is ruined.

II. PROGRAMMING FOR A BETTER PERSONAL ATTITUDE

If you can program your attitude, then you can plan it. You can organize it. Dear friends, I know that some of you have some real difficulties in this area. I have been working with you for some years and I think part of the problem is that you don't realize who are you in Christ. Think about your own personal attitude. You need to learn to be confident of who are you in Christ. Why should you be confident? Who are you? You are a special person in Christ Jesus. Let me tell you why. - **You have _____.**

You have more than anybody else in your province. You are a child of God. You are on God's side and He is on your side.

I want to share with you several verses from Scripture. There are too many of them to read the whole verse, so I will just give you the idea and the reference. And it is concentrating on the question, “Who am I?” Not, “Who is Abraham Bible?” but, “Who am I?” You! So according to the Bible, **WHO ARE YOU???** I want to give you just a list of some 15 Bible ideas that are very exciting and encouraging.

1. I am “...the salt of the earth.” (Matthew 5:13)

Without salt, what would life be? Dull and tasteless. You are that salt in your province.



2. I am “...the light of the world.” (Matthew 5:14)

Maybe the electricity goes off. Maybe the candles go out. But you are still there. You are that light. And in the building where you live, you should be that light. Be the neighbour that everybody knows they can come to with their problems and their needs.

The person that they know will pray for them. You are that light.



3. I am ...a child of God. (John 1:12)

I know that all of you, are excited about being a child of God. Jesus was God's child, yet He was born in a barn. Yet He did not have a place to lay His head. Yet he was rejected by people, forsaken. Ultimately the full glory of God was upon Him. We see it in His resurrection. We see it in His ascension. And that is exactly what you are. You are a child of God.

4. I am ...Christ's friend. (John 15:15)

Christ said, *"I no longer call you servants, ...I have called you friends..."* Why? Because a friend knows what the other friend wants to do. There is an intimate relationship. You do not have to say, "Oh, I wonder what I should do. God what it is that you want me to do?" You can be confident because you are a friend of Jesus Christ.

5. I am ...chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit. (John 15:16)

You are chosen to bear the fruit of Jesus Christ. He is the trunk. He is the roots. He is the branch. But you are the fruit producing bud. Without you, nothing spiritual is going to happen here. Christ said, *"I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit."* (John 15:16)

6. I am ...a son of God.

"...because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." (Romans 8:14-15). God is spiritually our father. (Galatians 3:26) He is the perfect father. He has un-surpassing love. He knows precisely what the needs of His children are, and is waiting and ready to help you.

"Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, ...So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir." (Galatians 4:6-7)

7. I am "...a joint heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance." (Romans 8:17)

I will receive a part with Jesus in heaven, for all of eternity.

8. I am "...a temple of the Holy Spirit"; a dwelling place of God. (1 Corinthians 6:19)

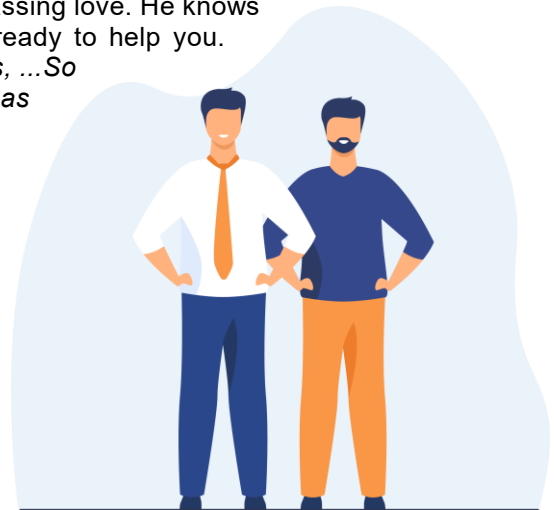
His Spirit, and His life, lives in me. (1 Corinthians 3:16)

9. I am "...a new creation." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

We are not what we used to be. The old desires and thoughts, they have left. We are brand new in Jesus. We do not have to accept any of this old filth in our life.

10. I am ...reconciled to God, and am a minister of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

I was not always these things that I am now. Once I was an enemy, but I have been turned around and now I am a friend and a partner of God. I have been reconciled. And on top of that, I am the instrument to reconcile others, to Jesus Christ. Who can think of anything more beautiful than reconciling other people to their Creator?



11. I am ...a _____. (Ephesians 1:1. Philippians 1:1. Colossians 1:2)

The most beautiful thing is that you are alive. You are not just an icon on the wall. You are a living saint. It is not that somebody in your church is a saint, someone whom you never knew, someone that died a long time ago. It is you. What a humbling but glorious privilege; being a saint.

12. I am "...God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus". (Ephesians 2:10)

I am His handiwork. He made me. Can you tell me how many mistakes God makes? Well, if you don't think that He made any; then He did not make a mistake when He made you either. Your nose is too long. Your arm is too short. Your hair is too grey. You need extra eyes. But He did not make a mistake. And that is not just on the outward appearance, it's also with your character, with your innermost being. So what you are struggling with is something that God has given to you, so that you can develop victory. Spiritual victory.

13. I am "...created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

Can you imagine? You, holy! Now can you imagine Abraham Bible being holy? Now the Denominational President, yes. We could accept that. But the rest of us...? But it is true. God has made us without mistakes.

14. I am ...a member of a chosen race. I Pet. 2:9

In His Word, He has called us holy. He says,

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9-10)

We are part of God's special people. It is no longer just the physical Jewish race. It is all those who have been united spiritually to Abraham, through Jesus Christ. I am a member of *"...a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God."* God wanted people. Can you imagine what an exciting place heaven would be if God was all by Himself. What kind of exciting place would it be? There would be no music, no songs, no worship, nothing to look at, nothing to do. God would just be by Himself. And that is the very reason why God has chosen you for His own people.

15. I am ...not the great "I am" (Exodus 3:14)

"But by the grace of God I am what I am." (1 Corinthians 15:10)

I am not a nobody. I am a special fruit bearing friend of Jesus Christ.

III. DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE THAT MAKES EVERY DAY A GOOD DAY

Philippians 4:8, instructs us to develop a good attitude. An attitude that opens new doors.

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable -- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy -- think about such things."

The idea is for you to set your mind on these things so that you will not be unproductive. God wants you to be productive in your own life, in your own character, with your family, your wife, your children, with the other believers that you are ministering to. And generally with all the other people--the unbelievers around you. **SO, DEVELOP A GOOD ATTITUDE!!!**

A. Conscientiously concentrate on the things that are good and pure and lovely.

Our sinful attitudes concentrate on _____ things. Let us repent of that. Let us become Bible obedient Christians.

B. Turn from evil.

There is evil all around us. There are bad posters, pictures, books. There are indecently dressed people. There are things that we hear. We can turn away from them. The Bible says, *"Flee from the evil desires of youth."* (2 Timothy 2:22). *"You, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness."* (1 Timothy 6:11) It is you who need to do that.

C. It is you who need to force yourself into the habit of a good attitude.

It is you who need to say, "God I am building a new attitude. You have made me a new creation. That is from the past, that is gone. I am going over there."

D. Look for and concentrate on new and good things.

Just a couple of days ago, I told my little boy about the little flowers in the grass. The low little ones that you did not see this spring, but now you can see them. He was bored. He wanted to get some toys. We were on the metro. I said, "No. Look outside. Learn to appreciate the glory of God in nature." And then I got him thinking about the flowers, and pretty soon he was talking about all kinds of other things he was seeing. One of the most blessed things is that your spouses have more good points than negative points. So there is certainly something nice that you can say to your wife or to your husband. The door opens, your spouse comes in, and you say, "Who is there?" "Me." "Oh, it's only you." That is all. You cannot choose another word? He or she does have a name. "Oh, Ivan!" or "Valodiya!" or "Luba!" We do have names. We can learn to concentrate on the good things in life.

IV. VISION KILLERS

A. Tradition

"We have never done this before. Why do you want to change? It was always so nice. Why do we have to do something new?" These traditions, they existed before they invented cars and tractors and cassette players, and all the other things. If you want to stop some beautiful _____ from somebody, just say, "We have never done that before," and all the air goes out of the balloon. Traditions tend to build negative cultures. They build barriers between us and our neighbors, because they are Georgians, or because they are gypsies, or they are from another province. We build these barriers. We create a negative culture. It is something that all of us must learn to fight. There are good traditions of course. But many traditions need to be challenged. They need to be evaluated. Are they good for our family? Do they fit in our culture today? Is that something that fits in the big city or in the country?

B. Fear

Fear is another vision killer. Focusing on failings and not on potentials. How often we focus on failures. This morning you had breakfast with your children. Your child set his glass down nicely at the table. What did you say? "Oh very nice of you." Five minutes later, he drank, he set it down, "Oh very nice of you." And he did that about ten times during breakfast, and you said ten times, "Very nice." No, I do not think so. But if he spills one time, "What is the matter with you? You always do that!" No, not always. It was the first time for that breakfast. He already set it down five times very nicely, and you did not say anything. Then he spilled it only one time and immediately you had gave a long lecture.



We tend to concentrate on the failings of people. It kills anybody's vision. A new plan, a new idea, may be much better than the old one, but it will not be perfect because nobody is perfect. So we must learn to focus on people's potential. Your child spills his tea, and you say, "Well, that was not very good." Tears pop in his eyes. He ducks his head and you say, "It is okay. Ten years from now you will not do that." "Oh. I am going to get better? There is hope for me?" Children become what you think they are. So concentrate on their potential. Concentrate on the potential of your team. Concentrate on the potential of your members. Most

people can do much better than they are doing if somebody _____ in them, if somebody trusts them and has a vision for them, if somebody sees their potential in them.

C. Stereotypes

A stereotype is a preconceived mental picture. Before we have information, we make a decision, a conclusion, and we develop a mental picture. Then when the real event happens, we look at it through the grid of this picture. When you hear the name Billy Graham, a positive image flashes before you. You go to a meeting, and you say, "Yes, just like I thought. It was good, it was wonderful." You hear about another speaker. Maybe it is Abraham Bible. And you say, "Well, we hope it will be okay." And you have your mental picture. "Maybe it will be a good lecture, but it will not be practical." And you come and sit and listen. Then you go home and you say, "Yeah, just like I thought. It was wonderful, but not practical."

So whenever you are confronted with certain negative thoughts, turn again to Philippians 4:8, and concentrate on these instructions from the Word of God.



D. Complacency

"Oh well, we could not do it today, but there is tomorrow." Complacency tends to think, "So, we did not get it done. It is no problem." Or, "Maybe there is a better time." Or, "Maybe somebody else can do it better than I can." Complacency is an **action stealer**. It keeps people from being involved. It keeps people from being participants. People become bystanders. Instead of being learners, they become listeners. And you should recognize complacency for what it is. It always brings regret later on. "If I had only..." "If I had just..." "If I..."

E. Fatigue

Being physically tired. Being mentally tired. It limits our vision. We do not have enough energy to look to next month or to look to next year. Fatigue limits our influence for God. "That is all I can do." "I think this is enough." "Oh I think that is going to be too much." Fatigue is another vision killer.



F. Short-Term Thinking

A common thing that we encounter is that many people want to do spiritual work now! Forget about studying and preparing for the _____, "I want to do something for God right now." I am reminded of some of the brothers that I have met who said, "Oh! Studying for the future! I want to do spiritual work right now." But praise God there are others. Viacheslav Nesteruk is just one of them. He studied. He started coaching another small group. He was a pastor. He was assistant superintendent. He had a large New Life for Churches ministry with over seven hundred students. Then he became both provincial superintendent and a denominational president in Ukraine. He has been to the Far East. And some others of you have had the same experience--because you were thinking long-term, not short-term.

V. PROPER ATTITUDES CAN BE DEVELOPED — IN WORKERS & IN TEAM

How do you build people up, not tear people down?

A. Complement each worker on something.

Of course that can mean complement your team. At home it could mean compliment your child. But we are thinking in terms a little larger, of our spiritual ministry. What happens when you complement a person? You are building security. "Oh, I have done something right." "Oh, he was pleased with me." "Oh, it was just like he hoped." Parents, just stop and think a moment and look at your children and see how hard they are trying to please you, many, many times. Many of your team members are trying to do just that for their directors and for their administrators. Many students are doing just that for their course coaches. Complementing each worker on something creates security. It also gives a feeling of acceptance. "I am important to my leader." Or, "I am important to my husband." "He wants me. He counts on me. I am important to him." All of us need acceptance." We are not made to live unto ourselves. We are not made to be islands.

B. Do not say "never" or "always" to people.

"You never learn the Bible verses." The house is never clean Or "always late." Or, "always forget the salt in the potatoes." Those words are wrong words. It simply is not true. So you are stating a falsehood, a lie. You are hurting somebody. You should never use those kind of words.

C. Take time to explain things.

People like to know why they should do something. If people understand the reason, it is easier for them to join in on the idea and do a good job. I believe that this is one habit which I have developed with my children. I do not tell them, "Well just do it because I want you to." I tell them, "Well, because it is good and mama needs it and I have no time right now, and you are getting bigger and stronger." Proper attitudes can be developed in other people.

D. Concentrate on positive things.

Everybody has some successes in their lives. All students have some good lesson, or some good homework, or some good exam that they did. Your wife has made many more good meals than bad meals, or otherwise you would not be here. You would have been dead a long time ago. When new mistakes happen, do not bring up old ones. When we see something we say, "Yeah, remember what you did before?" You do not develop good attitudes in people like that. It is much better to say, "Oh, that is really too bad that that happened. Now let us stop and talk about that for a moment so that next time you will not have that problem anymore." List two or three points that give hope, by showing him how to do it better.

You need to learn to see _____ in people: in members, in your team, in your family. Just think that, if a worker knew everything and he could do everything better than you could, how would you train him? You would not have a job. So instead of saying, "Oh, you still do not understand it." You say quietly, "Praise God, he does not understand it yet. I have a job next month too!" He needs you. You have the opportunity to help people with their imperfections and build them into better potential workers for the Lord Jesus Christ.



CONCLUSION

Here is a poem that I want to share with you. I believe you will enjoy it and that it will be helpful for you as well. You will be able to see through this poem, all the things that you are bombarded with, and what your attitude should be.

People are unreasonable, illogical, self-centered;
Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives;
Do good anyway.

If you are successful you will win false friends and true enemies;
Succeed anyway.

The good you do today, will be forgotten tomorrow;
Do good anyway.

Honesty, frankness, makes you vulnerable;
Be honest, be frank anyway.

The biggest people with the biggest ideas,
can be shot down by the smallest people with the smallest minds;
Think big anyway.

People favour underdogs, but follow only top dogs;
Fight for the underdog anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight;
Build anyway.

People really need help, but may attack you if you help them;
Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have got, and you will get kicked in the teeth;
Give the best you have anyway.

Anybody can find character defects and performance flaws in another Christian;
But it takes the grace of God, to see past an impulsive Peter, and see in him the Rock that was the foundation of the church.

Anybody can find character defects and performance flaws in another Christian;
But it takes the grace of God, to look beyond Saul the persecutor, and see in him the Apostle Paul.

So as you live day by day, with people who are sometimes less than saintly in their behavior, and who look at you and see you the same way;
Simply say, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you." (2 Peter 1:2)

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by New Life for Churches. You have the privilege to use this lecture with others.

Answer Key

- II. God, 11. saint
- III. A. negative
- IV. A. thought
- B. believes
- F. future
- V. D. potential