

Attitude

Opener: How have you seen an attitude (good or bad) impact an outcome?

Scripture: So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed. ²⁰That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:17-24

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. Romans 12:2

Finally, brothers and sisters, 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. Philippians 4:8

Discussion Questions

1. Paul begins his admonition with, "So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord." What was he insisting upon? What does his insistence imply about himself, his message, and his audience? Ephesians 4:17
2. What characteristics in non-believing Gentiles did he identify that alarmed him? Give some examples of how those characteristics show up in everyday life. Can they also exist in a believer's life? If not, why the warning? Ephesians 4:17-19
3. Paul goes on to remind them that they know a better way to live. How did he describe what that entails? Ephesians 4:20
4. Why are old self desires deceitful? Identify some things they promise but never deliver. Ephesians 4:22
5. Attitude defines our perception, value system, and how we look at life and the world. We may have knowledge and abilities but becoming an effective disciple and enjoying life won't happen without a good attitude. Paul knew that which is why he wrote, "be made new in the attitude of your minds." When have you seen someone's attitude make a difference in how they're perceived or in what they accomplish? Ephesians 4:23
6. What do Romans 12:1 and Philippians 4:8 add to Paul's instruction about the mind? What's the relationship between the way we think and our attitude? Can we change one without changing the other?
7. How can we actually renew our mind and attitude? How does life governed by a transformed mind and attitude test and approve what God's will is? Eph. 4:23-24, Rom. 12:1-2; Phil. 4:8

Wrap Up: Many quote Martin Luther as saying, "We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone." Saving faith is always accompanied by a change in thinking, attitude, and behavior. It was true for the believers in Ephesus and Rome and it's true today. Change your attitude, change your life. Try it.