

**SERIES: The Mind of Christ
“A Christ-like Attitude”
Philippians 2:5**

Big Idea – The mind of Christ gives me a Christ-like attitude.

Intro: What is attitude? An inward feeling, shown by an outward expression or action.

“With the right attitude, all the problems in the world will not make you a failure. With the wrong mental attitude, all the help in the world will not make you a success.”

Warren Deaton

It is impossible with words to adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life.

It isn't your problems that are bothering you. It is the way you are looking at them.
Greek stoic philosopher Epictetus (C. 55-C. 135)

The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
John Milton (1608-1674)

“Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens. Circumstances and situations do color life, but you have been given the mind to choose what the color shall be.” John Homer Miller (1722-1791)

People can alter their lives by altering their attitudes. William James (1842-1910)

My attitude determines whether grief causes a disease in me or a glorious and everlasting reward. S. I. McMillen

1. My Attitude determines my viewpoint of life.

(Story about kids who put Limberger cheese on Grandpa's moustache. When he woke up, he said, “This room stinks.” Went into the kitchen and said it smelled bad too. Went

outside, and said, “The whole world stinks!” How do you feel? Do you feel your world is treating you well? Listen to these words from the Apostle Paul:
Philippians 4:4 “Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!”

Easy for Paul to say? NOT! He was confined to a jail cell in prison when he wrote this.

We need to be more like the apostle Paul who wrote from his jail cell seven verses later:

Philippians 4:11, 12 “Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live when I am poor, and I know how to live when I have plenty. I have learned the secret of being happy at any time in everything that happens, when I have enough to eat and when I go hungry, when I have more than I need and when I do not have enough.”

He said he had learned to be content in all situations in life.

OVERFLOWING CUPS “The optimist says, My cup runneth over, what a blessing. The pessimist says, My cup runneth over, what a mess.”

Francis Shaeffer said, “When we lack proper contentment we have either ceased to believe that God is God, or we have failed to be submissive to Him.”

2. My Attitude determines my relationships with people.

Matthew 7:12 “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.”

Two components of Christ’s ministry style: Serving others

John 13:16 “I tell you the truth, a servant is not greater than his master. A messenger is not greater than the one who sent him.”

I heard Tim Tebow say recently in a podcast that God taught Him a great lesson about serving others when he was cut from the Jacksonville Jaguars NFL football team thus effectively ending his NFL football career. He said if he had not been cut his schedule would not have allowed him to travel to Afghanistan on relief missions with his foundation to help disabled throw-aways that no one else cared about.

Relational love

John 13:34 “So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Challenge: For one week treat every person you meet, without a single exception, as the most important person on earth. You will find they will begin treating you the same way.

3. My Attitude is often the only difference between success and failure.

Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life.

The longer I live the more convinced I become that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it.

This may shock you, but I believe the single most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis is my choice of attitude. It is more important than my past, my education, my bankroll, my successes or failures, fame or pain, what other people think of me or say about me, my circumstances, or my position. Attitude is that `single string' that keeps me going or cripples my progress. It alone fuels my fire or assaults my hope. When my attitudes are right, there's no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me. -- Charles R. Swindoll

4. My Attitude at the beginning of a task will affect its outcome more than anything else.

“All’s well that begins well” is just as true as “all’s well that ends well.”

Example from witnessing/evangelism: attitude is of utmost importance when witness. Do you expect someone to get saved or not? The positive witness thinks, “People are hungry for the Gospel and looking for positive change in their live.” The reluctant witness says, “People are not interested in spiritual things and don’t want to be bothered.” Those two attitudes will not only determine the number of attempts made in witnessing, but also will help determine the results.

Example of two shoe salesman who were sent to an island to sell shoes. The first guy on arriving and learning to his dismay that nobody wore shoes, immediately sent a fax to home office in Chicago, “Will return home tomorrow. No one wears shoes.”

The second salesman was thrilled at the news and sent a fax, “Please send 10,000 pairs of shoes. Everyone here needs them!”

5. My Attitude can turn any obstacles into opportunities.

J. Sidlow Baxter, in his book *Awake My Heart* writes, "What is the difference between an obstacle and an opportunity? Our attitude toward it. Every opportunity has a difficulty and every difficulty has an opportunity."

Life is like a grindstone. Your attitude determines whether it grinds you down, or polishes you up.

When God educates a man, He does not send him to the beach, but to the desert, to the wilderness (Joseph, Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, Paul, Jesus Christ).

Challenge: Think of two problems that are part of your life. Write them down. Now write beside or below them three possible benefits from each problem. Then attack the problems with your eyes on the benefits, not the problems.

6. My Attitude can give me an uncommonly positive perspective.

Example: David and Goliath. Other soldiers all thought, "He's too big to kill." David thought, "He's too big to miss."

Example: Parking space in shopping mall. Do you start looking at the farthest spot away from the store, or the closest in. I always look at the closest in because the chances are that a person coming out of the store has been in there the longest, and if they got there at opening they parked as close as possible."

A little boy was overheard talking to himself as he strutted through the backyard, baseball cap in place, toting ball and bat. He was heard to say, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world." Then he tossed the ball into the air, swung at it and missed. "Strike one!" Undaunted he picked up the ball, threw it into the air and said to himself, "I'm the greatest baseball hitter ever," and he swung at the ball again. And again he missed. "Strike two!" He paused a moment to examine his bat and ball carefully. Then a third time he threw the ball into the air. "I'm the greatest hitter who ever lived," he said. He swung the bat hard again, missed a third time. He cried out, "Wow! Strike three! What a pitcher! I'm the greatest pitcher in the world!"

7. My Attitude is not automatically good just because I am a Christ follower.

(Quotes on p. 44)

Things a Christ-like Attitude enables – Philippians 2:3-8

1. Right motives – v. 3.
2. Selflessness – v. 3
3. Concern for others – v. 4.
4. Christ knew who He was; therefore, willing to serve God and others – v. 6.
 - Not power hungry
 - Humbled himself
 - Obedied
 - Fulfilled God's purpose

John 17:4 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do."

Chuck Swindoll - Philippians 2:3-7

It was a cold, blustery January night in 1973. Senator John Stennis, the venerable hawkish Democrat from Mississippi, drove from Capitol Hill to his northwest Washington home. Although older (71), he was still the powerful chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. At precisely 7:40 p.m., Stennis parked his car and started toward his house 50 feet away.

Out of the darkness jumped two young robbers—little more than kids, really. One nervously waved a .22 caliber pistol as the other relieved the senator of his personal possessions. "Now we're going to shoot you anyway," one told Stennis. He did, firing twice. For six-and-a-half hours, surgeons at Walter Reed Medical Center labored feverishly to repair the damage and save his life.

At 9:15 that same night, another politician was driving home from the Senate . . . a man on the opposite end of the political spectrum, a Republican "dove" who had clashed often and sharply with Stennis. His name? Senator Mark Hatfield. The tragedy was reported over Hatfield's car radio that wintry night. Disregarding the strong differences in their convictions and pulled by a deep admiration for the elderly statesman plus a compassion for his plight.

Hatfield later admitted: "I had no skills to offer. But I knew there was something I must do—and that was to go to that hospital and be nearby where I could be helpful, if possible, to the family."

There was untold confusion at the hospital as fellow senators, colleagues, and curious friends and reporters overwhelmed the hospital's telephone operators. Understaffed and disorganized, the hospital crew tried their best but were unable to handle the calls and answer the questions.

Hatfield quickly scoped out the situation, spotted an unattended switchboard, sat down, and voluntarily went to work. Much later—after recovering—Stennis related what he heard happened next: "He told the girls, 'I know how to work one of these; let me help you out.' He continued taking calls until daylight." An exceedingly significant detail is that he never gave anyone his name because someone would surely suspect some political connection, some ulterior motive. Hatfield finally stood up around daylight, stretched, put on his overcoat, and quietly introduced himself to the other operators. "My name is Hatfield . . . happy to help out on behalf of a man I deeply respect," he said as he walked away.

The press couldn't handle that story when it leaked out. It boggled their minds! No way did it make sense for a Republican to give a Democrat the time of day, not to mention several long hours of personal assistance in some anonymous, menial task. I mean, that kind of character went out with the horse and buggy and silent movies and saying "ma'am" and "sir" to teachers. Or did it?

Politics and personal preferences and opinions on things like military involvement may vary among members of the body of Christ . . . but there is a bond deep within that binds us to one another. It is the glue of authentic love, expressing itself in compassion, fairness, willingness to support, and (when possible) coming to the aid of another. Personally. Without strings attached. Committed to the protection and dignity of human life . . . regardless of how somebody votes.

And what does it take? Swindoll called it bigness. Being free of grudges, pettiness, vengeance, and prejudice. Seeing another in need—regardless of differences of opinion—and reaching out in solid Christian maturity. Just because you care. Because you have a Christ-like attitude, the mind of Christ.

It's living above labels . . . it's seeing beyond hurts . . . it's caring unconditionally, helping unassumingly.

And therefore it's rare. As rare as a hawk and a dove in the same nest on a cold winter's night.