

never to catch up, never to have any extra time or money; everything is just a struggle.”

Anita smiled: “Sometimes I think, ‘I’m so tired, I wish I could just quit.’ But then I look at families in which someone is critically ill, or where the husband is out of work, or families that have lost a son or a daughter tragically, or families with children who have left God and are living such worldly lives – and then I know how happy I ought to be. I don’t have any real problem or great tragedy to live with – so I create my own atmosphere of trouble by worrying and complaining about little things. How small I feel then, and ashamed. I pray for God to help me realize the countless blessings I have, before I maybe lose them because of my attitude.”

Do you see the absolutely opposite outlook and resulting effect the same situation produced in the two lives described? No, it isn’t actually opportunity or tragedy or good times or the loss of them that shapes our lives. It is our own attitude in direct response to each event that comes our way. We, ourselves, determine whether it will be a blessing or a curse, whether we will grow or be withered because of it.

Moses said: *“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God,*

which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God...” (Deuteronomy 11:26).

The commandments were the same for all the people; the difference, causing the blessing in one life and the curse in another, was the reaction to the commandments.

Paul said: *“For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and unto the other the savour of life unto life...”* (2 Corinthians 2:16).

The Christian and his message have remained the same through the years. The difference is solely in the hearers of the message. Let us, each of us, be careful how we hear and how we respond. Our attitudes will send us to heaven or to hell. We cannot be too vigilant in our guard over them.

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Request a free Bible Correspondence Course

Presented by the Church of Christ



Attitudes

Betty Burton Choate

Attitudes... If we could fully master this one part of our makeup, how much greater would be our control over our days and years. What a truth to embed firmly in our hearts and to remind ourselves of, over and over, as we deal with the various situations of life!

Even Christians value things differently because of different attitudes!

Look at these contrasting responses to situations and the resulting effects:

The regular song leader of the congregation was away, so a substitute had to be found.

George, grumpily said, “Don’t bother me, Mary, I’ve got to lead the singing this morning. Why couldn’t they have asked somebody else?”

Bob, with a smile: “Come on, Ann. Help me choose the songs for worship. They want me to fill in while Tom’s away!”

A teacher was needed for one of the children’s classes.

Barbara: “Oh, no you don’t! I’m not going to teach a wild bunch of kids.”

Jane: “I love to teach children that age. They’re old enough to be able to read and write, so there are many methods open for teaching them. And that age is so ready to learn!”

The preacher was to be away for two weeks on vacation.

John: “I don’t know why they always want to put all the extra work off on me. Why can’t some of the other men feel some responsibility to do something?”

Charles: “Sure, I’ll stand in for Jim. It’s a good opportunity for me to add a little to my development. If I take advantage of opportunities to speak now, God will surely open other

doors of service for me further along the way.”

A new list was being made for the care of the communion trays and the building:

Mary: “Well, when they make such a mess of that building, they need not think I’m going to break my back helping to clean it up. And someone else can do the trays. I don’t know how to make the bread and, anyway, I don’t see why we have to do that.”

Ann: “If no one else wants to clean the building this month, we will. Even though humans are the ones who sometimes carelessly dirty it, it is the building set aside for God’s worship, so in a very special way, it’s God’s house. I like the thought that we can clean it *for Him*. And I love filling the trays. Without human hands to clean them and make the preparations, that memorial of Jesus’ death couldn’t continue. I have my own private time of worship and giving myself to God when I’m taking care of the trays, and especially in making the bread. It makes me feel so good to take the best flour and oil and to work with care to make the bread to the best of my ability, fresh and lovingly prepared for that high point of congregational worship.”

A person taking the Bible correspondence course requested a home Bible study:

James: “Well, I hope they don’t think I have

time to go. All of my extra time is taken up with practice and games with the church ball team. The elders ought to be the ones doing the studying. Besides, I don’t know this Walker fellow, anyway. He’s probably not really interested and the trips over there will be a waste of time...”

Sam: “I’m so glad they gave me this person to visit. How wonderful it is to find somebody who actually wants to study! I’ll call now to introduce myself and to see just when we can arrange the first lesson. Even besides the possibility of the Walkers learning the truth, studying with them will be so good for Joan and me in our own spiritual growth...”

Volunteers were asked to visit the various Christians reported as being sick:

Tom: “No, don’t ask me. I don’t know what to say. Besides, sickness depresses me.”

Scott: “I’ll go. Maybe I can be of some help. Visiting sick people reminds me strongly of how thankful I need to be that my health is good and that it is me doing the visiting instead of having to lie in bed, suffering, wondering if anybody cares enough to come.”

Weariness with Life and Challenges

Beth was heard to remark: “I’m just so tired of everything – the schedule that has to be kept, the challenges, the bills to be paid. I seem