

“As a Man Thinketh...”

As we transition from one spiritual season to the next, our faith-oriented philosophy must increase so that the statement, “With God, all things are possible” can become a reality. The reason it’s important that our disposition change is because, “The way we think in our heart, is really who we are (Proverbs 23:7 KJV, “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he”).” Since this statement is true, then the next one is as well, “our thoughts govern our actions.” Here are two statements that describe a right and wrong attitude, please consider each position and determine which one best fits you.

Right Attitude - (Kingdom Law) - “Nothing is as hard as it looks; everything is more rewarding than we expect; and by faith we will expect everything will be alright at the best possible moment.”

Wrong attitude - (Law of Negativity) – “Nothing is as easy as it looks; everything takes longer than you expect; and if anything can go wrong, it will at the worst possible moment.”

I’m sure that you’ll agree that there are numerous negative attitudes that harass us on a daily basis. Today I want to talk to you about four that are common to us all, they are: Resisting change, Expecting problems, Embracing negative thinking, and Believing criticisms about oneself.

I. The first negative attitude is **Resisting Change**:

Why do we resist change? The answer to that question may rest in the fact that a negative experience may have caused us to pull back and say “never again!” We ought to look at our failures in a different way. Instead of an event embarrassing us and causing fear that says, “I won’t play a part the next time, think of how humiliating that was.” We can use the situation as a positive experience. After all, to fail means we are being trained for our next success, right?

“At a coastal aquarium, a barracuda quickly tried to attack a mackerel but was stopped by a partition that had been constructed. After bumping his nose repeatedly, he finally quit trying. Later, the partition was removed, but the barracuda would swim only to the point where the barrier had been and stopped. He thought that the partition was still there. Many of us are like that. We move forward until we reach an imaginary barrier, but then stop because of a self-imposed attitude of limitation.”

Change is essential for growth. A famous inventor once said, “The world hates change, yet it’s the only thing that has brought progress.”

II. The second negative attitude is **Expecting Problems:**

Can anyone name a Bible character who didn't endure some form of trial or who didn't experience problems? At times we can become overwhelmed and experience moments when we feel as though we have more issues than we can handle. If we live expecting problems, all we are doing is opening ourselves up to more of them; please know everything is not a problem!

I Corinthians 4:8-9 says (The Living Bible)

"We are pressed on every side by troubles, but not crushed and broken. We are perplexed because we don't know why things happen as they do, but we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going".

III. The third negative attitude is **Embracing Negativism:**

Matthew 15:19 says,

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander" (Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks). However, when we reject negativity Revelation 3:21 states that, "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on His throne."

We must ask ourselves, "Are we governed by negative or positive thoughts?" As negative thoughts produce negative results, so positive thoughts produce positive results. You and I should remember that whatever negative situations we are faced with, all we have to do is ask the Lord what we can learn from them and by doing so our negatives turn into victories!

IV. The final negative attitude is **Believing Criticisms:**

Jesus, who was perfect in every way, was criticized and misunderstood continually. People called Him a glutton (Matt. 11:19), a drunkard (Luke 7:34), they criticized Him for associating with sinners (Matt. 9:11), they accused Him of being a Samaritan, as well as having a demon (John 8:48). In spite of experiencing misunderstanding, ingratitude, rejection, abandonment and betrayal Jesus never believed the criticisms that were spoken about Him. He never became bitter, discouraged or despondent. Instead, every obstacle became an opportunity!

For example, to the Lord, broken heartedness was an opportunity to comfort, disease was an opportunity to heal, hatred was an opportunity to love, temptation became an opportunity to overcome and sin became an opportunity to forgive. How many of us remember a statement that was critically made that greatly offended us? We need to think of how the Lord responded to similar accusations and respond in like manner. In reality, we need to begin to see our dilemmas as opportunities and not personal offenses meant to hurt us.

There are at least six results of negative thinking:

1. Negative thinking creates faithlessness at critical decision times.
2. Negativity is contagious and non-productive to success.
3. Negativity blows everything out of proportion. Some people treat the drip from a leaky roof like a hurricane; they find a problem with every opportunity.
4. Negative thinking limits God and it limits our potential.
5. Negative thinking can hinder others from making a positive decision it is infectious!
6. Negativity keeps us from enjoying life. If we have a negative neighbor, borrow a cup of sugar from him, he'll never expect to be paid back. A negative thinker once said, "If things appear to be getting better, you've overlooked something!"

For example:

During the early 1900's an impressive array of scientists were negative on the idea of the airplane. "Stuff and nonsense," they said, "an opium induced fantasy. A crack pot idea." One week later on a bumpy field called Kitty Hawk, North Carolina; the Wright Brothers taxied their crackpot idea down a homemade runway and launched the human race into the air.

Thomas Edison is on record as having said that talking pictures would never catch on. "Nobody," he said, "would pay to listen to sounds coming from a screen."

Edison also tried to persuade Henry Ford to abandon his idea of a motorcar. "It's a worthless idea," said Edison to the young Ford. "Come and work for me and do something really worthwhile."

Conclusion

Please read Isaiah 41:10-17.

How do we turn our negatives into positives?

1. Identify what has made you so “negative.”
2. Identify the areas in which you think negatively.
3. Identify people who can help you change from being negative into being positive.
4. Stay in prayer and in the Word of God!
5. Believe what the Lord says about a situation.
6. Ask the Holy Spirit for continual help about overcoming your negative thought life.
7. By the power of the Holy Spirit and through a Spirit-led life accept no negative statements. Remember, “With God all things are possible!”

Remember, “Nothing is as hard as it looks; everything is more rewarding than we expect; and by faith we will expect everything will be alright at the best possible moment.”

* Some of this ministry was taken from the book, “The Winning Attitude” by John Maxwell.

Permissions: You are permitted to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do NOT alter the wording in any way, you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, and you do not make more than 100 physical copies. For web posting, a link to this document on our website is preferred. Any exceptions to the above must be explicitly approved by Arise Christian Fellowship.

Please include the following statement on any distributed copy: By Vance Russell, Arise Christian Fellowship 2006. Website: www.ariseministries.com. Email: ministries@ariseministries.com. Telephone: 512.451.8260.
