The Power Of Attitude
Proverbs 23:6-7

Next to knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, nothing is more important than having a good positive attitude. Your attitude can:
Make or Break You; Heal or Hurt You; Make you friends or make you enemies; Make you happy or make you miserable; Make you a success or make you a failure.

Some people think that the whole world stinks. Maybe you've heard the well-used preacher illustration about the cranky grandpa who laid down to take a nap. To have a little fun, his grandson put some limburger cheese on his mustache, right under his nose. Grandpa awoke with a snort, staggered out of the bedroom and shouted, "This room stinks!" On through the house he went, shouting louder, "This whole house stinks!" He charged out on the porch and shouted as loud as he could, "The whole world stinks!" The truth is, it was grandpa who stunk. The problem was right under his own nose.

95 times out of 100, when we begin to feel that things in life stink, the problem is not with the world or with others, but with ourselves. The problem is that our attitude has become negative. Change your negative attitudes to positive ones, and you can change your world.

Motivational speaker Zig Zigler rightly said that: attitude... not aptitude.... determines one's altitude in life.

Beginning today and lasting for the next several weeks we are going to talk about attitude. And this topic applies to everyone here, including me, because we all have attitudes; sometimes they’re good, sometimes they’re not so good, and other times they’re just plain nasty.

Now today is an introduction to the subject, laying the ground work
for where we’ll be heading. So...to do that let’s look at 3 facts about your attitude...

**FACT #1; YOUR ATTITUDE - REVEALS THE REAL YOU**

How important is your attitude? Your attitude is more important than: facts - circumstances - what others say - it’s more important than your past - your education and your money. Your attitude is more important than you realize.

Understand today that your attitude is much deeper than just a few thoughts you might think or not think. Your attitude comes out of the core of your being. Your attitude represents your disposition, your outlook, your very character.

The Bible says in Proverbs 23:7; "For as a man thinks in his heart, so he is..." (NKJV)

**ILLUSTRATION**  > JAR OF WATER -- PUT A LID ON IT LOOSELY -- SHAKE THE JAR VIGOROUSLY UNTIL WATER FALLS OUT.  
  > ASK: WHY THE WATER SPILLED?  
  . LID LOOSE . JAR SHOOK . GRAVITY

NO, THE REASON THE WATER CAME OUT WAS BECAUSE THE JAR WAS FILLED WITH WATER. WHAT’S ON THE INSIDE IS WHAT COMES OUT.

Jesus said, in MATTHEW 15:17-20  
**17** "Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? **18** But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart...

Your attitudes always become actions or re-actions.

Let’s look at it this way. The attitudes inside you are like a jack-in-the box. Have you ever played with one of them? You turn the little handle (all around the mulberry..) and when you least expect it - he pops out. Now that’s a vivid picture of our attitude, when we least expect it, it will pop out and cause other people to like or dis-like us.
You see, much Louder than the words you speak is your attitude that keeps telling people what you are really like.

Personally I find this truth that my attitude reveals the real me - to be quite sobering. I like to say, when I do or say something that obviously wasn’t the right thing, "I didn’t mean it, where did that come from?" - it came from inside.

When I have a negative, nasty, critical attitude... that’s the real me and when YOU have one... that’s the real you.

Understand we don’t have an attitude just because we had a bad day (all that a bad day can ever do is shake our jar). The reason you have a bad attitude is because you have a bad attitude inside of you/inside of your jar/inside of your life.

So....Fact #1 is: Your attitude reveals the real you.

**FACT #2 YOUR ATTITUDE DETERMINES THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF EVERY RELATIONSHIP IN YOUR LIFE.**

What a difference your attitude makes! Your attitude affects every relationship in your life. And sometimes relationships will never get started in the first place -- because many times your attitude has built up walls... making it difficult for people to be around you.

Bad attitudes affect your marriage relationships/your relationship with your kids/at work/at church/friends

And the thing that makes a bad attitude so destructive is that like the jar of water with the loose lid on it, a bad attitude is eventually going to spill out into some negative actions - destructive words and deeds.

In Numbers 12:1-11, we read about 2 brothers and a sister. One brother, Moses, had a good attitude. The Bible says that "Moses was a humble man, more humble than anyone on the face of the earth." In other words, Moses was teachable and cooperative. He treated people as he wanted to be treated and he lived a life that honored
God and caused God to speak to him face to face.

But Moses’ brother Aaron and His sister Miriam on the other hand, chose a bad attitude - and it eventually spilled out. Miriam seems to have had the worst attitude and she infected her brother, Aaron. In verse one of Numbers 12 we read, "Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his cushite wife."

Get the picture? here they are, family members whom Moses thought he could count on and trust, going around behind his back, criticizing him, stirring up trouble among God’s people against their leader, their own brother Moses.

YOU CAN NEVER TRUST PEOPLE WITH A BAD ATTITUDE BECAUSE THEY WILL DO THINGS THAT YOU NEVER THOUGHT THEY’D DO

You see, most people who stir up trouble do so, not out of right reasons, but out of bad attitudes. The fact that Moses had married a Cushite wife was not the real problem - it just shook Miriam’s jar. This was just a symptom, an excuse. The real problem was that Miriam had a longstanding bad attitude.

This bad attitude stemmed from her jealousy of her brother’s position and leadership. And out of her own poor self-esteem she allowed herself to become critical and then she chose to cause trouble.

Often times the things that we criticize and get all stirred up about are not the problem at all. The problem is our own sour, critical, bad attitude. We’ve all seen what bad attitudes can do: Such bad attitudes can hurt and potentially destroy: marriages, families, friendships, work environments, churches, meetings, teams;

You see, whenever you have an individual or a group of people filled with a bad attitude and wearing a loose lid, trouble is bound to happen, things will rapidly get negative.

So...FACT #2...Your attitude determines the success and failure of
every relationship in your life.

**FACT#3 YOUR ATTITUDE IS ALWAYS YOUR CHOICE**

I like the man who was explaining to a friend about his days in college. He said, "No, I never actually was in the top half of my class, but I can say that I was in the group that made the top half possible..."

Two men are in prison. One looks out through the bars and sees only mud. The other looks out through the same bars and sees the moon & stars. They are both in the same place. What’s the difference? It all depends on what attitude you choose.

Without a doubt, the human mind is the most awesome creation of God. With it, God has given us the ability to think, to reason and to choose whether we will focus on positive thoughts or negative thoughts. In every one of our lives there is the positive and the negative. The choice as to which one we will focus on and feed, and nurture is up to us.

Understand... You can’t choose what will happen to you today (it’s beyond your control) -- but you can choose your own attitude - we each have the power to decide how we will respond to what happens to us.

Dr Victor Frankl stood under the glaring lights of the Gestapo court in a Nazi concentration camp, soldiers had taken away from Victor every earthly possession - his clothes, his watch, even his wedding ring. And as Dr Frankl stood there naked, his body shaved before those cruel men, men who tired to take every ounce of dignity from him. At that moment Frankel said that he realized he was destitute except for one thing, . He still had something that no one could take away from him, not even the Nazi’s.

He still had the power to choose his own attitude. And he chose to not give that attitude to his enemies. He chose joy, he chose hope, he chose to be positive.
Max Lucado wrote in his book: "The Applause of Heaven:"
"I have everything I need for joy!" Robert Reid said. "Amazing!" I thought.

His hands are twisted and his feet are useless. He can’t bathe himself. He can’t feed himself. He can’t brush his teeth, comb his hair, or put on his underwear. His shirts are held together by strips of Velcro®. His speech drags like a worn-out audio cassette.

Robert has cerebral palsy.

The disease keeps him from driving a car, riding a bike, and going for a walk. But it didn’t keep him from graduating from high school or attending Abilene Christian University, from which he graduated with a degree in Latin. Having cerebral palsy didn’t keep him from teaching at a St. Louis junior college or from venturing overseas on five mission trips.

And Robert’s disease didn’t prevent him from becoming a missionary in Portugal. He moved to Lisbon, alone, in 1972. There he rented a hotel room and began studying Portuguese. He found a restaurant owner who would feed him after the rush hour and a tutor who would instruct him in the language.

Then he stationed himself daily in a park, where he distributed brochures about Christ. Within six years he led seventy people to the Lord, one of whom became his wife, Rosa. A follow up (2014) He became a missionary to Portugal - learned to speak the language and served there from 1972 until 1993. 190 Baptisms resulted from his ministry and several churches were started. He is now a prison chaplain in Texas.

Lucado continued in his book: I heard Robert speak recently. I watched other men carry him in his wheelchair onto the platform. I watched them lay a Bible in his lap. I watched his stiff fingers force open the pages. And I watched people in the audience wipe away
tears of admiration from their faces. Robert could have asked for sympathy or pity, but he did just the opposite. He held his bent hand up in the air and boasted, “I have everything I need for joy.”

His shirts are held together by Velcro®, but his life is held together by joy. (Max Lucado - The Applause of Heaven and Max Lucado Blog)

Maybe right now you are feeling pretty broken, your life has taken way too many turns for the worse. A lot of things have gone wrong. It seems like everything has fallen right down on top of you. You’re weary, overwhelmed and your hopes & dreams are fading fast over the distant horizon.

I know from personal experience that it is not easy when the stuff of life hits you on the head, knocks you down and then kicks you in the stomach. But in such times you must remember that there is something that your situation can never take away from you - that there is something that not even; Nazis, Cancer, cerebral palsy, paralyses or even what you’re facing can take away from you - your power to choose your own attitude.

No matter what has happened to you (some of you have had tough times; bad marriages, health problems, financial challenges...etc), the attitude choice though is still yours. And understand that Jesus Christ wants to help you choose and cultivate a positive - faith filled - hope filled attitude.

I find it both interesting and tragic that the one thing that no person or circumstance can ever take away from us.... the awesome power to choose our own attitude... is usually the first thing we give away!

To blame our bad attitudes on another person or on a difficult circumstance is simply a lame excuse. And If we allow events and people to cause us to be negative, we are only hurting ourselves more, because in addition to everything else, we are now forced to live with the effects and misery our bad attitudes will bring.

So, remember today: YOUR ATTITUDE REVEALS THE REAL YOU
....IT DETERMINES THE SUCCESS OF EVERY RELATIONSHIP
....AND....IT IS ALWAYS YOUR CHOICE

Adapted from Steve Malone...additions by David Simpson