

Positive Spiritual Attitudes

Introduction:

- A. Several years ago a famous psychiatrist said, "The greatest discovery of the twentieth century is that man can change what he is by changing the way he thinks." This is really not a new discovery! God said it many centuries ago (Prov. 23:7; see Mk. 7:14-23).
 - B. Thinking, attitudes can be changed. This is at the foundation of what is involved in becoming and living the Christian life (Rom. 12:2).
 - C. ATTITUDES are either "negative" or "positive." Example of negative is that of ten spies into land of Canaan. Positive is that of Peter and John (Acts 4:13).
 - D. All recognize importance of proper attitudes---positive attitudes! Norman Vincent Peale, "Power of Positive Thinking." (Principle taught in Bible). Used in "Success Seminars." "Think and Grow Rich," etc.
 - E. God's people must have Positive Spiritual Attitudes. Attitudes will determine destiny. Key to happiness, spiritual growth, church growth. Development of Positive Spiritual Attitudes overcomes greatest hindrance in life: "Negativism."
 - F. In this study we want to consider some positive attitudes necessary for spiritual success.
- I. ***Must Have Unwavering Faith In God***
- A. Demonstrated by O.T. characters - Heb. 11
 - 1. What we hope for depends on God's existence, power, and character.
 - 2. "Fully persuaded" that He is able to reward.
 - B. Abundant evidence to enable this kind of faith (Elijah)
 - 1. "If the Lord is God" then serve Him - 1 Kings 18:21
 - 2. When He speaks, it will be just as he said - Acts 27:25

II. *Must Have Definite Goals*

- A. Requires thought, planning
 1. No one achieves any worthwhile objective by accident
 2. "To fail to plan is to plan to fail."
- B. Paul was "goal oriented" - Phil. 3:13-15
 1. "What do I want to change in my life?"
 2. "What do I still lack?"
 3. If do not recognize, make commitment to change, will never come to pass

III. *Must Trust in God's Power*

- A. Power of the gospel - Rom. 1:14-16
 1. Power to save from past sin, but power that "works effectively," (mightily) - 1 Thess. 2:13
 2. Power to those who will let it work in their life - 2 Thess. 3:1
- B. Must learn that power not in self.
 1. Lesson God tried to continually teach Israel of old, "Not by few or many" - 1 Sam. 14:6
 2. Too often, become discouraged; want "more results."
 3. Tempted to do things by "sight," rather than by God's way
- C. In life of individual, provides power to become what He wants us to be - see Phil. 4:13

IV. *Must Have "Mountain Moving Faith"*

- A. Jesus taught disciples need of such - Matt 17:20
 1. Continuing to preach gospel requires great faith.
 - a. Do not have to confirm today, but great faith to live it, teach it.
 - b. Working God's plan accomplishes great things.
 - c. Cannot be a co-laborer with God without this kind of faith.
 2. One has said, "the biggest mountains to move are those between our ears: doubt, fear, worry: negative attitudes."
- B. Faith must be greater than the balance on check book.
 1. Takes no faith to plan for the future based entirely on what we have on hand.

V. ***Must Have An Expectant Attitude***

- A. Negative thinking doesn't expect anything to happen, or only bad things.
- B. When doing God's will, good things will come - See Judges 6:1

VI. ***Must Believe That All Things Work For Good*** - Rom. 8:28

- A. Doesn't say, "All things that happen are good." However, all can work together to bring about our good.
 - 1. Problems, hardships in life, (or in congregation) even great trials can prove faith - Jas. 1:2-7
- B. Although may not understand at time how good can come, in faith believe it!

VII. ***Must Renew Mind Daily***

- A. Key to living differently from the world - Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23
- B. This concerns what one lets mind dwell on:
 - 1. Things above or of the earth - Col. 3:1-2
 - 2. Things wholesome, or corrupt - Phil. 4:8
 - 3. Things which bring victory or defeat
 - 4. Satan can be defeated - 1 Jn. 2:14
- C. Mind renewed through Bible study, prayer.
 - 1. As surrounded by people & events which crowd out spiritual can cause to think this life is all that is important
 - 2. It is necessary to spend time in study so word may "dwell richly" in us.

VIII. *Must Believe That God Answers Prayer*

- A. One who doesn't believe God answers prayer, or doesn't pray is headed for defeat.
- B. Assurance form one who cannot lie, " effective prayer...can accomplish much" - Jas. 5:16
 - 1. Could it be that many do not know how to pray effectively?
 - 2. More than "words."
- C. God answers prayer
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. No
 - 3. Delay
 - 4. Something better.

Conclusion:

- A. How is your spiritual attitude? Is it positive or negative?
- B. Must work on attitudes every day if we are to be successful in Lord's work, reach heaven.
- C. What is attitude toward obedience? Obey is better than sacrifice. Nature of God is such that He cannot save one with a stubborn, rebellious heart. Gospel truth can bring about change if you let it.