

Dear Friends,

I have been greatly influenced by a brief quote by Chuck Swindoll. My hope for this Christmas season is that it will have the same positive effect on you. So I am making his quote my Christmas gift to you.

Charles Swindoll

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than success, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me, and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our attitude”.

*Colossians 4:2 “Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving.”*

*Philippians 2:5 “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus”*

With all the information on the WEB about attitude I am surprised that anyone can have a bad attitude! But we do! As an adult I struggled for many years with all the negative effects of ‘Childhood Christmas Trauma’. Only God’s healing, through forgiveness, and a patient wife has brought me to have a positive attitude about the Christmas season. Here are a couple gems I would like to share:

- When we comment that someone has ‘a chip on their shoulder’ we are referring about someone’s negative attitude but, if someone is said to be ‘chipper’ we are referring to their positive attitude. I wonder about the origin of these statements! Loggers or wood carvers?
- Attitudes are often learned in childhood from those with influence over us. They are often a family member or teacher that we looked up to. Attitudes are learned from the behaviors of our examples while growing up.

- Attitudes can be influenced by physical problems such as pain, diet, hormonal fluctuations or, emotional issues like suppressed anger, grief, and fear.
- Attitudes can be more important than reality! It is possible to be in a really bad situation and, if you react in a negative way your situation can get worse. Likewise, if you react positively the situation may still be really bad but you are more likely to be more stable and be better able to deal with the adversity.
- According to some writers if you establish a good attitude in one situation then your next problem will be less overwhelming on you.
- Attitudes are learned and can become habits. Repeated over and over until we react without being aware of our attitude or its effect on others.
- Attitudes effect our perceptions. Often we interpret a situation differently depending on our attitude at the time.
- Attitudes can create judgments. Attitudes can be fixed and become an unchanging opinion toward anything in life.

*May you have a Jesus filled  
Christmas  
Richard & Debi*