

Alpha Counseling Service

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Dear Friends,

My third installment on improving my attitude is being POSITIVE.

Now I admit that as a Christian who counsels I hear a lot of negativity and sometimes Debi reminds me that there is another part to church life and the **TRUE** Christian life is not negative. So I have to work at not focusing on the dark side of life.

I have found that being negative actually makes you feel worse. Take the weather as an example. Complaining about the weather does not change the weather but, it can make you feel more miserable! About the only thing you can do to change the weather is move to a different climate. While living in Florida I met a family in a hurry to move back North because the wife was traumatized by thunder and lightning storms. During the summer, in Florida, they occur nearly every afternoon. If I had known at the time I would have recommended the great Northwest as a nearly thunder free zone.

I've known Christians who I call 'fruit inspectors'. They always notice the things people do wrong, and, sadly extend little or no grace to those caught up in some offence. Most of these so called 'inspectors' seem to minimize anything that is positive, My tendency is to avoid them whenever possible.

Jesus had difficulty with religious leaders who only noticed what didn't fit their rules. Imagine confronting the Lord of Glory because his friends didn't wash their hands is a certain way!! Jesus' response in Mark 7 is: ***"this people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrine the commandments of men"***. It is scary to realize that this is still how God feels about traditions that override the Gospel.

So how about something more positive? Debi introduced a great saying to me recently and it surprised and pleased me when I saw the author's name.

"People are often unreasonable and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you.

Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the end, it is between you and Him and not you and them."

Mother Teresa

Being positive when times are frustrating can actually bring solutions quicker than if we are complaining. Complaining is not the same as problem solving and when we complain we are not really looking for solutions that will help our situation.

Philippians 4:8&9:

*"Whatever is true,
whatever is honorable,
whatever is just,
whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely,
whatever is commendable,
if there is any excellence,
if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.*

*What you have learned and received and heard and seen in Me,
practice these things,
and the God of peace will be with you."*

Look Up and be Positive, Richard