

Alpha Counseling Service

June

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2015

Dear Friends,

It has been several months since I mentioned the message behind my topic of 'attitudes' for this year. So here again is the quote that has been a source of change in my life:

"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".

Charles Swindoll

I would like to remember Mothers' and Fathers' this month as I share about the attitude of Respect.

Webster's Dictionary defines respect as (1) a feeling or understanding that someone or something is important, serious, etc. and should be treated in an appropriate way. (2) Expressions of high or special regard or deference to a person or object. Example: to respect the flag of your country.

In my counseling I find that many relationship problems would heal themselves if we would only treat people with the same consideration we expect, and often demand, from others. Our culture today wants everyone to have the same views on life, politics, sports and religion that I have. If you don't, you are defective and I am entitled to disrespect you in the meanest possible way.

I grew up with the example of this attitude but by God's grace, a patient wife and, years of watching people ruin their lives with disrespect I am learning to respect people I don't agree with.

Treating people with respect is truly a reflection of our inner life. I often see people attack another person's character rather than argue the facts of the issue at hand. This tells me that their arguments are weak and that deflecting from the real issue at hand is their present goal..

One of the great assets of being a counselor is learning to be a good listener! I had to be taught to listen attentively.

Bryant McGill says: "One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say."

Many are willing to be "respecters" of persons" of influence or social status; and yet treat those of less importance with disrespect. Some time ago a man was sharing how his father informed him that to 'honor and respect' his father he was expected to always agree with his father's opinion. I told him that sounded like bullying. It isn't often practiced, in our culture, but you can DIS agree and still be respectful. Treating adult family as equals is a sure sign of maturity and hopefully will win you respect even from ill informed family. I really like Winston Churchill's saying:

I am fond of pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals."

I hope we will treat the 'common and ordinary' of this world and in our family with the same respect we give the 'high and mighty'.

Ephesians4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Thank you for your prayers and generosity this last month.

God Bless,
Richard