

## Attitude Is Everything

We are now going into part two of four more lessons on leadership skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is not just about being a leader in business or in a ministry or in a corporation; it is about being a leader in your own family and around your friends, around any place that God desires to put you because God needs you to speak for Him. He needs you to show people what He is like. That is why He sent Jesus. "Jesus, show them what I am like." He did. You may be the only Jesus some people ever see, ever know what Christianity is really like. There is always a place for someone to lead and show how to do things.

I want to recap what the first series was about, the four lessons, so that you know exactly where we are headed. The first one was the basic aspects of being a good leader, the basic things that you have to know in order to be a good leader. I know that some of you have never been trained in leadership. No one has ever taught you anything and then someone has given you a leadership job and you are drowning. You are thinking, "I do not even know what you do. I do not know how to do what you do. Somebody help me." That is what this is all about. The second teaching was identifying personality traits, talents and giftings in other people. You have to find the people to help you do this thing. You cannot do it by yourself. God will help you find those people but you can have instruction and that is what that lesson was about. The next one was about interruptions. Here you are on this great way to do this great thing for God and then some big interruption pops up. The title of the lesson was, interruptions, could it really be God? I then showed you all of the times in the Bible the stories that we know about Jesus were pretty much about interruptions when He was on the way to doing something else. The last one was goal setting for future good. I reminded you that your dreams, which everybody has to have and do not ever let anyone steal your dream. I do not care; do not let them do it, because there are dream stealers out there. We talked about that your dream from God is the car, the vehicle, and goals are the tires to help you get there. They are what you have to do to get there. If you want to keep your life in balance those four tires need to be four areas of your life, spiritual, family, personal and material goals. You can set as many as you want in each area as long as they move you forward in the same direction.

Today, we are starting the second part of the series. It will be four lessons. This one is entitled, Attitude Is Everything. You can be a person that is really not as trained as other people, but if you have the kind of attitude that is a can-do kind of attitude instead of an oh-me kind of attitude, people will pick you up and want you with them. They know behind that attitude is somebody who is really willing to try and will not be stopped by obstacles and will learn and move. You see, attitude is everything. You could be the most talented person on earth and if you had a lousy attitude, if you had stinking thinking people do not want to be around you. It does not matter how much you know, it does not matter how gifted you are, it is just so unpleasant to be around you that nobody wants to be around you.

One time a lady came up to me at the prayer rail and said, "That preacher was talking about me when he said there are people who go home and say why do I act the way I do, why do I treat people the way I do? I make everybody mad and I get fired on every job I go on." You know what was wrong was in her heart. Her attitude was bad. Maybe it was based on things that happened in her past, maybe it was based on things that people had said to her, maybe it was based on present things that were going on. All I know is that she said "Nobody wants to be around me. I am good worker." That attitude was so bad. Why is it that some people can show up for work with a good attitude? Do you think they do not have any problems at home? Do you think they do not have any challenges? Do you think they do not have setbacks and that is how they can show up with a good attitude? Probably not, maybe sometimes, sure. A lot of times people just have to get in the car and say, "Right now I have got to have a good attitude about work," or they leave work and they say, "Right now I have got to have a good attitude about going home and being with my children and being with my spouse."

There are some people who are really made this way. No matter how bad things get, they are those people that say the glass is half full not half empty. They just cannot stay down. I think you have heard me say on these shows that my family had a lot of mental issues, depression, all of that, bipolar. One time a family member was trying to tell me, "Betty, I think you have it." I went to my

husband and I said, "Honey, do you think I have depression?" He said, "Yeah, about like Bugs Bunny." That is probably true. The way I am made, I get down, I do not tell you I do not, but I just cannot seem to stay down. I start finding the good in it. I start thinking about how to change it. I do not know. Some people are made like this but some are not. You may be one of those not made like that.

What are you going to do? You are going to have to learn how to have a good attitude in spite of what is going on. God can show you. Have you ever thought about how God could have a bad attitude? What do you think He could say? "People, I give up. They do not want My help. Look what they are doing." No, the Bible is full of God's good attitude. Have you ever noticed that? "I believe in you. Come on let us go. I will forgive you. I paid for that sin, you do not have to die and go to hell, I paid for it, come on let us go. I have a great plan for your life." Look at Jeremiah 29:11. "I know the plans I have for you, plans for good and not for evil. Plans to give you a hope and future."

In Jamaica, have you ever been there? Even the cab drivers say this, "No problem, mon, no problem." It does not matter what the deal is, no problem. At all ages people can learn to have a good attitude. Sometimes you have children who have really bad attitudes. You have to teach them how to have a good one, no matter what.

(Look at this little boy smiling. Look at this picture. Look at this girl. Can you tell she has a good attitude? Look at this couple.) You know a picture is worth a thousand words is it not? There is not one thing that they are saying but you can look at those pictures and tell me a lot about the marriage, about the girl, about the boy. When you are around people like that do you not like it? Some people do not. They are going, "Yeah, what is really wrong?" Those are people with bad attitudes. Everybody can have a good attitude.

Look at this Scripture. Proverbs 17:22, "A happy heart is good medicine and a cheerful mind works healing, but a broken spirit dries up the bones." Oh my goodness. I had a preacher one time, a pastor, that had this lady and she was so negative. Everything he said trying to say something nice and positive and she would come back with something else. One day the sun was shining, the birds were singing and he thought, "Boy I have got her now." He was standing at the door and she came by to shake his hand and He said, "Oh is this not the most beautiful day. You can hear the birds singing." She said, "Yeah, preacher, but it is raining somewhere." People are like that. A broken spirit dries up the bones. Do you have a broken spirit? Ask God to change you and to heal your spirit. He would love to do that for you. He would love to make you a person with a good attitude.

One way to get a good attitude is to read the Word of God a lot because it is so full of positive. You can train yourself to have a good attitude. You think, "Well, but I am faking it." Fake it until you make it. That is a little saying too. If you are going to be somebody that has to be everybody has to be around, I think I would rather you at least be trying to change. Does it affect your job? Oh goodness, yes, because you will be more effective on the job. You will not be as tired. You will not be as discouraged by setbacks. You will be able to look for the answer.

In training people to be leaders, leaders get down. They can get way down. Sometimes I think the bigger the ministry, the bigger the call, the bigger whatever it is that God has for you to do, the obstacles can get bigger. Listen to this little saying. I have lived by this for so long. "Anybody can be up when he is up, but only a leader can be up when he is down." What do I mean by that? I mean, if you are a leader and people are looking to you for leadership, looking to you for encouragement and support, you have to learn to compartmentalize what is negative that is going on and you have to learn how to go right on doing your job and then later deal with the negative.

People will follow you. If you are up, they are going to be up. If you are down, they are going to get disheartened and want to give up. You just cannot let it show. Does that mean you cannot ever let down if you are a leader? No, I do not mean that at all. You have to have a safe place that you can let down and just say what you are feeling and know that it is not going anywhere. Sometimes it can just be God and you get out in your car and you shut the door and you say, "I just want to scream. I want to quit." I can remember times when I first started doing women's ministry at my church. I had never done anything. I had never been the number one leader. I had always been either co-leading with my husband or the number two person. I had never been the person that the buck stops here; the top banana. I can remember days thinking, "This is over my head. I cannot do this. I do not know what to do. I do not know what to do now." I would shut the door, put my head down on my desk and pray in tongues because I did not know how to pray in English. I did not know what to say. I did not know what to do but I knew who to go to and I knew how to pray.

What are the elements of a good attitude, one that pleases God? Be positive not negative. Be an

What are the elements of a good attitude, one that produces God? Be positive not negative. Be an optimist. Of course you need to look and see where potential problems are, but you need to have the attitude that we can solve this. We can do this. We can handle this. We will find a way. If you think there is no way, you will say, "There is not a way right now but we will find a way." What if you get a lot of no's? I guy taught me one time that no does not always mean no. It only means no right now. You might go back to that person later, things have changed in their life and they have a yes. Do not quit.

Have you heard that story about the cat scratching trying to get in the house? "Get him out. Get him out. No, No, No." It was on and on. It was so cold and it was snowing. The cat would scratch. "Get away. No. Go away, go away, go away." Finally, he got so tired he just went off in the snow, froze to death and died. At the same time, the daddy looks out and goes "You know it is really cold out there, you better let that cat in." Most people quit when success is right around the corner. Why? Because it is so hard. You are tired. You have had discouragement. You have had obstacles. You think I do not think I can put one foot in front of the other. Yes you can. Yes you can. You can do a lot more than you think you can. You can go a lot further than you think you can because you can get a second wind from God and sail past things. If you have self-talk, make it positive. What do I mean by that? I mean when you are just talking to yourself, say things like, "Betty, God is for you, not against you. Betty, God says you are the head and not the tail. God says everything you do will prosper. Betty you are prospering. You are full of the Holy Spirit. You are led by God." You can be by yourself. In fact I said that to myself this morning all the way over here to film these shows. You have to do it.

Look at this second Scripture. This is about Caleb. Do you remember Caleb and Joshua? They were the only two out of all of the children of Israel that believed they could go in and take the land. Everybody got so mad at them. Look at Numbers 13:30. "But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. Let us go at once, at once, to take the land. We can certainly conquer it." What is the background on that? They sent twelve spies over into the land to see where God had called them to go. They saw giants. They saw it was a land of milk and honey. The grapes were so big they had to carry them back with all twelve of them carrying it, but ten people had a bad attitude and only two had a good one. The bad ones said, "They are going to kill us. They are going to eat us alive. We are like grasshoppers in their sight." Think about a grasshopper and a human. What they did not know was what God was doing and what God was doing was making sure those enemies knew about the parting of the Red Sea and all of the miracles that had happened with Moses. Those people were so afraid of this group of people coming in because they said, "Their God is with them. Our gods will not be able to stand against this God. Our gods cannot part a great sea and make dry land. We are going to die." They did not have any idea that was going on and maybe you are like that. Maybe you are looking at your circumstances and you think "It is not going to happen. It is not going to happen. It cannot happen. I cannot do it." You do not even know that on the other side, God is talking to people and telling them that these people are going to come and really take over.

One time we were in a job situation, my husband was, and we looked everywhere trying to find a veterinary practice for him to open up. Everything we looked into did not materialize. Nothing did. We were young. We did not have any money. Nobody would loan us the money. We were so frustrated. We were looking in the wrong place. We were trying to do it the way we wanted to do it. At the same time we were growing in our faith and learning to give it all up. Let God pick the place. You do not pick it. Let God pick it. We said, "Okay, we will go where You want us to go." Out of the blue the perfect place opened up with a job offer that was miraculous. There is no other way to describe it. What we did not know was that all of the time God had been working on the person on the other end. I want to be honest with you. We had faith through it but it was very hard because we were so discouraged. It had gone on for so long with no answer. About that time a man in a Bible study that we went to every Sunday night would say, "If you are waiting on something to happen and it is not happening, it could be because God is working on the person on the other end and when that situation is ready and that person is ready God will open the door to you." That is exactly what happened to us. I wonder what would have happened if we had gotten discouraged and said, "It is not ever going to happen. We need to give up and not even try." Thank God for Christian leaders who said the right things to us. Every Sunday night I waited to hear that man say that because all during the week it was so discouraging. Every Sunday night that man named Frank would say that and keep us going another week. Then as I told you, when God really opened the door and it was dependent on people on the other end, it was miraculous. We had a testimony to share with businessmen for many, many years of what God can do when you leave the choice up to Him.

What does your attitude need to be around others? Well, a can-do attitude and Caleb had one. Do you know what is interesting about Caleb? He was 40 years old when he went into the Promised

Land when they began wandering in the wilderness. We are going to study in just a little bit what he had to say. Can you tell that Caleb felt good about himself and about what God was doing and what he felt like the people could do? He said, "Yeah, let us go in. We can do it." You have to learn how to cooperate with people. If you are a person who cannot cooperate your attitude needs to change.

You cannot do anything great by yourself. Even if you say, "Nope, I am a self-made man." No you are not. You do not even know, maybe there have been people praying for you and you did not even know it and will not know until you get to heaven. There are just people willing to help you.

You know that there are people who are willing to help you. If they can see somebody with a good attitude, great goals and a big dream, they want to help. You also have to learn how to accept others. A good attitude is not racial, it is not prejudiced against groups of people, against continents of people, even people who differ from you in your belief system, you have to accept people. They can tell when you do. You may not like their behavior. You may not like their actions but those can change. They can change in a heartbeat. God can work on them and they can change right before your very eyes. You need to be able to accept others. You need to be enthusiastic about things.

One time I had a UPS driver and he would come to our house. He was okay. He was nice. He just kind of had an attitude. He had to be gone and man of a different race came and delivered our packages. Our other little guy came back and he said, "I bet you are glad to have me back." I thought, "No I liked the other guy better as a matter of fact." The Lord said, "You better pray for that guy Betty. You better pray for his attitude." Okay. I prayed for him. The guy comes back and he is a totally different person. I could not believe he was the same guy. I liked him. God can do that.

Be willing to accept people. Be willing to pray when people need to change.

What is another good attitude? To learn from your past; do not dwell on it. Let go of your past.

Jesus wants to forgive you of everything you have ever done. Everything. All you have to do is say, "Lord, I am so sorry I have done all of this. I do not want to be this kind of person. Come into my life and change me and make me a different kind of person." He would love to do that for you. Do not dwell on the past.

Another is do not take rejection personally. That is hard. Sometimes you are just not the person.

They have in their mind something they want, somebody, a certain type. I know that from acting in commercials. They know before I get there if they want what I am. You cannot take it personally.

Another sign of a good attitude is do not jump to conclusions. Have you ever done that? I have and then did you find out later, whoops do I ever have egg on my face? That was not it at all.

What do you do if you are having a bad day and we all have them? Ask yourself, why am I so negative? What is the real reason? A lot of time for me it is that I am afraid something is going to happen. Check your options. What would I do if this? What would I do if that? How would I handle it if it was this? Focus on the positive. I am going to give you some figures. You might be surprised.

Did you know that 87% of what you worry about never happens and 10% is not nearly as bad as you thought it was going to be. 3% is going to happen but it was things you had no control over; like a tornado. You could not have prevented it even if you had known. Accept the outcome and realize you have a God in heaven that loves you. You have a Holy Spirit that lives in you that wants to help you. You have a Jesus that is interceding for you constantly. He has lived as a man. He knows what it is like. He is always interceding for you, always. You have three people always there to help you. Accept the outcome and say, "Well praise God anyway. God is going to turn something good out of this bad. I know He is."

Look at this third Scripture in Numbers 14:10. "But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb. (that is scary is it not) Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to all of the Israelites at the tabernacle." God is going to step in there at some point. He is going to redeem you some way. He is not going to leave you where people are wanting to stone you. Of all the children only Joshua and Caleb had the good attitude and God rewarded it. He always does.

Look at this Scripture, Numbers 14:24. "But my servant Caleb has a different attitude than the others have. He has remained loyal to me so I will bring him into the land he explored." It is even better than that. "His descendants will possess their full share of that land."

I want to read this to you. This is what Joshua heard Caleb say to him. "Remember what the Lord said to Moses. I was 40 years old and I gave an honest report. My brothers did not and God made me a promise. It has been 45 years since then. I am 85 years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on the journey. I can still travel. I can still fight just as well. Give me the hill country even if it has the Anaks living there." Who were they? Giants, real giants with great walled towns. What did he say? "He said, but the Lord is with me and I will drive them out of the land just as the Lord said." Eighty-five years old. How old are you watching this show? You have to be so

careful as you get older and older, because you see the end of your days coming and you can get a bad attitude. You can get a negative attitude. You need to remember what Caleb did at 85. He said, "I can do it. I can do it Lord." I want to tell you to get a good attitude. Go out with a great attitude because you will be a leader that way.

#### QUIET TIME QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to have a good attitude?
2. What does Proverbs 17:22 tell us about having a good attitude?
3. What are the elements of a good attitude?
4. What do you do if you're having a bad day?
5. How did Caleb from the Bible show a "can do" attitude?

To watch the video on ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING, Pillar Six, Leadership Skills, go to [www.bettyswann.com](http://www.bettyswann.com).

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