

Attitudes for Everyday Life

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Air Dates: Oct. 28 – Nov 1, 2024

Day One

Are you teachable?

We will examine the 5 attitudes for everyday life, and today, let's look at our teachability.

When it comes to having a posture of learning, Proverbs 1:5-7 reminds us of this,

Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:5-7).

These words teach us as followers of Jesus, God's Word is filled with wisdom and instruction and should always be our go-to and guide. In a broader sense, they also remind us to have a posture of teachability and be open to correction.

Sometimes we can become so self-absorbed that our pride, ego, or arrogance can prevent us from inviting instruction, learning from others, seeking out different perspectives, and being open to hearing differing opinions. We can find ourselves so convinced we are right that we are closed off from considering anything out of the scope of what we already know, or think we know.

I think it's interesting that Proverbs is intentional to point out the pursuit of increasing our learning.

These words remind us even the wisest of the wise should be open to listening and adding to their knowledge. We never know it all and we should continue to be intentional about seeking opportunities to learn, understand, and expand our insight.

If you think about it, these wise words can apply to the workplace, home life, and relationships with friends. When we have an "I already know that" attitude, it does not leave much room for growth and can stunt our relationships.

When we are teachable and adopt a learner's mindset, when we are willing, with wisdom, to invite correction and consider other points of view, we display the godly character of humility.

In what circumstances and in which relationships can you take on a posture of listening, openness, and learning this week? When you do, perhaps you will learn something new.

Day Two

We're examining the 5 attitudes for everyday life, and today, let's look at our approachability.

How approachable are you? Do people find it easy to interact with you, or are you prickly, perhaps a bit dismissive, distracted, or disengaged?

Sometimes we can unintentionally put off an attitude that deters people from wanting to interact with us. Not too long ago, I worked with someone who frequently put off a grumpy vibe. Needless to say, it wasn't super pleasant to work with him when his attitude was like a big dark rain cloud. As I prepared myself to go to work, I wondered, "Am I going to get the pleasant version or the wet blanket?" His demeanor created an uncomfortable atmosphere of walking on eggshells.

Now, we all have bad days, myself included, but if we find ourselves in a pattern of being easily irritated or edgy, we carry an imaginary sign that says do not disturb and disrupt our connection with people. We can damage relationships at home and the office, and our witness as followers of Jesus is hampered.

Digital distractions can also compromise our kinship with people. In this age of technology, there are way too many opportunities to check out of conversations and miss truly connecting with people around you. We want to consciously build connections with people, not send mixed signals. This can be particularly challenging when our plates are full, but we never want to be so busy we blow past investing in relationships.

When I think about ways of being that communicate approachability, I am reminded of Galatians 5:22-23.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

We need to be asking ourselves, "Does my attitude reflect the fruit of my faith?" "Do people feel loved, cared for, and included by me?" "Do I exude joy even in challenging or stress-filled circumstances?" "Am I patient and kind at work even when it's crunch time?"

As followers of Jesus, we have a tremendous opportunity and responsibility to behave in ways becoming of Jesus; ways that put the glory of God on display. Our lives and demeanors are meant to invite people to engage with us, not turn them away. As you go about your day, how can you behave in a way that creates an invitation for connection and gives people the feeling that you are approachable?

Day Three

I'm examining the 5 attitudes for everyday life, and today I want to invite you to reflect on this question, "Are you an encourager?"

Think about it. The dictionary defines encouragement as words or behavior that give someone the confidence to do something.

In other words, when we encourage someone, we give courage to them.

I was flying home from a work trip the other day when a text came through right before takeoff. It was from a woman I had not seen or talked to in two years and out of the blue her words of encouragement came through. They brought tears to my eyes and were like water to my soul.

Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the body (Proverbs 16:24).

When you speak goodhearted words, it breathes life into people. The words you speak can bring healing.

A few weeks ago, I was having lunch with a friend, and I started chatting up the young man who was preparing our order. I commented about how much I appreciated his kind disposition. You should have seen the look on his face. He lit up, flashed a huge smile, and then proceeded to tell me I just made his

day. I don't say this to toot my own horn but rather to share an example of how easy it can be to breathe life into people around us every day. How do you use your words to strengthen those around you? Think about people at work. Who can you give sincere words of encouragement to? Simply point out something you appreciate about who they are and the value they bring to the team. Studies show people who feel appreciated at their job have more joy and greater satisfaction.

I don't know why, but we can be so stingy with our words when it doesn't take much to make a positive impact on someone. I think we can all agree there is a shortage of kindness these days. Whether in the workplace, at home, or at the grocery store, there's no limit to the love and light of Jesus that we can spread when we use our words to water another person's soul.

As you go about your days, look for ways to breathe life into people with your words. Be an encourager. Say a kind word. You just never know the impact you can have, and what you say may just be the boost someone needs to keep going in their day.

Day Four

We are examining the 5 attitudes for everyday life, and today, let's talk about the attitude of curiosity.

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you thought you were right about something or someone only to get more information and find out you were dead wrong? I know I have too many times to count.

Our brains have a tendency to jump to conclusions rather than asking clarifying questions, and that can cause us to make assumptions. And when we do, it can damage our relationships. If we are not careful our rash reaction can impact our witness as followers of Jesus too.

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires (James 1:19-20).

What do these verses have to do with taking on an attitude of curiosity? When we do not heed these wise words and instead find ourselves reacting with certainty rather than pausing and engaging our curiosity we tend to operate from a place of judgment. We come from an "I know I am right" attitude, but the reality is we often do not have the full picture. We have a tendency to presume we know all the facts when in reality we rarely do.

When that co-worker, spouse, or friend does or says something and you are convinced you know their motive and intention, rather than presuming to know what is true, get curious!

One way to do this is to switch from the mindset of "I bet," to "I wonder."

Rather than, "I bet my co-worker is withholding information from me," switch to, "I wonder why I haven't received an update on that project yet. There must be a variable I am unaware of."

Or move from, "I bet my friend didn't return my text because she's not that interested in our friendship," to "I wonder why my friend hasn't replied. She must have forgotten or has a lot going on."

Now, it may turn out your co-worker is withholding information, or your friend is distancing herself, but that's not the point. The point is our assumptions are more often inaccurate, and we all know what assuming can do. It can make us look like a fool. The next time you are quick to judge and jump to conclusions, move from "I bet," to "I wonder," believe the best, and see what moving from certainty to curiosity can do.

Day Five

We are examining the 5 attitudes for everyday life, and today let's look at what the apostle Paul writes about having a Christ-like attitude.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:3-5).

These verses challenge us to align our attitudes with the very heart and mind of Jesus. They're a reminder we are called to reflect Jesus in our daily lives.

But what does it mean to have a Christ-like attitude?

First, it means embracing humility. Even though he was God, Jesus didn't cling to his divine privileges. Instead, he *emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant* (Philippians 2:7). A Christ-like attitude doesn't elevate self, seek status or recognition, but is willing to serve others selflessly. When we have an attitude like Jesus we find joy in lifting others up. We find ways to be generous with our words, our finances, our resources, and our time, even when it costs us something.

Second, a Christ-like attitude is marked by love and compassion. Throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus moved with compassion, whether he's feeding the hungry, healing the sick, or comforting the brokenhearted. His love wasn't conditional or reserved for those who thought the same way he did or could give him something in return. Jesus's love was freely given to all. In our daily lives, we are called to mirror this love—offering grace, kindness, and forgiveness, even when it's hard or we think someone does not deserve it.

Third, a Christ-like attitude is characterized by obedience and surrender to God's will. Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, *not my will, but yours be done* (Luke 22:42). He was obedient to the point of death on a cross. Similarly, we are called to surrender our desires and plans to God, trusting his ways are higher, and his plans are perfect. This requires a heart that is willing to listen, to be led, and to follow wherever he may guide us.

Living with a Christ-like attitude isn't easy when we operate in the flesh. It requires renewing our heart and mind with God's Word and prayer, abiding in Jesus, and relying on the Holy Spirit. As we grow in our relationship with God, we display more of his character. We reflect his heart, and our attitudes bring glory to him in everything we do.