

# The Song on Your Heart

9/24/17

Ephesians 4:22 -- *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off the old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds.*

I want to talk about attitudes today. According to what we have learned our attitude reflects our internal feelings or position toward something or someone else. Our attitude is our feelings, mood, opinion, sentiment, temper, tone, perspective, frame of mind, outlook, view, or morale. It is an important part of us so there are many descriptive words defining that particular characteristic.

Airplane pilots used the word attitude to describe their plane's horizontal relationship with the runway. Similarly, our attitude is our disposition toward things outside of us, such as circumstances, people, or situations.

There are times, despite our best efforts, when we display a bad attitude. These might include times when we are negative, critical, rebellious, defiant, impatient, uncooperative, apathetic, discouraged, arrogant, self-centered, or rude. We recognize when we are demonstrating this sort of attitude, and so do others. It is evident in our faces, our body language, our words, and the way we treat others. These are the outer symptoms of our attitude, which is an internal state – a disposition of our heart and mind. Invariably, how we feel inside is reflected outside. Proverbs 23:7 tells us: *For as we think in our heart, so we are.* In truth, no one

really knows our attitude except for God and ourselves. But we can give people a pretty good idea through how we act.

The Bible gives other examples of behavior that are representative of a corrupt internal attitude, which usually comes from accepting what the world is offering us rather than what Spirit is offering us. Galatians 5:19-21 says this: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like....”

We have seen these behaviors in people from the low places to the highest positions in society. They reflect a misalignment of attitude. Each of us is part of the world, so one common lesson we all share is to attempt to manage the temptations of the world and ego. None of us escape it, not even Christ. “Get behind me Satan.”

One way to deal with temptation and realign our attitude is to recognize the temptation and ask God for strength to see us through the challenge.

Once we are aware of the negative desire we can replace it with an opposite thought or separate ourselves from the presence of the temptation. If we are afraid, we can think of loving thoughts and call upon confidence building thoughts: “With God, all things are possible. I can do this.” St. Francis gives us guidance in his poem: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

If we are trying to avoid carbohydrates in order to lose some weight, we need to go through all the pantries and toss the spaghetti, crackers, and candy. If we do not do this, and think we can do it ourselves, we are setting ourselves up for failure.

An easy way for a smoker to relapse to the addiction is to spend time around other smokers. So it is with alcohol, drugs, infidelity, or foul language. The company that we choose has a powerful impact over our attitude, our inner temperament.

Our attitude impacts everything. It directs our thoughts, our energy and the actions we take. When we wake up in the morning, or in my case, somewhere in the morning after my mind awakens, we have the choice of what attitude we will embrace the day.

Yesterday, if mean, hurtful, or disappointing things happened to us to put us in a foul mood, then after sleeping on it we have to choose to continue that negative nature.

During sleep I have rested, my mind has worked through the difficulties, and I am given a fresh start. Why do I so often choose to continue the attitude of irritation from the day before? It can take me a couple of days to get over an incident. Some people perpetuate negative attitudes their entire lives.

Christ gives us the option to release the negative, destructive, and counterproductive attitudes that we carry around within us. We can surrender our attitudes to Spirit and in faith embrace the disposition and outlook of God.

Well, what is God's disposition Patrick? We are told that in my favorite Bible verse: Jeremiah 29:11 -- *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

That is what God wants for us. God's attitude toward us is solely and absolutely one of Love. God is not going to send us negative circumstances. But during bad times God will tap on our hearts and try to get our attention. He will whisper that we have the strength to see the challenge through to its conclusion. He will try to illuminate within us the lesson to be gained from a particular difficulty.

A major cause of a poor attitude stems from a feeling or belief that we are not enough, or do not have enough. We have a feeling of lack. But truly, we live in a Universe of abundance, and God constantly attempts to reveal to us that there is no lack; we have enough for ourselves, and enough to share. We have enough time, enough wisdom, enough love, abilities, resources, and enough energy. God is our Source: we have enough; we are enough.

God will in so many different ways tell us that we are loved just the way that we are. We cannot do anything, say anything, or

become anything that will make God love us any more than He does at this moment. Nor can we do anything, say anything, or become anything that will make God love us any less.

At the same time, God has plans for us; we have things to learn, abilities to acquire, and attitudes to develop that will enable God to work through us more fervently, love through us more completely, and become the useful vessel for the delivery of God's good.

So in the morning when we wake up, we have a choice of what attitude we will wear today. Sometimes I wake up with a particular song running through my soul. Sometimes it is: **Make the World Go Away**.

But God intends all things to work for good. So what my soul thinks is a song about hiding or running away, God intends as a positive affirmation: we can ask God to remove the worldly influences on our hearts and minds – making the world go away, so to speak – and what we are left with is the good of God.

Sometimes I wake up with this song running through my heart: **My Way**. This is a common theme for humanity, that we can do it all ourselves. That is what the ego wants us to believe: that we don't need any help.

But right behind those thoughts, if we are still, we feel the ever present spirit of God leading us, guiding us, and impacting our decisions. What we think is our strength is God's gentle hand holding us up, aiding us when we are at the last of our energies.

Yes, we are the body that gets things done, but it is God's spirit that animates our body. When we release our ego we can humbly acknowledge that it is the Father within us who does the works.

At other times, my morning attitude runs along the lines of this song: **Oh What a Beautiful Morning**. Now, I wish that I could tell you that was the predominant way I wake up every morning. But I would be breaking the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment. Although many people wake up this way, with a positive, upbeat attitude that sees them through their days with joy and ease, I am not one of those people. It takes me a little time in the morning to get with God's plan.

I tend to wake up with this song running through my heart: Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head. (Sing it for the meditation) Although I may be mulling over some sort of discontent, there is another awareness that helps guide me: In Matthew 5:45 we learn that God gives His best - the sun to warm and give light, and the rain to nourish - to everyone, regardless of their nature: the good and bad, the nice and nasty.

God doesn't take sides – because God loves all of us the same. He will continue to love us and will whisper guidance to both sides of an issue. He will attempt to awaken the highest parts of our selves at all times. God will not help one team beat another, no matter how much we pray for the outcome of our choice.

God will help each individual rise to their potential as their hearts and minds attune to the presence of Christ within them. If this causes the tip of a game, then so be it. All of us have the same

means to call upon Spirit, but God does not weight one team or one country or one religion more than another.

So when raindrops are falling on my head, I understand that the rain is bringing much needed moisture to parched fields. What I believe to be inconveniencies to me are blessing to someone else. They are not intended to be negative or positive – that is what my choice of attitude determines. I know that my time is coming: this too shall pass; God makes all things work together for good for those who align their hearts and minds with Spirit. The challenges I face are not intended to harm me, but to strengthen me, educate me, and bring my awareness and faith in God to the forefront.

We can face life with a song in our heart. What song is running through your heart? Take a look at it and see if there is a message behind the words that your subconscious hears but your ears do not.

We've heard the expression from Zig Ziglar: "It is your attitude, more than your aptitude, that will determine your altitude." It is my prayer that we can raise our attitude and awareness from the worldly to the Divine; from fear and doubt to faith, confidence, love, and joy. As a lover of God, a positive attitude may be a responsibility, but certainly it is a choice.

Let us pray....