

Homily Sept 27 A New Attitude

Pray

MESSAGE NOTES: A life worth living is characterized by a new attitude. Following Jesus' example of emptying himself, and being filled with God's Spirit energizes us, regardless of our circumstances.

Thank you to those who filled out and returned a **Question Card** last Sunday. If you have a question about God, faith, the church, please write or print it on a card and place it on the Offering Plate. Name optional.

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference. - Winston Churchill

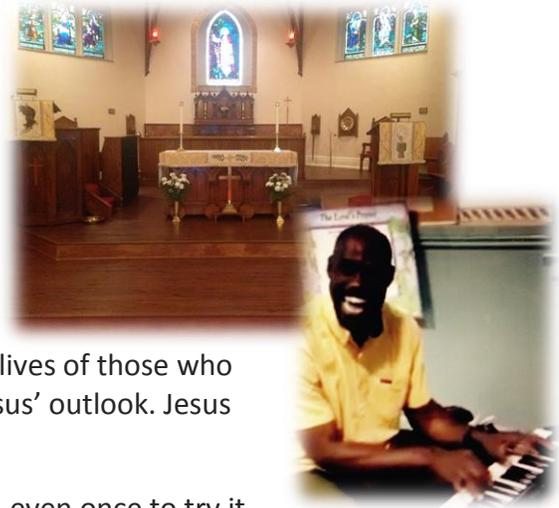
If you're not supposed to eat at night, why is there a light bulb in the refrigerator?

I hate it when women complain about being single every 3 minutes. 90% of my socks are single & you don't see them crying about it.

One day you're the best thing since sliced bread. The next, you're toast.

A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort.

How much does our renovated chancel and sanctuary mean in the grand scheme of things? What difference does welcoming a few foreign farm workers make? Perhaps these are small things. They do however illustrate an attitude of caring; caring for God's house of prayer and caring for the stranger among us. If that is how St John's is known, so be it. Compassion may seem like a little thing but it makes a big difference in the lives of those who feel loved and accepted by our church, reflecting Jesus' outlook. Jesus prayed. Jesus transforms lives.



If you're not convinced, why not consider attending, even once to try it out, the "Life Worth Living" study group, either on a Wednesday morning at 10:30 am in the Parish Hall or Thursday evening at the home of Adam and Cheryl Greer, 30 Honeyman Dr. Bowmanville at 6:45 pm. Sign up on the sheet on the Foyer. Consider purchasing a copy of the book by Nicky Gumbel called "A Life Worth Living" or better yet, simply read the bible book of Philippians, 4 pages in most bibles. Or Google Philippians – 1 "L" 3 "P's"! What was the author Paul's secret to happiness, while chained and under house arrest, for two years? Find the answer there.

If you're stuck in a rut, attitude wise, try this. Instead of saying, "I can't" say to yourself, "I can" Why? Because God has given all who believe in Jesus Christ the power of the Holy Spirit. You may feel inadequate in your own strength and wisdom. In Christ, all are made adequate by the Holy Spirit. First, recognize your need of the Lord. Take responsibility for your attitude which may stink. "A bad attitude is like a flat tire. If YOU don't change it, you'll never go anywhere."



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I know my attitude stinks from time to time. You can blame someone or something else or the devil but, quite frankly, it may be your own choices that have messed things up. Admit to the Lord that you need his help, his wisdom, strength, his power and resources, his protection, his provision.

Second, rely upon God. Trust God to be faithful to his word that He will never leave or forsake you. God is faithful and will provide for the things he calls you to do.

Third, take a step of faith to act upon what God has called you to do. You can't move a parked car in the right position unless you put it in gear, press the accelerator and steer it. In a like, manner God guides and directs us AS we move toward the goal God sets for before us.

Four, take a moment to be thankful. Even if it's the air we breathe, the sun that shines, the rain that falls, the ability to read or hear or smell, taste, touch, the freedom to choose.

Staying grumpy is tough if you're truly thankful. You might just find yourself smiling, realizing the Lord was smiling all along; God loves you so much. With Christ, all things are possible.

Jesus' advice about attitude? Stay salty my friends. Thirsty for God. His word, His worship. When I walked into Home Hardware yesterday afternoon, the door automatically opened and I thought, I can automatically open up to God right now and worship in my heart, right here in the store. No one can stop me. I rejoiced that God has given us his son's name Jesus, His spirit to help me find the sink thing I was looking for. All good.

Salt is for seasoning. That's us. Adding flavour to life in Bowmanville, by faith. We put out the call on Thursday for long sleeve Men's shirts L and XL and boom we must have had five bags of shirts and hoodies and blankets to give to the migrant workers last night at the Caribbean Worship evening. What a generous community!

When you pray for your day and then you meet your neighbour, or co-worker or whoever gets up your nose, you've already brought him or her before God's throne of grace and next thing you know, in stead of the negative attitude that had gripped you about them, you've already blessed that person by the smile God gave you for that person, who may be hurting. Give up the grumbling and stay salty.

As 2 Chronicles 7:14 says, If my people who are called by my name –Christ-ians- [my addition – that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess the Jesus Christ is Lord!] – humble themselves, pray, seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

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We too can bring God glory by following Jesus’ example. We are called to love as He loved us; to give up our selfish ambitions – even IF you feel you HAVE a right because so and so offended you – GIVE IT UP!, and serve the Lord, not be a slave to emotions. Jesus isn’t offended that others are casting out demons in his name, though the pretenders (as the disciples see them) are not a part of the inner circle. To give up self-importance and to look to the interests of others; to give up our self-centredness and to centre our lives on Jesus and on other people. We are called to become not stars, but servants.

That was why Paul could say that he was 99 % happy, despite being unjustly accused. He had given up his selfish ambitions; it did not matter that he had lost his freedom to achieve anything for himself. He had given up his self-importance, so it did not matter that he had ended up as a prisoner in chains. He had given up self-centredness, so that he was not worried by his own conditions. He was far more concerned about the interests of the Philippians (1 L, 3 P’s). Paul was following the example of Jesus Christ. God exalted Paul to be the single greatest influence, apart from Jesus, in the astonishing and continuing spread of Christianity, bringing life, hope and peace to countless millions by his writing and his prayers and example.

Next week: Jesus gives us a life worth living that include New Responsibilities.