

## Developing Godly Attitudes

Our attitudes arise out of day-to-day experiences and either please or displease God, depending upon our responses. Circumstances do not produce attitudes; rather, attitudes result from our responses to those circumstances, whether they be conflicts, trials, or sufferings.

God has a plan for each one of us. The circumstances we encounter, therefore, are designed to perfect us (James 1:2-4) (NKJ). It is often easier for us to encourage other people with the following verse than it is to believe it for ourselves: "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28); (see also Matthew 5:11-12).

God wants to produce in us the character of Christ, so that we will set our minds "on the things above, not on the things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:2). And it is that character trait in us, that attitude or response to circumstances, that others will see. Our attitudes can determine how effective or ineffective our witness will be.

Jesus declared in the Sermon on the Mount, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Out of each circumstance, we make a decision of the will (soul); and that decision is either godly or ungodly.

### **Ungodly Attitude**

If we grumble or complain when going through unpleasant or difficult circumstances, we develop an ungodly attitude. That ungodly attitude produces an ungodly action and an ungodly witness. Other people do not enjoy being around us because of our attitude, action, and witness. Worse, we can move far away from God.

The Old Testament gives us an example of an ungodly attitude that ended in tragedy: "And the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness" (Exodus 16:2). Their ungodly attitude, as they continued to grumble and complain about their circumstances, kept the children of Israel wandering for forty years in the wilderness where they eventually died, never reaching the promised land.

### **Godly Attitude**

God desires in all circumstances that we have a godly attitude, which produces a godly action and, in turn, a godly witness.

Forgiveness is a godly attitude. Jesus gave us the best example of a godly attitude. When He was hanging on the cross, life draining out of Him, He prayed "Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

Although we fail many times in our responses to circumstances, we must always remember God's promise in II Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

Whenever we recognize an ungodly attitude in ourselves, whenever we fail in our actions, we need to confess it as sin. For God is faithful "to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). He cleans the slate, never to bring our failures up to us again.

May we all purpose in our hearts to display godly attitudes at all times—regardless of the trials and circumstances we face. By so doing we truly glorify Him through our lives.