

Charles Swindoll, in his book Strengthening Your Grip, writes: "Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life. The longer I live the more convinced I become that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it. I believe the single most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis is my choice of attitude; when my attitude is right, there's no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me."

I'm inclined to agree with Pastor Swindoll. You know, the Bible has something to say about the importance of how we "set" our minds. God says through the prophet Isaiah, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is set on You..." (26:3) "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" is the instruction of Colossians 3:2. God tells us in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things." Our attitude toward life is often the difference between seeing possibilities or problems; challenges or trouble; opportunities or obstacles. Someone once said, "The individual who thinks he or she can and the individual who thinks he or she can't are both right."

I received the following anecdote about the power of attitude in my email recently. There was once a woman who woke up one morning, looked in the mirror, and noticed she had only three hairs on her head. "Well," she said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So she did and she had a wonderful day. The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that she had only two hairs on her head. "Hmmm," she said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today." So she did and she had a grand day. The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that she had only one hair on her head. "Well," she said, "today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So she did and she had a fun, fun day. The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on her head. "Yippee!" she exclaimed, "I don't have to fix my hair today!"

Attitude is so important. As the saying goes: "The kind of life you will have isn't determined by what happens to you, it's determined by your reaction to what happens to you." Woodrow Kroll once said, "Nothing is so sour that it can't be sweetened by a good attitude." God tells us in Proverbs that "as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Paul writes in Philippians 4:11: "...for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content." Notice Paul says this attitude is something he had to learn, which indicates that it didn't come naturally. In fact, I think our natural inclination is toward negativity & pessimism. I've noticed in my own soul that my knee-jerk instinct is to believe the worst I hear I about an individual or circumstance and I'm just as quick to doubt the wholesome news I hear about an individual or circumstance. So I encourage you to give attention to your attitudes - your life view, your worldview. Ask God to make Philippians 2:5 a reality in your life: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus..." Possessing a godly mindset will not prevent difficulties from coming your way...but a healthy attitude can certainly alter the way difficulties impact your life. Grace & peace, love you. PK