

Equipping Disciples to Multiply Laborers

MENTORING



**NEW
YEAR
NEW
ATTITUDES
NEW
YOU**

Right attitudes change everything

Nick Herman started his first career in the army and later got a position as a dishwasher. It turned out to be the only job he would keep for many years of his life. Washing dishes for 14 hours a day, the ho-hum of pots and pans, he endured the noise of shouting cooks and being the least important of all the workers. Then Nick made a decision, an attitude change. He chose to bring God into the kitchen! He began to wash dishes as a way to show love for the Lord. Everything changed. Nick said, "We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed... All things are possible to him that believes."¹ Nick worked 62 years serving others as a lay Carmelite monk in France, and died quietly at age 80. Millions know his spiritual name as Brother Lawrence. His book "The Practice of the Presence of God" is still in bookstores 400 years after his death! Brother Lawrence's remarkable faith replaced drudgery with delight in the presence of a loving Lord.

You choose your attitude

Attitude matters to God! I had the privilege of being involved with the Navigators in my early years. The founder Dawson Trotman, who designed Evangelist Billy Graham's counseling and follow-up ministry, challenged us regularly on attitudes: "Attitude is everything with God. Why you do what you do is more important than that you do." We are and become what we think! Altering our opinion and viewpoint starts first in our mind, our hearts. "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus..." (Phil. 2:5, NIV). "Be made new in the attitude of your minds..." (Eph. 4:23, NIV).

We must face this reality: attitude starts with a decision. We decide to be critical, sour, pitiful, whining, angry, accusative, short-fused, judgmental, caustic, jealous, or unforgiving. We also choose to encourage, listen, love, look for potential, complement, lift, and respond with hope. Think of the people you know who constantly find something wrong. It's all right to comment about something that needs changing, but only if we are seeking to help a person with a remedy.

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/// ACCELERATE!

/// WORKSHOP

**Sure Steps To Mentoring
Multiplying Disciples**

Featuring
Dr. Waylon B. Moore

Speaker & Author of *Living God's Word*,
Multiplying Disciples, *Power of A Mentor*, & *First Steps*



February 27-28, 2009

Friday, 7-9PM; Saturday, 8AM-1PM

Hope Church; Fort Worth, Texas

Rev. Harold Bullock, Pastor

Info: 813-238-2303

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Registration & Materials: \$35



"How do I change my attitude? I hate changing dirty diapers for my mom's new baby," whined a high school girl. I shared with her a verse that surprised me. What a discovery! The perfect verse for an attitude adjustment, including a reward! "Whatever you do, do it with all your heart, as work for the Lord and not for men, for you know that it is from the Lord that you are going to get your pay in the form of an inheritance; so keep on serving Christ the Lord."² We can wash dishes, change diapers, put up with a yelling boss or make lemonade out of a "lemon" experience-- for Him. Have you waited in vain for a "thank you" that doesn't come? Imagine doing the task now for Jesus!

Attitudes can't stay inside

Wrong attitudes are primarily against the nature and person of God. When we have something against God, His character and Scriptural promises are junked to the side-- to our hurt, and that of others. A negative viewpoint will affect our future and even change it (Prov. 23:7)! Our attitude rarely remains hidden; it jumps out of our mouths. It is an x-ray image of our heart made public (Matt.15:18). Some of our attitudes are habitual, cultivated since childhood. We don't recognize their deadly pollution until we're confronted. For example, I was the pastor officiating over a wedding rehearsal many years ago. Surprised at the unkempt appearance of the best man that evening, I hastily uttered an unkind comment. Many years later, I discovered that a hurt had lodged in the best man's heart that night, keeping him from church for years. As soon as I learned of my error, I called to ask for forgiveness. God worked and he came to church that next week.

Learn from Israel in the wilderness

Many verses in the Bible tell of Israel's wilderness wanderings. What can I learn from these stupid, rebellious for-

mer slaves in my 21st century walk? Two verses opened my eyes: "You must stop grumbling as some of them did, and for it were destroyed by the destroying angel. These things continued to befall them as warnings to others, and they were written down for the purpose of instructing us, in whose lives the climax of the ages has been reached".... "For everything that was written in the earlier times was written for our instruction, so that by our patient endurance and through the encouragement the Scriptures bring we might continuously cherish our hope" (1 Cor. 10:10-11; Rom.15:4, William's Trans.). Reading from the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy, I began to see that it was Israel's attitudes, not their enemies, which destroyed them.

Recall with me the great potential these people had:

- The Children of Israel had one of the greatest leaders of all time: Moses.
- God gave them a perfect environment: "aircon" in the day with a cloud, and warmth and light every night.
- They had abundant food, without plowing, and millions of rich, virgin acres.

All they had to do was trust and obey God, and have it all! But they failed!

James MacDonald, pastor-teacher in Chicago, is the author of **my book of the year read, "Lord, Change My Attitude Before It's Too Late."**³ I'm indebted to several ideas from him here. He points to five common attitude problems Israel had that we also need to face and exchange. The "killer" attitudes are: **doubting God, complaining, covetousness, being critical, and rebellion.** I, too, must plead guilty to committing these wilderness sins.

1. The Doubting Attitude

Israel's 2 million people spent 40 years in what is described as a "waste-howling wilderness" because they doubted God. It's scary! Over a million people died while they were "God's chosen

people." They modeled a disastrous attitude problem. They weren't on drugs, getting drunk, or into pornography. No mafia or crooked politicians. Their personal attitudes destroyed them as well as all persons in their families over 20 years of age. Mark this horror verse about God's quick trip plan for them into the promised land, "There are 11 days journey from Horeb by way of Mt. Seir, unto Kadeshbarnea" (Deut. 1:2). It took one night to free Israel from centuries of Egypt slavery. Then they needed just eleven days to cross over to THEIR land. However, verse 3 reveals what ended up happening: "And it came to pass in the fortieth year..." It took one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but it took 40 years to get Egypt out of Israel. God got them OUT to take them IN to the Promised Land; instead, they doubted.

We have the same Holy God today. He's a God of love, but he's also a sin-hating God. Before we continue, let's observe a principle we're going to use with each of these struggle and sin issues, these attitude disasters. The 5 deadly poison potions can be neutralized if we repent and substitute! Let's look at each common attitude and learn: **Victory is never gained by suppression, but by substitution.**

In Deuteronomy 1, twelve spies were sent to evaluate the land and its people. Forty days later the men brought their report. Caleb and Joshua said, in essence, "It is a great land, loaded with milk and honey. We can win any battle. God has promised He would fight for us." Ten other spies also reported that the land was good. But the people?! Well, they are GIANTS! We can't win. God's promises meant nothing to these heads of families. The 10 spies saw only giants. Two men, however, saw God. Ten men said, "They are too big to hit." Two men said, "They're too big to miss!" The ten spies' attitude of doubt brought wilderness and death to their families. The two spies' attitude was seasoned with the words of God; they got the Promised Land.



We win over the doubt attitude by faith, substituting the promises of God. We memorize the promises of God, and see every situation through the filter of faith. "Without faith it's impossible to please Him..." We are to "walk by faith, not by sight." "Faith cometh... by the word of God."⁴ God has a promise in His Word for every problem, person, or pressure in your life. Search the Scriptures for His verse to you. Then, glue the promise to the problem!

2. The Complaining Attitude

"And when the people complained it displeased the Lord... and his anger was kindled and the fire of the Lord... consumed them." Gripe, groan, yap, bleed, hiss, whine. Do we complain about the economy? How about your boss or the company? Your church, neighbors, or relatives? God hates it. He slapped my heart recently with a verse I memorized, "Don't grumble against each other brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door" (James 5:9, NIV). Notice who is listening on the other side of your door as you gripe!

We are to substitute thanksgiving for complaining. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men; for he satisfies the longing souls and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psa. 107:8,9). Purpose to cultivate a thankful attitude. My wife, Clemmie, highlights something daily for which she is thankful. She has every physical reason to gripe, challenged by a foot problem which makes it necessary for her to walk with a cane when outdoors, shopping or at church. Yet she constantly sees things for which to praise God.

Being thankful is essential. In Luke 17:12-13 there were 10 leprous men shouting "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" Jesus told the men to show themselves to the priest. As they ran obediently, each was miraculously healed. Only one turned back, fell at Jesus' feet, and gave thanks to Him. To this despised Samaritan Jesus replied,

"Stand up, your faith has made you well...was no one found to return and give glory to God except this stranger?" Make a list of 10 things for which you're thankful today, and share it.

3. The Criticism Attitude

In Numbers 12, Moses' older sister and brother, Miriam and Aaron, decided they were also capable of leading. After all, she had put baby Moses in the basket. When they criticized Moses, God called an immediate conference. Miriam was instantly leprous! Aaron confessed, "We have sinned!" Complaining is usually about things while criticism is more specifically about people. I was convicted of a critical attitude about a professor whom I felt wasn't ethical. The Lord then led me to talk to him directly. Oh no! But I was safe; I never saw him. Months later I encountered him at a convention. The Lord whispered, "Ask forgiveness." I caught him on an escalator and asked, "Would you forgive me for my attitude problem?" "Yes" was his kind answer.

Let's substitute love for criticism. To keep this in balance, we are commanded to "exhort one another daily... lest any of you be hardened from the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). We may, in love, "exhort" to help a believer keep from a major mistake. However, in the minor things we learn to hold our tongue until the person is open to us. Ask: Is it true? Is it the right time to speak? Can I say it in love?

4. The Covetous Attitude

Stealing on the job costs over \$400 billion a year!⁵ Think of this: if you covet in your heart, God considers this stealing. James MacDonald defines "covetousness" in four ways: **1) It's wanting wrong things. 2) It wants right things for the wrong reasons. 3) It wants right things at the wrong time. 4) Lastly, it's wanting right things, but wanting them in the wrong amounts.**⁶ In Numbers 11:4-10 God reports that thousands of people "yielded to intense cravings" for meat (v. 4, NKJV). They whined for meat--and it was contagious. If you focus on an object, you'll soon yield and covet. God

responded, giving them quail 3 feet deep, for miles! And the gluttons got sick and died.

The Apostle Paul reveals that the mind is the place where attitudes are formed or dissolved. "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity, every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). At the root of covetousness is a rejection of God's love, provision and promises of meeting all our needs. We must substitute a contentment attitude for coveting. I've traveled to many under-developed nations. Though people have so little, the Christians are usually so thankful. The believers I met in Cuba had never eaten beef; most foods were rationed and income was about \$12 a month. However, I recall the praise singing and joy in the faces of so many! Paul exhorts: "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6). Jesus tells us that having food and clothes, we should be content (Matt. 6). Paul said, "...for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances" (Phil. 4:11). Pray with me, "Father, teach me to have a contented spirit, like Jesus."

5. The Rebellious Attitude

In Numbers 16 we have an incident called Korah's Rebellion against a wise, humble, 90 year old Moses. God responded to the rebels by opening the ground and they all dropped into hell. Later in the chapter others griped against Moses. God's fire destroyed them. Still others didn't learn from these judgments and a plague took out 15,000 rebels. Ouch! How tragic that we don't learn cause-effect basics from the stupidity of others.

The Word says: "...Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice... For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry..." (1 Sam. 15: 22,23). We conquer rebellion when we substitute submission for it. A wise leader told me, years before I'd earned any

leader roll, that God trusts his leadership to great followers. Our Lord Jesus modeled servanthood daily. Read his testimony: "...I then your Master and Teacher, wash your feet..." (Jn. 13:13-14). "But I am among you as one that serves" (Luke 22:27). "The son of man came not to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 20:28). God has chosen to link me with men mighty for the Lord where I've learned, sometimes in painful growth, those needed lessons of **choosing** to submit, again and again. Got a difficult leader in your life? God regularly brings authorities into our lives who can stimulate spiritual growth, if we allow it. "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. 21:1).

Do you want to get out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land? Will you choose to substitute the servant-heart for rebellion, contentment for covetousness, love for criticism, thankfulness for griping, and faith for doubting? Begin today to substitute the Lordship of Christ over all of these attitudes. **Choose a happy new year!**

¹Fleming H. Revell, Spire Books, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967), p. 27.
²Colossians 3:23-24, Williams Translation. ³Moody Press, (Chicago, Illinois).
⁴Hebrews 11:6; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 10:17. ⁵MacDonald, p. 79.
⁶MacDonald, p. 80.

Family News

and Prayer Concerns



Waylon is giving input six times yearly in trustee meetings with the International Mission Board and serving on their South America Committee. Waylon taught in South America twice this year. In 2009, he's teaching at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Texas, February 23-26, in the practical theology department. His host is Dr. Mike Wilson. **Clemmie** continues keeping the Missions Unlimited office running, and thrills at supporting international missions this time of year! We are beyond words with joy at the birth and growth of our first grandchild, **Gwendolyn Bess**, who is 4 months old. Pastor **Bruce and Heather** will catch up on sleep sometime in '09! Our family church, LifePoint Community in North Tampa, is in Outreach Magazine as number 18 out of the 100 fastest growing churches in USA this year, having baptized 570. **Martha** is branching out, doing catalytic campus ministry in Sevilla, Spain since September. She's in Tampa during January to support her dad by editing a new manuscript which he's writing.

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