

Attitudes of a Christian Leader

by K.P. Yohannan

A Christian leader must cultivate a good attitude by depending on God's strength and guidance, rather than relying on their own abilities and resources.

Duration: 24:58

Scripture: Jeremiah 17:9, Matthew 6:33, 2 Timothy 2:1-15

Topics: "Christian Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, Brother K.P. Yohannan focuses on the attitudes of Christian leaders, specifically drawing a distinction between outer habits and inner attitudes. He emphasizes the importance of dependence on the Lord as the source of strength, evaluation, and guidance. The sermon is based on the book of 2 Timothy, where Paul writes to Timothy about being a godly Christian leader. Brother K.P. highlights the need for Christian leaders to have the right perception and outlook on the work of the Lord, and to be strong in the grace of God.

Transcript

Being Strong in the Grace of God, next on The Road to Reality with Brother K.P. Yohannan. Welcome to The Road to Reality with Brother K.P. Yohannan, the Ministry of Gospel for Asia. Today we're going to bring you a message in Second Timothy on the attitudes of the Christian leader.

We'll learn the outlook of the Christian leader on the work of the Lord and how to be strong in the grace of God. And Brother K.P. wants to draw a distinction between outer habits and inner attitudes. So join us as we turn to Second Timothy for today's broadcast of The Road to Reality.

So when we come to Chapter 2, in this marvelous letter Paul wrote to a young man named Timothy explaining about being a godly Christian leader, a servant of the Lord. In this he deals with the attitude of a Christian leader. The two words we can keep in mind, one is habits, then attitude.

Habits is something that, if you have a habit, that is something that you can imitate and copy. You know, like people join the army or navy or military or whatever. You know, the guy has long spring hair and he wears all the colorful check shirts and all whatever it is.

But the moment he joins the army, the same day he goes and sits on the high chair, the barber comes with this clipper and his whole fabulous movie star hair is gone. Then the next thing you know, the fellow goes

and puts on his uniform. So what happens? Immediately he falls in line with the rest of the thousand soldiers.

It is something that you can copy. Habit always has to do with the behavior. Behavior has to do with your input.

You are exerting yourself to make a choice to be a certain thing for a certain time or circumstances or entity. So you can copy behavior. Habit in the long run is permanent, but even then it can be mixed up.

But attitude is more of a second nature of the individual. It is part of their life. It has become internal.

It's working out of the reality and values and principles that one has. So in chapter 1, Paul talks about the inner stable reality of being a follower of Christ, a servant of the Lord and leader, the basic deep root character. But now, how does it work out? How do you project it? What is your attitude? The attitude is the living out of what is in you, the part of your makeup, your thinking.

It is not just copying behavior and being like anybody else, because that monkey is doing it, this monkey is doing it. You know, there's a saying, monkey see, monkey do. That is not what it is.

It is you are always having this fixed response to people, situations, good or bad, whatever. Your attitude is sober, a good attitude. Now, it also has to do with our outlook to things.

We see the world not as it is, but as we are. You see, you look at somebody and you make evaluations based on not what that person is thinking. Here is a person who has hippie long hair and unwashed face and wearing some dirty clothes and the first thing you think, first thing I think, my goodness, what is wrong with this fellow? He is a hippie or what? Drug addict or what? But the truth of matter, the guy may have gone to university and got his PhD and was a professor.

He gave up all those things because he is tired of this phony plastic materialistic living and he took on himself the form of a beggar wearing these clothes and don't care about his body, but he spent five, six hours in prayer before Jesus. He's a devout follower of Jesus, fall in love with Jesus every day and he cares about nobody, nothing in the whole world. But what did I think about him? A drug addict.

What is wrong with this rascal? How did he come to this meeting? Because I interpreted his life the way I see it. My value, my understanding, my evaluation, I used to explain. It's like if I'm wearing a glass that is now colored with yellow or red or pink, I look, I see you pink.

You know the story about the man who had this cow that he tried his best for the cow to eat dry grass, hay, and the cow wouldn't eat it because the cow always ate green grass. In the end, the farmer was smart, so he got a pair of glass for the cow and put green lens on it and the cow looked at the dried up grass, the hay, and saw it to be green grass and the cow ate it. So we see others through what we are wearing and what we are wearing, our cultural background, our upbringing, our teaching from our pastors or our family or our specific rigid or liberated background.

You see, this is how it is, and we judge and make conclusions. But when you talk about attitude, it is not just we live with any paradigm, any attitude and say, well, that is my attitude. No, your attitude and your paradigm may not be correct.

A good attitude is one that investigates and studies and research and say, I want to make sure that my paradigm, my perception, my understanding is correct. So how do you do that? You take into you principles, values, glasses, colors that help you to neutralize extremes and come into balance with God's truth, which is always accurate. That is what here Paul is trying to do with Timothy.

We will begin with verse one. Notice, he simply says, you then my son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. If you are looking at the NIV Bible, I don't know what translation he got, I'm sure it's all the same.

You then my son. Literally, that verse reads more or less like this. You, therefore, because of this my son.

New American Standard version has a better explanation of that. You, therefore, my son, be strong. Again, let me remind you of the four places where Paul uses these two monosyllables, two tiny words in the Greek language.

Yes, Timothy, the whole world may go astray, all these different things, but for you, you be different. Let others do whatever, but you, for you, be different. That is still the call of the Lord.

So, what must be our attitude, our perception when you look at God's work? How do we respond to it? With what we must respond to it? What color of glass I must wear? What nature of outlook I must have to the work, the one who is involved with it, my responsibility, how do I do it? And for our work as Gospelfagia and the movement, what God is doing today, I think it is so crucial that we get a better understanding of how this thing works. First of all, dependence on the Lord and him alone, that God is our source. That's the first thing Timothy must keep in mind.

As a Christian leader, young or old, may this be the first attitude we have, no matter what, my dependence, the source of information, the source of strength, the source of evaluation, the source by which I judge other people, evaluate their life and ministry and good and bad, whatever else, is not based on my culture, somebody else views, some commentary, some magazine. No, it is the Lord who continually gives me the input to understand his thinking, his ways, his strength to handle it. Very simple but profound if we understand it.

Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. In Jesus, his grace, his strength. Our natural tendency is to try and solve our problems in our own strength and wisdom, but that only leads to trouble.

We must depend upon God and him alone as we travel through life. This is the road to reality and we're addressing the attitudes of a Christian leader as described in 2 Timothy. Now before we dive back into K.P. Yohannan's message, I'd like to draw your attention to a book that ties in quite nicely.

It's called Against the Wind. K.P. will challenge you to consider how well you're running the race and wouldn't it be nice to say along with the Apostle Paul, I have fought the good fight, I've finished the race and have kept the faith. There are sure to be a few obstacles, but this book will help you get over them and finish strong.

Order online at winasia.org. Again, you can go to winasia.org, Against the Wind by K.P. Yohannan, or in Canada, visit gospelforasia.ca. As we return to Brother K.P., he reminds us that we are engaged in spiritual warfare and rely on the strength and grace that the Lord will give. Paul, how many times declared this for himself? When I'm weak, then I am strong. I can do all things through Christ who continually pour his strength into me, Paul said.

The heart is deceitful all things and desperately wicked. Who can understand it? Jeremiah chapter 17 verse 9. Cursed be that individual who lean on the arm of the flesh. Naturally, you and I, we have the tendency first response, the first foremost response to anything from me, from you, is always how I can do it, what I must do with it.

I get a headache, the first thing, where is aspirin? You get sick, the first thought, where is the nearest doctor? When somebody offends you, first thing, why did he do that? He didn't understand me. It's me, I, what I can do. It is not I got a headache, I need to talk to the Lord first.

The Lord is my healer. No. Need money? The Lord is my source.

No, no, no, we don't think about it. That is the way humans work. You and I are living not in peacetime, it is war.

Who is warring against us? Demons, not one or two, but millions and billions. As a matter of fact, when you took the train, a whole bunch of demons traveled with you because Satan is not omniscient. Satan cannot be everywhere.

His hierarchy cannot be everywhere. Only God can be everywhere at the same time. So he has agents because they are very eager to hear what's going on here.

Really. The unseen world is more real than the seen world because it is unseen world that created the seen world, the Bible says. We think tangible is less important than abstract, but abstract is more important than tangible because it was created by the unseen world.

That's what the Bible says. So demons are not just illusions. They are very powerful, intelligent beings.

So who is warring against you? Jesus heard the voice from Peter. Jesus, please don't even think about it. Don't let it happen to you.

And Jesus said, get behind me, Satan. You seek not the things of God, but of man. So when you think about quitting the ministry, you think you just cooked it up because you ate too much rice last night or chapati, a bad dream.

No, no. It's demons. When you think about cursing your wife and you don't love her and you don't want to live with her, who is doing it? No, it is the devil who is doing it.

When you have problems in the family, in the right, the ministry, things are going on, you have problems, sickness and headache and bitterness and anguish and all kind of problems, who is doing it? It's not your neighbors. It is the devil doing it. The devil is behind all this nonsense.

We don't understand this. So we start taking the flesh and angry and upset and we fight. This is the way humans work.

A Christian leader always is tempted to use his money power, his influence, his connections, his power and authority. Hey, listen, I am the leader in charge. You better keep your mouth shut and do what I tell you to do.

If not, I will report on you and I'll kick you out. See, that is a pit of hell. He is borrowing strength from the position God gave to him and attacking God's work.

You see, that's how the devil does it. He never thinks about going to fast for a day for the brother or the family to solve the problem. He now uses his title.

I am the state coordinator. I am the principal. I am the leader.

You better do. I tell you what, if I find out one person like that, we should get him out of the ministry and leadership right away. Because this is actually nothing to do with God or anything of the kingdom.

So you are a leader in God's work. I'm a leader in God's work. What kind of leaders are we? Are we always falling back on the arm of the flesh, energy and things we can do? I tell you, serving God is more than being clever and crafty and smart.

As a matter of fact, one of my prayers to God, God, please, please never let me be so clever in doing your work. I want to be dumb little child. Mistakes we made, but I didn't want to be clever.

I'm so afraid of people who are clever because I know in the end they will destroy everything. God has no place in their life, in their ministry. So what am I saying? Timothy, 30 years long I ran the race and fought this fight.

I don't want to be clever. I want to remain innocent, little childlike, depending on the Lord and on no one else. You know that scripture in Chronicles, some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we'll trust in the name of the Lord.

I think that's in Psalm somewhere also, I'm not sure. See, our attitude to money, our infrastructure, our accomplishment kind of tells where is our dependence. Paul talked about this treasure in earthen vessel.

It's not gold and silver and bronze and steel. No, this vessel is made of clay. It is made from the most worthless dust and in this vessel is the wonderful treasure so that the glory may not be of the earthen vessel but of the Lord, Paul says.

Do you recognize that? The responsibility God gave you, the leadership, the teaching opportunity to be helpful to other brothers, to serve. Do you understand you are not a gold vessel. In it you have nothing.

It is an earthen vessel and what belongs to that vessel in it is not yours. It is the Lord who committed that to you all from him, for him, through him and for his glory, not for you, not for me. Sometimes we are saying, you know, I did it.

I'm the one who, you know, one of the funniest things my wife ever said about me in one of the large Christian leaders meeting, pastors meeting, 1500 people. She was giving a testimony and about God's grace and glory and all that and she right in the middle said, if the Lord didn't call my husband to be a missionary, a preacher, he would have been taking care of buffaloes. But absolute truth, if it was not the Lord who called me to serve him from a tiny village 14 kilometers from here, half the year the whole village underwater, no road, no electricity, no gas, no car, nothing ever come to that village during those days and the Lord should pick me out of that village, take me to North India and call me to serve him.

So now what I must say, oh I did it, this and that. You know what, it is easy to preach and teach but I'm telling you, it takes God's grace to live with humility. He cannot create it and buy it.

In the work of God, one of the dangers Christian workers face is when God does something through them, all of a sudden they begin to take glory. I did it, I am gifted, I am talented, it is my position, it is my

decisions, it is my cleverness, it is my ingenuity, it is my talents. The Lord should make you sick and lay you there somewhere in the hospital for a few months to find out how great you are.

So Timothy, you are young, you are sick, you are weak, you got a messed up family background, a Jew and a Gentile father and mother. Timothy, you are a low caste. That's what it is all about.

He was a rejected caste. Did you know that? The Greeks, the Gentiles said, you are a betrayer. The Jewish people said, you are a dog.

That is what Timothy was. From the least and the lowest class in the society. The rejected, the outcast, that is what Timothy's family is from.

If you didn't know that, you study it. Timothy, you are so full of complex. It is good, it is wonderful.

Paul, what is wrong with you? Being the least and the lowest and the outcast and the worst and then no qualities in him to be doing anything. Yes, Paul says, it is wonderful. Why? So that God will bring all the glory to himself through the wonders he will do through this weak earthen vessel.

Timothy, I am the one who was born to a millionaire. Timothy, I am the one who got the PhD from the best university. Timothy, I am the one who was one of the members of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council in the nation.

Timothy, I am the one with sanguine pragmatic temperament and ability. Timothy, I am the one with type A personality, born leader. Timothy, I am the philosopher, the thinker, the theologian.

But Timothy, it didn't work. For three years alone, I was sitting wondering what to do with my life. And then the Lord spoke to me and said, Paul, I want to use you, but you must give up all these things and become a zero.

So Timothy, I decided to take all my degrees, all my positive background, all the abilities, all these skills and talents and temperament, which was all wonderful. And I wrote on it, cow dung. Have you seen people hanging their certificates on the walls from this university, from this college? Have you ever seen people taking cow dung and dry it and frame it nicely? And under there it says, the cow dung, right there saying K.P.O and then cow dung.

Anyone do that? No. But that's exactly what Paul did. So if you walk into Paul's office, you will find him sitting there, scribbling away, partially blind.

I am one of those people who believe that Paul had very difficulty with his eyesight. And you look over, because he just came from somebody else's office, you know, the high priest and all the theologians and all the mighty Christian leaders and you all over the wall, MA, PhD, DD, all these degrees hanging all over there. And you are so impressed by all these things.

Then you walk into this Paul's office, you know, a man kind of sitting there scribbling away something and on the wall his degree, cow dung. Who warned him? Timothy, that's what I did. And recognized in me dwells no good thing, Romans 7. And Timothy, you didn't have to go through this kind of mess that I went through.

Well, you've been listening to The Road to Reality with Brother K.P. Ohanian, founder and president of Gospel for Asia. And we've been listening to a message from K.P. that we're calling The Attitudes of a

Christian Leader. You know, this study reminds me of K.P.'s book.

It's called Against the Wind. Doesn't it feel at times like we're running against the wind in this lifelong Christian race? You know, facing the pressures of a culture, the attacks of the enemy, they can be difficult, but we can win by the grace of God. Learn how to run and win and finish strong as you read Against the Wind.

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