

IT HAS TO DO WITH THE ATTITUDE

My family often goes out for brunch with my mother after church on Sundays. We usually alternate between 3 or 4 different places and have become familiar faces to some of the waitresses. This past Sunday the waitress who seated us marvelled at my mother being in such fine health for being 93. (Yes, she got my mom's age wrong by one year, but I will get back to that later). She proceeded to tell us how her mother is 93 as well and still spends her winters living in Florida. After telling us this she said, "I think it is because our mothers have such a good attitude toward life and living that they are doing so well for their ages." I could not agree with her comment more. It is so true how a person's attitude can make a difference with how they approach life and living.

The waitress' comment made me think back to some of the mid-week messages I wrote during the pandemic about how it was beginning to affect some people's attitudes toward life. At the beginning of the pandemic, we were all very much supportive for the most part of the lockdowns and measures that needed to be taken since this was so new and unknown to us. As things progressed, we began to see how the restrictions were beginning to affect some people's attitudes. I sometimes commented in my messages how we were seeing more incidents of people getting angry and upset with others in stores and parking lots. These kinds of things happened before, but they were becoming more common place in our new reality dealing with the pandemic.

I also wrote a few times in messages how these changes in attitudes were resulting in more divisions and splits happening amongst family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbours. If we are being honest, one of the things the pandemic has done is change some people's attitudes in ways not for the better.

The season of Christmas is another time when we see people's behaviours and attitudes not always change for the better. It is at this time of year we will hear of altercations happening in parking lots at the mall as drivers fight over the same parking space. We also hear about unkind words exchanged between shoppers in some stores. Store clerks and cashiers also notice customers seeming to be ruder and less pleasant at this time of year. We

have come to expect this change in some people's behaviour and attitude due to the stress and busyness of this season. While it may be expected, I pray that it does not become more commonplace in this or in any season. We need to remember we would not have Christmas to celebrate if Jesus had the wrong attitude with respect to coming here to be our Saviour.

It is so amazing to consider the attitude our Heavenly Father had in order to come to us that very first Christmas as the Christ child. The beginning of John's Gospel tells us about Jesus' divinity:

**In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.
(John 1:1-3)**

John knew it was important for his readers to understand that even though Jesus took upon Himself full humanity and lived as a man, He never ceased to be the eternal God who has always existed. John also pointed out the attitude Christ assumed in order to come into the very world He created as the Christ child:

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. (John 1:14)

We learn from John how Jesus' attitude was one of unfailing love and faithfulness in order for Him to leave heaven and all of His divine privileges there, to become our Saviour and one day die for our sins. We can easily forget how by coming into the world as He did, Jesus gave up eternity for a short time where He was not bound by time, nor subjected to sin and temptation. By having this attitude of love, compassion and care for us, Jesus gave us the gift that very first Christmas of coming into this world to be our Saviour.

Just as the waitress on Sunday said, our attitudes can make all the difference to life and how we live. Jesus' attitude made all the difference that first Christmas, and every day during His time here on earth. I mentioned earlier how the pandemic has resulted in some people's attitudes changing them in a way not for the better. The season of Christmas sometimes has this same

affect on people. Being reminded of this possibility it is important for us to **ask ourselves if we have noticed any changes in our attitudes toward others and life** in general as a result of the pandemic. We might want to also check to see if there has been any change in our attitudes since Advent has begun. If we are not sure, the best thing we can do is ask somebody close to us. They may be seeing it. If it is the case, then **let's ask Jesus to help us change by blessing us with the same attitude that He had that first Christmas and always**. By letting Jesus help us develop an attitude of unfailing love and compassion toward others, we will enjoy life so much more, and people will like being with us as well. Having the right attitude is not only the key to living but an ingredient to Christ-like living as well.

I cannot end this message without sharing how the waitress said my mother was 93. When she left, my mom turned to me and said, "I can't believe she thought I was 93 and not 92. She added a year to my life." I thought for a minute my mother was going to give me some attitude for not defending her age to the waitress. A mother's unfailing love won out and I avoided some attitude for not defending her proper age to the waitress. Having the right attitude does make a difference to the quality of our living even at Sunday brunch.

Keep Safe and God Bless - Pastor Dean