

# How to Develop and Maintain a *Positive* Christian Attitude

I realize it may come as a shock to many, but I'm not the most **"positive"** person around.

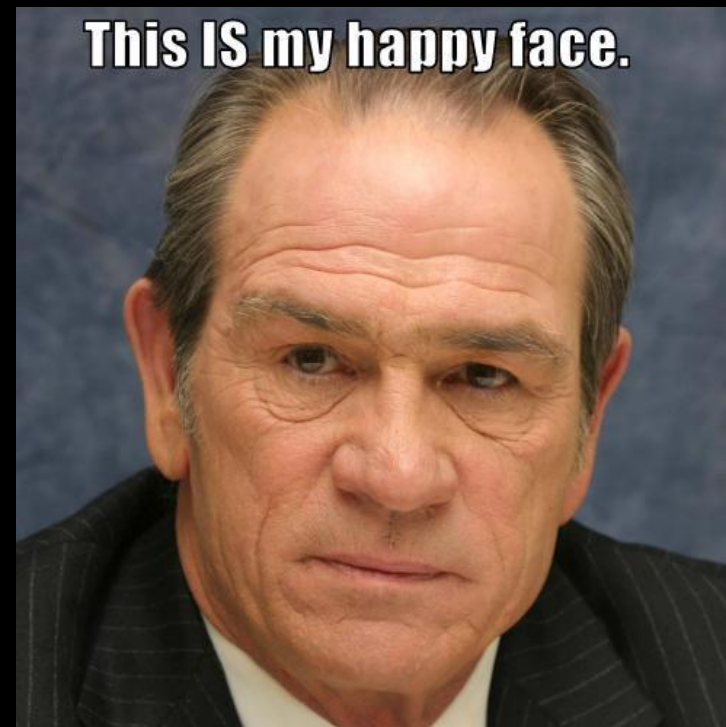
There are even some who have used words such as **"difficult"** **"obstinate"** **"crotchety"** **"stubborn"** and **"hard-headed"** (you get the point) to describe me...

But **"positive"** **"upbeat"** and **"full of sunshine"** are rarely used to describe me (for some strange reason that completely escapes me!).

Such reminds me of a Tommy Lee Jones line in one movie 

All of which is to say this lesson is as much, if not more, for me than anyone else!

This IS my happy face.



# *Developing and Maintaining a Positive Attitude*

- We either control and determine our attitude, or it controls and determines us.
- We may not be able to control all of our circumstances, but we choose how we respond to those circumstances through our “attitude.”
- One of the definitions of “**attitude**” has to do with “**the orientation of an aircraft’s axes**” or, “**the angle of an aircraft in relation to the direction of the airflow or to the horizontal plane.**” (Encarta English Dictionary)
- This is exactly right! If we think of our attitude as the wing of an airplane, and the circumstances of life as the force of the wind against it, we either *ascend* or *descend* depending on our *angle of attack*- our attitude! So, which way are you “moving the stick”?

# *Developing and Maintaining a Positive Attitude*

- **Nothing is more important in your walk of faith than your attitude:**
  - **It will make you the Christian you ought to be, or it will break you down into a bitter, angry, and malicious servant of Satan**
  - **It will heal you or hurt you**
  - **It will bring you happiness in the midst of tribulation, or misery in the midst of “success”**
  - **Outside of your decision to follow Christ in the first place, there is no decision more important to your well being both here and in eternity than choosing your attitude**
- **“Yes,” genetics and environment can influence your choice of attitude, but neither determine it- You do!**

# *Developing and Maintaining a Positive Attitude*

How do we determine our Attitude?

## 1. Always look for the good in every situation

- a. Paul was incarcerated when writing Philippians
- b. But found the *good* there too, 1:12-18
- c. His good attitude about the *present* allowed him to have a great attitude regarding the *future*, vv.19-26
- d. This doesn't mean that we refuse to acknowledge or even accept the *bad*, it just means that we choose not to dwell on or in it, 4:4-8.

# *Developing and Maintaining a Positive Attitude*

**How do we determine our Attitude?**

**2. Look for the good in others, John 1:47**

- a. Certainly, we should help one another to see or recognize and correct sin, cf. Jas.5:19-20
- b. But in our assessment of one another, look for the good, 1Cor.13:6-7
- c. Then express those positive feelings toward them, Phil.1:3-11; 4:1
- d. Doing these things consistently- until they become habit for us, will also influence our attitude regarding ourselves, and everything else that occurs in our lives

# *Developing and Maintaining a Positive Attitude*

How do we determine our Attitude?

## **3. Determine to take an attitude of love and goodwill toward others. Phil.2:1-11**

- a. Notice some key words from v.1...  
*encouragement, consolation, fellowship, affection, and compassion.* If these aren't key to your attitude, they need to be
- b. If you're a *loner* and *not really a people person*, you *can* change your attitude and activity, v.2
- c. Replace *selfishness* with *selflessness* , v.3a
- d. Develop humility, v.3b
- e. Always test your attitude toward every situation and everyone with *Christ-likeness*, vv.5-11

# *Developing and Maintaining a Positive Attitude*

## **Remember:**

- the importance of attitude: It determines your “**angle of attack**” to every circumstance and situation in life.
- that although genetics and environment can affect your attitude, they do not determine it- unless you allow them to do so.
- that you get to choose your attitude- do so wisely by
  1. **Always looking for the good in every situation**
  2. **Always looking for the good in others**
  3. **Determining to take an attitude of love and goodwill toward others**

