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# On Good Ground



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## The Issues of Life

There's a modern-day pearl that says "our attitude determines our altitude." That's a cute way of saying that the spirit with which we go about a thing will determine how successful we will be in doing the thing. This is certainly true, and has its basis not in the creative mind of some motivational speaker, but in the timeless wisdom of God.

In Proverbs 4:23, the Bible says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Today, our lives are filled with issues – marital issues, family issues, health issues, job issues, financial issues – you name it. We have issues! How successfully we deal with those issues will not be determined by our talent or some external resource, but rather by the attitude we bring to the moment. It's this simple: if we bring a bad attitude to the table, we decrease the likelihood of a positive outcome and increase the probability of a negative one. Yet how many times do we have a rotten attitude about this, that or the other? And then we wonder why our lives are lacking in quality and contentment. It's not because of what we *don't have*, but because of what we *do have*: a bad attitude.

What does a bad attitude look like? A bad attitude has a wrinkly forehead and a scrunched up nose; it has a stiff back and an even stiffer neck; it has arms defiantly crossed and a set of "I-wish-you-would" eyes; it has pursed lips and sucking teeth. Bad attitudes are slow to get on board, but quick to argue the point. They're expert at seeing and speaking the problem, but lack the talent to come up with a solution. Bad attitudes find fault and want "nothin' to do with nobody." Bad attitudes are problem children, the seed of Chucky, Bebe's kids on steroids. And they're right here among us – even in the church!

How can a born-again, redeemed from the curse of the law Christian have a bad attitude? How can an "I can do all things through Christ" saint be so negative? How can a person who God always causes to triumph in Christ be such a loser? Simple: by not guarding their heart against the evil manipulations of the devil and their own flesh.

When God tells us to keep or to guard our hearts, He is giving us the key to success and prosperity in this life. Things will not always go right for us. In fact, during the course of our lives, many things will go wrong; sometimes terribly wrong. However, if we have the right attitude toward life, we will successfully navigate the rough seas and troubling waters and find a place of smooth sailing in God.

Having a right attitude starts with being in right standing with God. If you know God and obey His Word, your mind and your heart get renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16). You develop a different perspective and speak with a different vocabulary. You begin to understand that the problems of this life are temporary, while the promises of God are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18). No matter what comes your way, you realize that you're a child of the King, so you boldly rush into the throne room of grace to get the help you need (Hebrews 4:16) instead of complaining or sitting around like a bump on a log. Christians with right attitudes are refreshing. They're winners who make great ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20), Who is the ultimate winner! Christians with the proper attitude are blessed above measure!

In what camp do you find yourself today? The grumbling, "nothing-ever-turns-out-right, why-does-this-always-have-to-happen-to-me" camp? Or are you an overcomer who can run through a troop and leap over a wall through the power of God (Psalm 18:19)? The answer lies not in what you say with your mouth, but by what you allow into your heart. Make the decision to fill your heart every day with the things of God. Diligently guard your heart from every corrupting influence. As you refuse the things of the devil and feed on the goodness of God, you will see the issues of your life in a new light: as an opportunity to grow and to overcome and shine as a child of our great and mighty King!