

205. Survive The Storm By Arland Steen

Introduction

I have a friend who pastors a church in South Carolina. He told a story recently of an event that happened to him in 1989. He was flying a plane using regular radar. In 1989, neither GPS or weather satellite was available. He needed to penetrate a line of thunderstorms. When he asked the controller for permission to deviate and go around a storm cell, he didn't know it was hiding an even bigger cell behind it. He did what pilots are never supposed to do. He flew right into a massive storm.

The plane shook so violently, he couldn't read the instruments. Within seconds, he was jerked 1,400 feet above his assigned altitude. At that moment he heard words from his instructors: "If you ever get into that spot forget your altitude and just remember your attitude."

The controller spoke calmly (like the Holy Spirit does to us in a storm), "When you can, turn about 15 degrees to the left. You should be out of the storm in four minutes." He followed instructions and popped out of the storm.

He said, "You never read about me in the papers the following day."

Ten years later, John F. Kennedy, Jr. piloted a fatal plane crash off Martha's Vineyard. It affected him on several levels. One was this. Exactly one year prior, he had flown that same route. He remembered thinking as he flew it, "You can't tell which end is up out here, even on a clear day!" With the water and haze, the color of the ocean went right up into the sky. The National Transportation Safety Board's accident report noted that other pilots flying that night reported no visual horizon while flying over the water because of haze. The report listed Kennedy's flight training and stated the plane did not malfunction. The probable cause was his failure to maintain control of the airplane during a descent over the water, which was a result of spatial disorientation.

My friend said the primary difference that caused him to survive is that he had more training in recovering from "bad attitudes" than JFK, Jr. had.

One primary flight instrument is the Attitude Indicator (A1). It shows the position of the plane in relation to the horizon. When the wings on the gauge align with the artificial horizon, the aircraft is in level flight. With just a glance, the pilot can tell if the plane's nose is pointed up or down and if the aircraft is turning. It is critical because the inner ear can be tricked, and the pilot can't tell whether the plane is going up or down. In attitude training, pilots are trained to recover from unusual attitudes in flight. It can mean life or death. A pilot must be able to control the plane's attitude to survive.

The parallels to our lives is remarkable! We must also be able to control our attitudes to navigate life successfully.

Five Principles (for developing a healthy attitude)

- 1) Choose to think positive.
Colossians 3:2 (New King James): *Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*
- 2) Practice learning and growing.
- 3) Find teachers and be teachable.

Everyone knows that most pilots carry with them a certain level of arrogance. But did you know that the FAA actually has a list of five hazardous attitudes to which pilots are prone? They include:

- a. Anti-authority – discounting regulations as unimportant and not applicable to them
 - b. Impulsivity – a career as a pilot attracts the daring who are unafraid of risk and impulsive but doing the first thing that comes to mind instead of making thoughtful, calculated decisions is dangerous
 - c. Invulnerability – realizing you're in a dangerous career but thinking nothing will ever happen to you that is bad because you are untouchable
 - d. Machoism – people who like attention and are willing to take unnecessary risks to demonstrate their piloting skills
 - e. Resignation – giving up at the first sign of trouble in the air
- 4) Conquer fear.
- 5) Don't stop taking action.
Take actions that are in line with a great attitude.

Maintain Control

There are few things in life we have control over but we can control our attitudes.

Proverbs 19:11 (Good News Bible): *When someone wrongs you, it is a great virtue to ignore it.*

For some people *everything* is life or death. They can't ignore anything. A small pot boils quickly. What you get upset over shows the depth of your character and how big a person you are.

What does it take to upset you?

Maturity is the ability to overlook a hurt. To disregard it. To shrug it off. To play it down. The best example of this is Jesus. He was slandered, criticized, put down and misunderstood -- yet He never retaliated.

Nothing can cause you to have a bad attitude. You choose your attitude. Don't blame anything else. If you put two people in the same situation, one will have a bad attitude and the other won't.

Why? It's the way they've chosen to interpret the situation and the way they've chosen to respond to it.

Have you ever heard this, "You make me so mad!" No. Nothing *makes* you mad; you choose to get mad. You need to ask yourself when you're irritated, is it worth being upset over? Every minute that you are angry, you lose 60 seconds of happiness. You need to ask yourself, 'Is this worth giving up my happiness for?' Some things just aren't worth arguing over.

In the book Patton's Principles For Managers Who Mean It, by General George S. Patton, he says, 'Never fight a battle where you don't gain anything by winning. Know what battles to fight and know what battles aren't worth fighting.' *When someone wrongs you, it is a great virtue to ignore it.*

Colossians 3:2 (New King James): *Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*
This verse includes attitudes.

You will end up in situations you didn't see coming. Things happen around you that are out of your control. Suddenly, you're in an unusual or bad attitude. To survive life's storms, you must be able to control your attitude.

What is your gauge for a level flight in life?

Philippians 2:5 (New Living Translation): *You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.*

Your attitude is the major difference between success and failure. If you think like Jesus, you know you are more than a conqueror. The Holy Spirit is inside you and you can do all things if you choose to believe.

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