

# Delete That Attachment

By Luther Powell

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I have a statement in my newsletter that informs all my subscribers that I will not open an attachment. The statement is very emphatic in that I declare that I will under no circumstances open an attachment. And I mean exactly what it says. I WILL NOT OPEN AN ATTACHMENT.

Why am I so insistent on not opening an attachment? Because the last time I did, it cost me over three hundred dollars to have my computer repaired. I was an old "newbie" and didn't understand how a virus or worm could enter my hard drive and destroy everything. I did not even know what a virus was and was unprepared for the problems ahead. However, it did not take me long to learn and how it could make my day miserable and costly.

How did it happen? I am still in the dark about that, however, the technician who installed a new hard drive and repaired some of the other problems said that I had been attacked by a virus. He said it looked like a "boot" virus and I had received it through a disk or download. I did not know what a boot virus was or how it got into my computer. I just know I went to my computer that morning about five o'clock and when I turned it on, I could not bring up any of my files. I kept trying, but things got gradually worse.

I went into my Outlook program for my email and found that I could download my email, but later found I could not send any at all. Just an error message popped up each time. After trying for several minutes, I decided to call my ISP mail server and see if they could help me. After I explained the situation, I was told that my hard drive had probably become corrupted and I needed to get a computer technician to check it out.

The technician asked me if I had downloaded any programs. I remembered that I had received an email stating that I had won an ebook. The email contained an attachment for me to open and click on a download link. I did this and received the ebook. I later learned that I was a foolish old man, which wasn't anything new to me. I should have never downloaded the ebook or opened the attachment in the first place. This had probably delivered the virus to my hard drive and corrupted all my files.

Expensive lesson? You doggone right it was. It taught me to never, and I mean never, opened

another attachment. I have made that clear to all my family and friends. Last Summer, my brother sent me some photographs of their vacation, and I did not see them. Why? They came as an attachment and I deleted them. It upset him when I told him what I had done, but after I explained the situation, he understood. At least, I hope he did. He has not sent any more photographs.

I think some of my subscribers have tested me to see if I mean what I say, but I am not sure, because I never read an attachment. I don't care if they tell me I won the million dollar prize in Publisher's Clearinghouse, if the notice comes as an attachment, I will never know if I won or not.

At the advice of the technician, I purchased an anti-virus program and installed it. I was a little leery of that at first, but now when I start my computer, it scans the disks and files for viruses or anything else that would cause problems. I highly recommend it to every computer user. I will not list the name, because I am not advertising here, but you can find a good one by going to search and type in "Computer Virus."

Although I have the program in the computer, I still will not open an attachment. The program might go out on me or a new virus would emerge that could override the program.

I hope you never experience what I went through, but it is better to safe be and than sorry. I know you've heard that before.

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