

# THE WORD

YOUR FAMILY. YOUR HOME JAN 5, 2020

## ALL THINGS NEW

Part 1

### STAYING POSITIVE



#### WARM-UP

Probably, nothing can contribute more to the quality of our lives than a **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**. And yet, sometimes it is so easy for us to become **CRITICAL**. And we end up focusing on the **NEGATIVES**. We love to make negative comments about other people. But we hate hearing people talking about our flaws and mistakes. It's like the wife who bought her husband two (2) new neckties. He was so appreciative that he immediately went to his room and put one of them on. Then, he came out to show it to her. She took one look at him wearing the new tie and said, "Darling, What's the matter? Don't you like the other one?"

#### ONE BIG IDEA

**IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, REGARDLESS OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR LIVES, WE ARE TO BE JOYFUL, PRAYERFUL, AND GRATEFUL.**

#### STUDY (COLOSSIANS 3:12-13 ESV)

##### LEARN:

If you look hard enough, you can find something positive in almost **EVERYTHING** or **EVERYONE**. We have to realize that in the midst of all the negatives, there is still much that is good in the world, in the church, and in our lives. And we need to focus our attention and energy on what is good. Paul said in **Philippians 4:8**, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (ESV)

Solomon said in **Proverbs 23:7**, "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he (KJV)." Therefore, the things that **DOMINATE YOUR THINKING**, those things **CONTROL** the words you speak, the attitudes you have, the thought that runs in your mind, and the way you react to others. If we keep on criticizing other people, talking about their faults and mistakes, it means that you are a critical person. Their good attitude, then it means that we have a good heart and we're a good person.

#### HOW DO WE DEVELOP A POSITIVE SPIRIT?

##### DEVELOP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Paul begins by telling us that the best way to develop a positive spirit is by having a positive attitude toward our spiritual leaders. In this church, spiritual leaders work hard among us. They sacrifice time and energy to serve the Lord. We're to respect, honor, and encourage them in what they do for God. When was the last time you appreciated your **LIFE** Group Leader? Did you ever thank your Ministry Head? Have you ever said "Thank you" to the Council members, **CORE** Team members, or Pastors?

**(1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 ESV)** - It's wonderful when the church works together in harmony, where people love and respect each other. But in a world that is becoming more and more negative in its attitudes, we must be alert to the challenges we face.

Most of us don't see all the hard work that goes on. We show up on Sunday and act as if we think things just happen. But they don't. Church workers have to come early to open the building, clean the place thoroughly, turn on the air conditioning units, and prepare the communion if it's first Sunday. Kidzone Teachers have worked hard to prepare Bible lessons for children's classes. They have to make props and buy prizes for the kids. Musicians, Singers, Dancers, and Projectionists have to come here earlier than you do so that they can practice and prepare for the Praise and Worship. Programs have to be planned. The ushers have to prepare the chains and usher people to their seats. Then, we have intercessors who bathe our service and church in prayer, again and again. Why do they do that? Why do they have to sacrifice? Because today, and every Sunday, there are people present who need what Jesus is offering – the forgiveness of their sins, a fresh start in life, and the fellowship of a church family who loves and cares about each other. Our **ATTITUDE** makes all the difference. And it needs to be a positive attitude – one that projects joy, peace and harmony, a church that really loves the Lord and desires to put Him first in all things.

##### DEVELOP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER BELIEVERS

###### (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 ESV)

We need to be patient with each other. We make mistakes. We make wrong decisions sometimes. We aren't perfect. So cut some slack. Give some room for mistakes and be patient with each other. If something is wrong, don't pay back wrong for wrong. But insert something positive. Always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. We should **STOP** seeing the **NEGATIVES** of other people and **START** seeing the **POSITIVES**.

This year, why not write down the positive things your spouse has done for you. Write down the positive traits of your parents or children. Jot down the positives of the people that you easily get annoyed with. Try to observe. Open your eyes. Don't just see the stuff that you don't like about them. If you'll see other people in the eyes of God, I'm sure you'll learn to love and appreciate them.

##### BE POSITIVE IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE

###### (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV)

Now, we don't always do that. If things are going well for us, then we're joyful.

But Paul says, "**IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES**, regardless of what's happening in our lives, we're to be **JOYFUL, PRAYERFUL, and GRATEFUL.**" That's an important lesson to learn for **2020**.

What are your concerns right now? Do you have a huge problem last year that is brought forward to 2020? Let me tell you the reality in life: Every person has a problem. But the question is: Are you going to use the problem as **SET UP** or **SETBACK**? If you have a positive perspective, you'll be able to take advantage of the problem and use it as set up. But if you have a negative perspective, you'll just think of it as setback and do nothing.

You need to **RETHINK** your attitude. You need to **CHANGE** your mindset. Remember that you're able to wake up every day. Be thankful that you have a bed to sleep on every night. Praise God for the house that you're staying in every day. Be grateful that you can eat three times a day. If you are going to open your mind, you have everything you need and a whole lot of stuff that you don't need that God provided. So, we ought to be thankful, we ought to be joyful, and we ought to be prayerful.

When we read these words of Paul about being positive, it's important to realize that he didn't write them while sitting in a penthouse enjoying the luxuries of the world. He wrote them while he was in prison - quite likely in a Roman dungeon where moisture was dripping down the wall and the stench was unbearable, where rats ran across the floor, and bugs were everywhere. While chained to a Roman guard he wrote, "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Jesus is the only one who can really **CHANGE** you. He can change you inside and out. He can give you new words to speak and a new relationship with others. He can make you into a person who experiences the fullness of life in Christ and whose witness is positive to those around you.

#### GROW

##### Application Questions:

1. How do you handle trials and difficulties in life? How do you reactant respond when the promises of God contradict with the reality of your situation?
2. Consider a time when you questioned why God allowed something to happen to you, only to see later on, at least in part, that God was using that seemingly negative circumstance for good? How did that make you feel about God and his plan for your life?
3. What are some troubling things going on in your life right now that you hope God will eventually use for good and one day allow you to understand? Do you find it difficult to trust God to guide the decisions you make in life?

**PRAY FOR EACH OTHER IN YOUR GROUP**