

# ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

## 09. How To Be A Positive Person In A Negative World

You are listening to episode 9 of the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. Hello and welcome to this week's episode. Everywhere we turn we see and experience much negativity in today's world, don't we? Well today we are pausing for a moment to discuss how you and I can stay positive and how each of us can be positive person, filled with joy and hope in a negative world. Can we? I think we can and I believe we are called to be. So, without further delay, let's jump into this episode and find hope and encouragement along the way. Here we go.

Why do you think there's so much negativity in the world today? Is it because that's just the way it is? Or because of the government or because of the people in charge? Or does it have to do with our own personal choices and attitudes?

Well, if we look back to Genesis 1 and 2 in the Bible. God made this world and humanity perfect, but as soon as sin entered it through Adam and Eve's choice in chapter 3, everything changed in that instant. Humanity changed. Childbirth changed. The earth changed. Life changed. The world changed. Disease, decay, and death entered the scene. Working the ground and toiling for food became a thing. What was once glorious and good, in that moment was now tainted with evil. Beauty, joy, peace, and positivity were now marred with ugliness, sadness, discord, and negativity.

**I believe this is where negativity began.**

And it's been affecting people and our attitudes ever since.

The hope here is this: just because there's so much negativity in the world, doesn't mean we can't live positive lives. We can, and I believe God calls us to. But you and I can't live positive lives when we focus on what's negative. We can't live positive lives with negative thoughts. We must focus and train our minds to focus on what's positive. Just like what it says in Philippians 4:8:

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

*Philippians 4:8 NLT*

Fixing our thoughts means to set or put or fasten or direct our thoughts on these things, to concentrate on these. And this takes work, it takes effort. It may not be easy, because what's easy is to let our minds just go with the way of the world. That's what's easy. Fixing our thoughts on what's positive is swimming up stream, so to speak. It's not doing what everyone else is doing. It's being positive in a sea of negativity. And friend, you may be the only one.

## **But even so, it's okay to stand out.**

Just look at what Matthew wrote in chapter 5 in the Bible:

And you, beloved, are the light of the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. Similarly it would be silly to light a lamp and then hide it under a bowl. When someone lights a lamp, she puts it on a table or a desk or a chair, and the light illumines the entire house. You are like that illuminating light. Let your light shine everywhere you go, that you may illumine creation, so men and women everywhere may see your good actions, may see creation at its fullest, may see your devotion to Me, and may turn and praise your Father in heaven because of it.

*Matthew 5:14-16 VOICE*

You and I are called to be a light in this world. To be a source of hope, positivity, and encouragement who shines bright for Jesus. Why? So others "may turn and praise your Father in heave because of it." Negative people can't shine a positive light. Only positive people can. Jesus was a positive person. He attracted people to Himself while on this earth. He spoke of truth, of hope, of blessing. We can see he encouraged and taught others everywhere He went. He is a great example for us to follow.

Being a positive person is much more than just being a happy person. It goes much deeper than that. It stems from what's in our hearts. What's inside of us eventually comes out.

## **So, what steps are you taking to be a positive person in a negative world?**

I mentioned in a previous episode we stopped watching the evening news last year. Why? Well because it was causing us to become fearful, dreadful, and filled with doom and gloom. It was replacing our positive outlook on life with negativity. And that's not who my husband and I are.

Sure, some may disagree with our choice. And that's okay. Some have asked, "How do you find out what's going on in the world?" Or, "Where do you get your news?" We get it from other sources and like my friend, Jeanie, has said for years, "If it's big enough and bad enough, I'll hear about it." We're not trying to dig our heads in the sand and ignore what's going on in the world. No. We are choosing to not allow the news to dictate our thoughts, our attitudes, or our lives.

Of course there's a downside to this. We were out with friends a few weeks ago and they were talking about a local news story that began in May and is still ongoing today as I produce this episode. Sadly, I knew nothing about it. The looks on our friends' faces showed their disbelief in the fact I wasn't aware of this story. They were shocked we don't watch the news. I know. We aren't the norm, but it's what we've chosen to do. And I believe we've remained more positive because of this choice.

## **We can choose to remain positive in a negative world.**

Not only are the headlines filled with negativity, but so are many of our social feeds. Some people have halted all social media altogether. Some have uninstalled all apps and have walked away from it. I've thought about doing that, but I can't. Part of my job is running the social media accounts for our church, and a part of my ministry centers on social media, so doing that is just not possible for me.

So, I've chosen to make my feeds as positive as possible. I don't need to allow negativity in my personal feeds. In fact, I don't. I hear others make comments on how negative their feeds are, and well, that just doesn't make sense to me. Our feeds are our feeds, and we get to control who has access to our space

and to our lives. We get to control who we follow. The thing is, if someone is mean or aggressively negative, well, we can choose to not follow that person. Or on some apps we can hide that person. And it's okay. It may take some time to make our feeds a positive space, but if you ask me, the effort is worth it.

### **What about the people we hang with?**

Is your best friend a positive person or a negative one? What about your co-workers? Your neighbors? How do you feel when you're in their presence? Do they give you life or do they bring you down? What's that saying? "We become like the people we hang around the most." If we hang around positive people, then we tend to be more positive. The opposite is true as well.

If our friends are negative, we don't necessarily have to find new friends. Our positive attitudes can influence them for good, and you may be the only positive person in someone's life. Keep showing up as that person. Continue to see the glass half-full, even if you're the only one. Continue to be a blessing to those around you. And take a break from the negativity when it gets to be too much. Again, you choose what you allow in your life. May we choose wisely.

What are some things you and I can do to remain a positive today?

Fill our minds with hope, read God's Word or a devotional, listen to uplifting music, spend time with an encouraging friend, help another person, do something that brings you joy, be a blessing in this world.

### **Be the most positive person you know.**

Even if the world around you isn't. May you be known as the most encouraging, uplifting, full-of-hope, joyful, positive person in your corner of the world.

But what about when negative things happen?

What do we do when bad things happen in our lives and in the lives of others? We may not feel happy in those situations, no, but you and I can remain positive. Our hearts may be hurting, but our souls remain positive. Why? Because of the hope we have in Jesus. We can remain positive because of Who we belong to. We can cling to hope when the rest of the world wallows in despair. He is our source of hope, strength, courage, love, peace, faith, and positivity in all seasons of life.

### **You can be a positive person in a negative world.**

The world needs you to be. Maybe now more than ever.

Drop in to our Encouragement for Real Life Community Facebook group today as we discuss this further. As I always say, it's the most encouraging space on the internet. The link to this community is in the show notes.

If you've found encouragement in this episode, I invite you to add a rating and a review so others can be encouraged as well. And to never miss an episode, I encourage you to subscribe to this podcast.

In closing I repeat this statement again: Being a positive person is much more than just being a happy person. It goes much deeper than that. It stems from what's in our hearts. What's inside of us comes out. I'm praying for your heart and mine to be filled with everything of God... of His presence, His peace,

and His provision. Continue to remain the positive person you are. You are making a difference in the lives of others and in this world. More importantly, you are making a difference for God.

Let's read Philippians 4:8 one more time:

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

*Philippians 4:8 NLT*

Thanks for being here, friend. God bless you.

*Julie Lefebvre*