

THE POWER OF A POSITIVE CHURCH

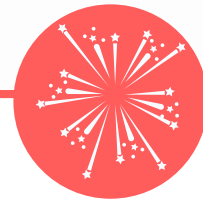
SERIES BREAK



WORD

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Philippians 4:8



SPARKS

- Can you share a moment when you found it difficult to stay positive, but something or someone helped you shift your perspective?
- Have you ever witnessed a group or community (like a workplace, family, or church) become more positive because of one person's attitude or actions? What happened?
- What's a practical way you've encouraged someone else when they were feeling negative or discouraged?

In a world where negativity often seems to dominate our conversations, workplaces, and even our communities of faith, this message invites us to rediscover the transformative power of positivity rooted in our relationship with God. Drawing from both Scripture and practical wisdom, we'll explore how a positive outlook is not just a personal preference but a spiritual calling—one that shapes our hearts, our church culture, and our witness to others. As we reflect on real-life challenges and the hope we find in Christ, let's consider how we can intentionally build an environment of encouragement, unity, and joy, no matter what circumstances we face.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVITY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Philippians 4:4

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Positivity is not just a personal trait but a spiritual calling. Philippians 4:4 commands us to “Rejoice in the Lord always” and Habakkuk 3:17-18 explains that even when everything is not going well for us, “yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior”. The message is clear: believers are called to maintain a positive outlook regardless of life’s challenges. This mindset is rooted in faith and trust in God, encouraging each believer to rejoice and think positively in all circumstances. How can we stay positive despite all circumstances?

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2. BUILDING A POSITIVE CHURCH CULTURE INTENTIONALLY.

Hebrews 10:24-25

24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Being positive by rejoicing in the Lord always contributes to the intentional creation of a positive church culture. Hebrews 10:24 and 25 urges the church (brothers and sisters) to spur one another on toward love and good deeds and encourage one another. This means we need to actively foster unity, encouragement, and positivity within the church. The apostle Paul also encourages the church to live in harmony with each other and be united in thought and purpose (1 Corinthians 1:10). He challenges the church to be proactive in shaping its environment and culture, rather than letting it just happen, which tends to lead to negativity. How can you encourage your brother and sister in Christ to create a positive, loving and united church culture?

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3. THE SPIRITUAL ROOT OF NEGATIVITY AND THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION

Philippians 4:8

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

God commands us to think about things that are true, noble, right, pure and other positive things (Philippians 4:8). Yet, sometimes we find it hard to do it; instead, we think the opposite. We may think about ugly instead of lovely things or shameful instead of admirable things. If we dig deeper into these negative thoughts, we will find that they are rooted in sin. For example, impure thoughts could be rooted in lust or pride, and wrong thoughts could be rooted in lies. Therefore, the best way to stay consistently positive is to get rid of sin by repenting and asking Jesus to forgive and change us. The ultimate solution to negativity is staying away from sin and following God every step of the way.

LIVE IT!

- **Practice Positive Thinking Daily:** When facing challenges or negativity whether at work, home, or church, pause and focus on what is good, true, and hopeful.
- **Encourage and Support Others:** Regularly build up those around you. Send an encouraging message, help someone struggling, or celebrate small wins in your J-Group or family.
- **Examine the Roots of Negativity:** Reflect on recurring negative thoughts or attitudes like fear, pride, or discontentment. Pray and repent, asking God for help to overcome these sins and stay consistently positive.



PRAYER

- Pray for a heart that chooses joy and positivity in all circumstances, asking God to help you focus on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy, even when life is challenging.
- Pray for your church and community to be united in love, encouragement, and good deeds. Ask God to help you and others intentionally build a positive, uplifting culture that reflects Christ's love and brings people together.
- Pray for God's help in identifying and overcoming the roots of negativity in your life, such as fear, pride, or selfishness. Ask for spiritual transformation, forgiveness, and the strength to stay away from sin, so you can be a positive influence to those around you.

