

SINGLE ALLIANCE

06/21/08

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

I. Introduction

- A. I will be going on vacation for the next two weeks. Chuck McConkey will be filling in. He is going to be teaching on overcoming stress.
- B. This week I want to talk about a key to lasting and positive change
- C. Text: Philemon 1:6: **(HCSB)** *I pray* that your participation in the faith may become effective through knowing every good thing that is in us for *the glory of Christ*.
- D. Religion teaches that to advance in the faith you must focus on all your negative things in your life and eliminate them one by one. The gospel is that the negative is replaced by the acknowledging and participation of all the good things that are in you in Christ!
- E. God always overcomes negatives with positives.
- F. Galatians 5:16- Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the flesh. Many try to eliminate the flesh so they can be in the Spirit. This will not work.

II. Accentuate the positive

- A. Genesis 1:3- Light be, not darkness stop
- B. Jesus always spoke positive outcomes that overcame negative situations. Be healed- drove out sickness!
- C. Faith will tap into God's power when we focus on positive outcomes
- D. Most people are living their lives trying to eliminate negative situations. They are trying to stop things. Stop wrong actions, habits, tendencies, emotions, and thoughts. People spend countless hours and dollars to eliminate what they do not want in their lives. They are living to eliminate the negatives in their lives hoping for positive results but these people end up spinning their wheels. They seem to make progress for awhile but end up right back where they were or worse. Why?
- E. Well it is simple math! When you work on eliminating negatives the best you will arrive at is zero! If you have a -100 and you work to eliminate that negative and achieve your goal you will arrive at zero! This is why so many people find it fruitless to fight against

the negatives in their lives. You might see progress at first but in the long run you come up with zero or back to negative once again. This is trying to change negatively. This just doesn't work! It just leaves a big zero! However, if you focus on adding positives then this will eliminate the negative automatically and leave you with only plusses! Most people are trying to negatively change their lives!

F. How do you know you are trying to negatively change your life? It is by looking at what you trying to stop doing? What are you trying to get rid of? What are you working at removing from your life.

G. (Rom 12:21 KJVR) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. God intends that the evil things in your life be overcome by good, not you trying to focus on them and eliminating them.

III. The Cross and Resurrection

A. Many people are trying to rid their lives of all the negative things that come by the flesh, world, and devil. However they are ignorant that God has already dealt with all the negatives from these three arenas. How did he do it? He did it by the cross! The cross was the big eliminator. The cross eliminated sin, bondage, sickness, and poverty. Jesus put the death blow to Satan's authority and eliminated it.

B. Instead of trying to overcome sin, habits, sickness, and poverty we must accept that it was dealt with by the cross. He eliminated all the negatives for us by His grace. Now we have a choice to believe it! We must reckon ourselves dead to sin, bondage, sickness, and poverty because we were placed into Jesus when He died as our representative. When he died to these we did also in Him! This is a spiritual fact to be believed first rather than felt! Once believed then it can and will be felt!

C. The cross dealt with the negatives but if that is all he did we are still left at zero. Jesus did not stay dead. He rose from the dead. The resurrection was the biggest positive in history. By his resurrection we were given all the riches of God. We were given righteousness, freedom, healing, and prosperity. We received the Spirit of God which infuses us with resurrection power when we believe in what Christ has done for us and has deposited within us! We are not only to reckon ourselves having died to all the

negatives, but we are to reckon ourselves alive to all God's positives!

D. Let's give a practical example of this. Say someone has quite a temper. Well the natural tendency of the flesh is to try to eliminate this. They work hard at stopping being angry. They come up with rules and strategies for themselves to not get angry. They count to 10. They bite their tongue (now they need healing!). They walk away from the situation. They scream into a pillow. They try their best to stop being angry. This is trying to change negatively. They are trying to overcome the sin of anger. How does the N.T. show us to walk free from anger? It is by reckoning that we died to the sin and unrighteous anger when Jesus died on the cross. He dealt with it there. We are new creations now. We are not the same old enslaved sinner we used to be. We now have positive resurrection power on the inside of us. Instead of focusing on how we can eliminate anger we need to focus on God's answer which is loving! The love of God has been shed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. When we trust God to work in us to desire to love and give us the power to love then anger is automatically replaced by the power and fruit of the Holy Spirit! Love overcomes and pushes out anger!

E. Let me say this clearly! God will not help you to change negatively. He will not help you to stop doing wrong things. He will only empower to do right things. As you trust Him to empower you to do positive and righteous things then God will manifest His power in you and through you. God is at work in you to desire and to do those things that please Him. Philippians 2:13

F. Many people say they have tried to make positive changes in their lives but it did not produce any lasting changes. It is because they tried to do positive things in order to get rid of something negative. The whole focus and reason behind what they were doing was to try to eliminate something negative. This is still negative change. This will bring you to zero!

G. When people try to change negatively they will set goals to eliminate the negative thing they want changed. When they reach the point of doing this then they will stop doing what they had been doing and they slide right back to where they were. They lose the motivation to go on when the goal of elimination has been reached. This is why so many fail on diets. They have a goal to lose 25 pounds. They work real hard on eliminating these. When they have then they stop doing what they did because they lose the

motivation to continue. When they stop then they return back to where they were and usually worse! They lose the same 25 pounds many times! Many find it easy to lose weight- They have lost hundreds of pounds over the years!

G. This is something God is working with me on. Let me give you a practical example from my own life. I have for so many years focused on losing weight. I have eaten good foods and exercised but it was to eliminate something negative- extra pounds around my waist. The Lord has been showing me that my focus has been all wrong. Instead of focusing on trying to eliminate the negative my focus needs to be only on the positive. Instead of living on the scale and trying to stop eating bad foods and stop eating too much, I now focus on eating what feeds my body and makes it feel nourished. The focus now is being and feeling healthy and not trying to get rid of weight. Once this positive focus took place then the negative started being overcome. I now have the desire and power to eat nutritiously and to exercise. I want to do this now. I no longer keep track of the scale to see if the elimination process is working. I am focusing only on the positive. I do not know how much I have lost because I have not weighed because that is not my focus but I feel better and my clothes are fitting better.