

STAY POSITIVE: PART 1 – BE OPTIMISTIC SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2022

Negativity reigns! Though there are people who are naturally optimistic, it seems there is a pull in most of us toward negativity. The economy is in the tank, the morality of the world is at an all-time low, there's really nothing to be optimistic about. Or so we tend to think. Yes, there is a lot wrong with the world, but there is also a lot right with the world – if we want to look for it. It is possible to be optimistic – not based on how we think or feel but because of who God is and what God says.

READ PROVERBS 11:24; ROMANS 8:1-39

- Do you agree that there are positive things in the world to find – if we want to find them?
- Why do you think human tendency is to focus on the negative?
- How would you describe the difference life-giving optimism and life-draining pessimism have on life?
- What are some ways a sense of condemnation can creep into the rhythms of life?
- What would it mean to you to be free from the trap of condemnation?
- How do you think Jesus' sacrifice declared an end to sin's control over life?
- What does Jesus' sacrifice ending sin's control over life mean to you personally?
- How would you describe the difference between a mind controlled by sinful nature and one controlled by the Spirit?
- How do you respond to Paul's statement that the challenges we face now do not compare to a glory to be revealed?
- Have you ever felt the help of the Spirit? If yes, describe what that was like? If no, what area would you like to have help from the Spirit?
- Do you agree that God is working everything for good? Why or why not?
- How does it make you feel that because of Jesus, no one can condemn you?
- How does it make you feel that nothing can separate you from God's love?
- How does what Paul wrote encourage you to replace life-draining pessimism with life-giving optimism?
- What next step will you take to be optimistic?

OPTIMISM IS OPTIMAL – AND POSSIBLE