

Talk It Over

Stay Positive

(Week 1)

Enough of the Bad News

SMALL TALK

1. What makes you feel positive?
2. What makes you feel safe and secure?

VIEWPOINT

3. **READ Psalm 46.** Which lines jumped out at you? Why?
4. Does 46:1 encourage you? What has to happen for these truths to be experienced personally so that you can say 46:2 with confidence?
5. What is the connection between the heading of this Psalm, "of the Sons of Korah", Numbers 16, and Psalm 46:2, "though the earth gives way"? How compatible is rebellion and refuge? Explain.

Making Matters Worse

*There is something easily overlooked in this Psalm. This Psalm was written by the sons of Korah. **Psalm 46:1 the heading reads:** For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alomoth. A song.*

There was a rebellion in their history that was etched deeply into the memory of these sons of Korah. Korah was a leader at the time of Moses. He made matters worse by suggesting that Moses' proposed solutions were all wrong! You can read about it in Numbers 16. Korah grumbled and incited a grumbling mob of leaders in rebellion against Moses.

God gave Moses clear instructions as to what to say and do.

***Numbers 16:23-24 (NIV)** Then the LORD said to Moses, {24} "Say to the assembly, 'Move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.' "*
He did. Then he said,

He told Moses to warn the people to get away from those in rebellion, that God was about to act.

***Numbers 16:28-31 (NIV)** {28} Then Moses said, "This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things and that it was not my idea: {29} If these men die a natural death and suffer the fate of all mankind, then the LORD has not sent me. {30} But if the LORD brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with*

everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the realm of the dead, then you will know that these men have treated the LORD with contempt.” {31} As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart

Then God took action. He judged them right before the watching eyes of the nation, with something they could never forget. The earth opened up before their eyes and swallowed the rebellion, then closed up again.

This indelible memory is reflected in Psalm 46:2.

Psalm 46:2 (NIV) *Therefore we will not fear, **though the earth give way...** God is a refuge for those who trust him. God is not a refuge for those in rebellion.*

6. Why is it so hard for us to follow God’s specific instruction in 46:10?

GETTING PERSONAL

7. Do you practice “being still”? What does that look like for you? Have you discovered this to be helpful? How? How often do you practice being still before God?
8. Where do you need God’s “ever present help” right now? After each person shares where they need God’s help, have a group member read 46:10. After everyone has shared take time to pray for one another.

MAKING PROGRESS

9. One of our core statements is: “Don’t Do Life Alone” Our Small Group purpose is to pursue healthy relationships and help one another take steps to follow Jesus. Have you experienced encouragement from your Small Group? How? What are some steps you have been encouraged to take? What about this week?

May 31, 2020

STAY POSITIVE 1-Enough of the Bad News

How many of you feel like it is increasingly more difficult to stay positive these days? I'm having trouble. Everywhere you turn, we hear about the people dying, people becoming unemployed, the economy struggling, the Nation is divided, people are in disagreement over nearly everything, disagreement on proposed solutions, everyone seems to be on edge. Do you catch yourself being more stressed out, more on edge? I do. Enough of the Bad News, we just want it all to be over. How do we stay positive at such a time as this?

If there is a way to do it, we need to figure out how to stay positive.

I've been preaching to encourage you, but I'm also preaching to encourage me. We need God to help us see the good in the middle of all the bad.

We need to fight to keep a faith perspective. We need to fight to keep a good attitude. We need to have an attitude like Jesus. If we want to follow Jesus, we need to carry our cross, follow him, and love people right here and now in times like these. We need to stay positive. But how?

John 14:27 (NIV) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

That kind of peace comes from him in the midst of troubled times. The world gives a peace by escaping trouble. Denying it. Numbing it. Ignoring it.

We need a peace that Jesus gives. Not like the world gives. The world's peace is a tranquilizer, an escape, the removal of conflict, a period of calm. The peace Jesus gives is a peace from the inside when the storm is still not calm.

John 16:33 (NIV) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

I. Optimism is not IGNORANCE or DENIAL but rather it is

A. CONFIDENCE

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV) Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

The **future** is something we cannot see. If you are feeling pessimistic, the negativity feels permanent. It feels personal. The uncertainty and darkness feels like it will last forever. But this confidence is about a future that is good even though we cannot see it. It is a confidence because Jesus has overcome the trouble, and has shown us a way to a confidence and a hope, and an assurance about our future.

REFLECT

Optimism is **confidence** about the future or a successful outcome

B. EXPECTATION

REFLECT

Optimism is the unwavering **expectation** that our loving God is working in every situation for our future good.

Romans 8:28 (NIV) And we know that in all things God works

for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

C. FAITH

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV) Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

This FAITH is based on TRUST in God's faithfulness to his promises.

And yet it goes deeper into the character as we stay with the faith and trust. It literally shapes our mindset. Our way of thinking.

D. MINDSET

Romans 8:5-6 (NIV) {5} Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. {6} The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

REFLECT

The quality of your life will never exceed the quality of your thoughts.

Your mind habits (meditations) control your life.

Your words and actions, positive or negative, are evidence of what governs your mind. Stay positive.

Meditation is the bridge between thoughts and outcomes.

Romans 8:18 (NIV) I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

The Power of A Positive Thought

The struggle I'm in today is producing the strength I need tomorrow!

II. How do you STAY POSITIVE?

A. First, ask yourself where you STAY?

Psalm 46:1 (NIV) God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Where do you camp out? Where do you find refuge? Do you take refuge in God? He is ever-present to help, but do you go to him? Do you stay in under his strength, in his refuge?

What if you feel like you have been stuck in fear?

You need to starve your fears—and feed you faith!
Whatever you feed, grows. Whatever you starve dies.
What fuels your fears? Stop fueling. Starve it. What fuels your faith. Fill up! Feed on it.

Make God your refuge. Take refuge. We've been hearing all about Sheltering in place. Choose your place. Shelter in God. Shelter in Grace.

B. When God is our REFUGE, We will not FEAR

Psalm 46:1-3 (NIV) God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. {2} Therefore we will not fear ...

Psalm 46:10 (NIV) He says, "Be still, and know that I am God..."

BE STILL PLAQUE (remembering life's lessons)

This is a plaque that hangs in my office [show plaque]. The plaque is a slice of log as you can see with a laminated picture of an ocean with a crashing wave against a rock. In the sky are printed these

words, and they come from the Psalm we will study this morning, “Be still and know that I am God.”

It was given to me by my sister 38 years ago. It was my 7th day on a 10 day stay in a hospital bed with no clarity as to how long I would be there. I had a burst appendix that was left far too long, and there was infection and scar tissues inside. I was struggling and down at the time. **Waiting felt like no answer at all, but it was the answer.** It was a command to trust God when there was nothing I could do to control the outcome.

I have a great difficulty consistently taking refuge in God. I have great difficulty relaxing or being still in a personal crisis. I try to fix it. I analyze it to death. I try to make things happen. This can make my stress worse.

Why do we need to stay positive? For our own good, and for the good of those around us.

In the Talk It Over, small group questions this week, one of the things you can look up is how dangerous staying negative can be. Something happened that was etched into the memory of the sons of Korah, the writers of this Psalm. For now, suffice it to say, staying positive is for your good, and the good of the entire community. Being negative is very dangerous to you and those around you.

SUMMARY

Actively take refuge in God; that’s how you stay positive. It looks like confidence and it comes from faith. This positive confident faith is built slowly over time through difficulties. Develop a mindset, a mind that is habitually taking refuge on God as your center, your source of strength, and your ever present help.

"Anything God has ever done, he can do now. Anything God has ever done anywhere, he can do here. Anything God has ever done for anyone, he can do for you." —A.W. Tozer

ENOUGH OF THE BAD NEWS...

OUR LIVES BEFORE = BAD NEWS

Independence = BAD NEWS

Jesus is the GOOD NEWS

SURRENDER to Jesus. SUBMIT to Jesus. STAY in Jesus. Take refuge in Jesus.