

Eliminate the Negative

This past Sunday morning, I brought a lesson that I originally titled “Enthusiasm.” I've since determined that what spoke more to me was the need to eliminate the negative things in our lives. Without the elimination of the negatives, and the inclusion of more and more positives, we can never be enthusiastic about our walk with God.

I began with a description of motivation. Motivation, briefly, is “the act of giving someone a reason to do something...being eager to act or work.” In order to be successful at anything, we must have a goal in mind and be motivated to accomplish that goal. There are three things, I said, that a person must do to be truly motivated. One must:

1. Truly believe in their product or service
2. Put aside all doubt and negativity, including worry
3. Be willing to encourage others work to keep them motivated

Without these three things (and many others), a person cannot be motivated or motivate others.

We all believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The hard question is whether or not we are so full of faith that we just HAVE to tell others. Peter and John obviously were on Pentecost, encouraging all within their hearing to believe in the power of Jesus' sacrifice. They preached in spite of persecution and danger of bodily harm or imprisonment. Paul said he was “compelled” to preach, His enthusiasm motivated him to tell everyone he met of his love of the Lord. Paul told Timothy in **2 Timothy 4:2** that he should preach the word even when it isn't convenient. Paul took all the negatives of his life and turned them into positives. As someone has said: Problems are only opportunities turned inside-out. Paul believed that, and we should, too.

Paul didn't worry, either. You would think that one might worry when only a small percentage of those spoken to positively respond. He did all he could and left the end result up to God. Read **Philippians 4** and strive to look at things like he did.

The lesson was designed to motivate all of us at Columbus Avenue to do all we can to make our congregation even more successful than it is. This, I said, involves an “all in” attitude. Attend Bible study, teach Bible classes, lead singing, lead prayers, visit the sick, the elderly, the shut-ins. By all means visit those who have fallen away and bring them back. Use whatever talent you have to encourage one another.

Rekindle the fire within you. Turn negatives into positives. Stop making excuses for failure. God wants His church to conquer the world for His Son. **It is up to us to fulfill His will.** The elders have determined that we here at Columbus Avenue should have a meeting on Sunday night in two weeks, (August 28th) We will discuss goals for this congregation and how we intend to accomplish those goals. We need all members to make plans now to be here and share what you think. Everyone's involvement is key to success.

---Johnny Stephens