

**TEXT:** Psalm 98 Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. 2 The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. 3 He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 4 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music; 5 make music to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing, 6 with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn-- shout for joy before the LORD, the King. 7 Let the sea resound, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. 8 Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; 9 let them sing before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.

**TITLE:** Positively Negative.

1. As we get into the word this morning I want to be very transparent with you. I am about to preach on a subject that I have struggled with my entire life.
2. I am about to share with you a principle that I have not mastered yet. I'm still working on it, or better yet it's still working on me.
3. So, don't think I'm being all holier than thou this morning. You see I have a confession to make. My confession is this.
4. I have a problem with negativity.
5. I struggle with having a negative outlook on things and as a result life. And I continue to learn every day that negativity is not a very pretty thing.
6. Negativity is not a very admirable quality.
7. Listen to this list of other words that are similar to negativity. Defeat, doom and gloom, gloominess, hopelessness, lack of hope, despair, melancholy, despondency, dejection, distrust, and doubt.
8. I have to tell you it was somewhat painful looking that word up.

9. If I'm not careful, I can act like a character from the cartoon Whinnny the Pooh. Eeyore.



10. Eeyore is a pessimistic, gloomy, depressed, old stuffed donkey that is pretty negative about everything.
11. Eeyore says things like... "The sky has finally fallen. Always knew it would." "Could be worse. Not sure how, but it could be." "Sure, is a cheerful color. Guess I'll have to get used to it."
12. I hate to admit it but sometimes I think, sound, and act like that. Now I know that nobody else here this morning has that problem, so you just mourn with me over my weakness, but I am by nature a negative thinker.
13. In reality there have been times in my life where my negativity has overtaken my life. My negativity at times has been a level lower than what we would call pessimism.
14. You may have heard the old saying the optimist sees the glass as half full and the pessimist sees the glass as half empty. Well the negative minded person doesn't care if the glass is half full or half empty all they see is a dirty glass that is going to need washing when they get done talking about it.
15. The optimist sees the grass as greener on the other side of the fence, the pessimist says well no matter what side of the fence it's on it still has to be mowed. But the negative thinker can't understand why anybody is talking about green grass because we are heading into wintertime and nobody's going to see green grass till next spring anyway.

16. If they were handing out \$100 dollar bills down at Wal-Mart the optimist would say oh what a blessing, the pessimist would say well they're just going to raise the prices to pay for that. The negative thinker would take the \$100 bill and then complain because they had trouble making change down at the restaurant when they bought a cup of coffee.
17. You know what I'm talking about. Now I want to ask a question. What is the difference in the response of each of the people in the illustrations I just gave you?
18. They were all involved in the exact same situation, but their response was completely different. Let me tell you what the difference was. The difference was their attitude. The difference was how they chose to interpret what was happening to them.
19. Probably the hardest thing for me to come to grips with is the fact that while my negative attitude may come naturally because of my personality type, the truth is if I am a negative thinker and **if I am negative minded it is because I have chosen to be that way.**
20. Being negative is a choice. Let me prove to you that being negative is a choice.
21. David the great king of Israel in the Old Testament didn't have an easy life. For more than a dozen years he was hunted like an animal, he was lied about, he ran for his life, his life was in a constant state of turmoil, he didn't have many friends and the only people who would be kind to him were what the bible calls troublemakers. As if David needed more trouble.
22. At one point, David was in such distress that the bible says he acted insane. He let spit run down in his beard to make it seem like he was out of his mind.
23. If anybody had a right to be negative about their circumstances David did. If anybody had a right to be mad at the world David did.

24. But throughout the book of Psalms we get a glimpse into the heart of this great man. We get a glimpse into the gratitude that he had towards God and the love he showed toward the nation of Israel.
25. Now we know for sure that David didn't write all the Psalms and there is some question as to whether or not he wrote the psalm I've read to you this morning, but there are numerous references back to Psalms we do know he did write so we're going to assume it's his.
26. David writes in **Psalm 98** Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. **2** The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. **3** He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. **4** Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music; **5** make music to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing, **6** with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn— shout for joy before the LORD, the King. **7** Let the sea resound, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. **8** Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; **9** let them sing before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.
27. I believe that knowing his life's story and reading what David wrote we could safely conclude that David made a choice to not focus on the negative but instead focus on the positive in his life.
28. I believe as Christians, as followers of Jesus Christ we are called to do the same thing.
29. I gotta tell you, it bothers me more than just a little bit when people who claim to have a relationship with Jesus Christ are just as negative and gloomy and as down in the mouth as people who don't have a relationship with Jesus.
30. Maybe your thinking well pastor you must not read the papers and you must not listen to the news and you must be sheltered. No my friend I am not sheltered, I hear the same things you do from the same sources you do but I'm here to tell you our happiness should not be dictated by what is printed in the paper each afternoon or what CNN reports on the evening news.
31. The Jesus I serve is not swayed and influenced and manipulated by what happens here on the earth or in my little world he is the great God of all the universe, and he will never fail.

32. Yeah but pastor there are some pretty bad people doing some pretty evil things and this old world is just getting worse and worse every day. I would tend to agree with you. As a matter of fact, the bible predicts it will be this way.
33. But David possessed a very powerful perspective concerning all the negativity in the world. **Psalm 98:9 let them sing before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.**
34. What is the writer saying? Is he denying the existence of problems and problem people? Absolutely not. What he is saying is the problems and the problem people are not my problem, they are God's problem. The Lord will judge the earth and the world, and the Lord will judge the peoples in it.
35. This world's problems are not your problem. I shared a saying with you several years ago, but I want to repeat it.
36. **You are only responsible for what you have authority over.** If you don't have authority over that thing, that person or that circumstance, you aren't responsible for it. And if you aren't responsible for it then you shouldn't be worrying about it.
37. Are you suggesting pastor that we are to live disengaged, passive, uncaring lives? Not at all. What I'm saying is that the enemy of your soul would love to get you and I wrapped up in all kinds of negativity that we don't even have control over so that we will worry and fret all the time.
38. According to **1 Chronicles 29:11** this world is God's to worry about... **for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.**
39. You see our responsibility as believers is not to be down and out because everybody is messing up God's creation or our little world; our job as believers is to praise and thank God that he is able to manage and take care of his creation.
40. And trust me; he is able to take care of his creation. David said in verse 1 sing to the lord a new song for he has done marvelous things.

41. Verses two and three describe some of those marvelous things he has done. His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The hand signifies wisdom, and the arm signifies strength.
42. Verse two says he reveals himself to the nation. Verse three says he has remembered his love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
43. What does that mean? It means that this awesome, wonderful, powerful, and wise God delights in revealing himself, in making himself known to his people and that with all the strength he can muster he pours out his love and faithfulness.
44. That means in the middle of this crazy world you are not alone, you are not abandoned, and you are not without hope and because of that you can thank and praise him.
45. But we are not commanded to praise and thank him like weak little kittens, (illustrate) we are commanded to praise him with the power and authority that is available to us as children of the king.
46. **Psalm 98:4-6** Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music; **5** make music to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing, **6** with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn— shout for joy before the LORD, the King.
47. The word shout and the word burst, the word sound, trumpet blast and shout for joy those are all power words. As a believer in Jesus Christ you are not powerless you have power, and that power is released when you thank and praise and Glorify God.
48. But watch this. This glorious release of power is not just something for a church service, but it affects every part of our world.
49. **Psalm 98:7-9** Let the sea resound, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. **8** Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; **9** let them sing before the LORD
50. Wherever you are, the power of the Lord is. It's in creation, it's in the elements of this world, it's in nature and it's in the everyday aspects of our life.
51. Wherever you are, God is there with you. Wherever you are, that's where his love and faithfulness is. Wherever you are, that's where his power and majesty and splendor are.

52. It's real and its truth and it's powerful.
53. And it is right there, that I have been confronted by God. It is right there that my attitude is forced to surrender to God. It is right there that my negativity must look God square in the eye.
54. Because if Jesus is who he says he is. If he is the creator and sustainer of this world.
55. And if I am who I say I am. His child and the apple of his eye.
56. Then how can my life be controlled and dictated by negativity.
57. It can't be. **My attitude and your attitude must conform to who He is and not the other way around.**

### Conclusion:

1. As we change gears this morning may I issue each of us a challenge? As believers in Jesus Christ will we refuse to let our attitude be dictated by what is going on in this world or our church or our family, by what the paper or the evening news says, by how much food we have on the thanksgiving table or how many presents are under the tree?
2. Can we instead let an attitude of gratitude sweep over us as we thank God for who he is and who we are in him?
3. **Do you have anything to be thankful for?**
4. Would you stand and thank God? For anything. For everything. In any way you want.
5. The most vital thing to be thankful for is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Salvation call.
6. Last week I shared some vision concerning our immediate future as a church. Our response to Covid-19 is **Network-19**.
7. It is God's plan that Covid-19 not dictate to us what can and cannot be done, but rather we can adjust to what God is doing and how God is doing it.
8. **The purpose** of Network-19 is to connect and encourage.

9. **The mission** of Network-19 is to make sure that every person associated with BFA is *intentionally* connected to other believers and is encouraged.
10. **The plan** of Network-19 is to use whatever means necessary (phone, text, video call, media, etc.) to carry out the mission.
11. So how do we carry out this simple plan? We do it with the help of **Joshuas and Hannahs**.
12. To put it simply, Joshuas and Hannahs are connectors and encouragers.
13. Joshuas and Hannahs are folks who will not let the negativity of our times dictate their usefulness to the Lord and to others.
14. I shared with you last week that Champ Hawkins is the director of Network-19.
15. If ever there was a guy who had every right to be negative about what this year has brought to his life, it is Champ.
16. But as we will see in a second, Champ is choosing to focus on the positive. And he is able to do that partly because of the blessing of some Joshuas and Hannahs that didn't even know they were Joshuas and Hannahs.
17. **(Champ's video)**
18. Will you consider being a Joshua or Hannah? To adopt 4-5 people and intentionally connect and encourage them on a weekly basis?
19. We will help you with who those 4-5 will be and ways to connect and encourage.
20. Go to [batesvilleforst.org](http://batesvilleforst.org). Top of home page, click on the Network-19 tab and give us some basic information.
21. Hard copies at the welcome center.
22. Drawing.