

“LIFE’S TOO SHORT ... TO BE NEGATIVE!”

Numbers 13:27-14:4

Our world is filled with negative news. It’s true in the sports world, in business and in politics. The Bible often addresses the subject of negativity. Perhaps no story better illustrates that than the investigation of the Promised Land by the Jewish spies. From this story, we glean two principles that help us overcome a negative attitude.

1. Consider the Characteristics of a Negative Attitude

- Negativity runs in packs

“They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: ‘We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there.’” Numbers 13:26-28

“Do everything without complaining or arguing.” Philippians 2:14

- Negativity starts and stops with you and me.

“But the men who had gone up with him said, ‘We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.’ And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, ‘The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.’” Numbers 13:31-33

- Negativity is directed at leaders.

“All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, ‘If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?’ And they said to each other, ‘We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.’” Numbers 14:2-4

2. Commit to the Clean Up of a Negative Attitude

- Connect with encouragers

“...Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement)...” Acts. 4:36

“May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains.” 2 Timothy 1:16

- Look to the past & future

“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” Revelation 21:4

- Enjoy what God has given you!

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” James 1:17

Cf. 1 Timothy 6:17b

- Act in faith

“...the righteous will live by his faith.” Habakkuk 2:4

“Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” Hebrews 11:1

- Never forget the presence of God

“What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all - how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?” Romans 8:31-32

CONCLUSION

- What attitude characterizes my life?

PRIMARY RESOURCES USED FOR THIS SERMON INCLUDE:

“Life’s Too Short ... To Be Negative” by Ed Young, Jr.

“Life is Precious ... Be Positive” Mary Anne Biggs

“Life’s Too Short” by Dean Angell