“DO YOU SEE THE WORLD THROUGH NEGATIVE EYES OR THROUGH HOPEFUL EYES?”

Introduction:
A. Pessimists See The Negative In Every Situation!
   1. Henny Penny -- “THE SKY IS FALLING!”

   2. They see bad things all around them!

   3. The PowerPoint Background -- “Lemons are SOUR!”

B. Optimists Try To See The Positive In Situations.
   1. The PowerPoint Background -- “I Can Make LEMONADE!”

   2. They try to see possibilities and opportunities!

C. Interesting Observation About The First Century Christians -- “The Early Christians Did Not Go Around Saying, ‘Look what the world is coming to!’ Rather they went out with great joy and told the world, ‘Look what has come to the world!’”

I. (Slide #2) Do You View The World Through Negative Eyes?
A. (Slide #3) It Is Easy To Look At The Sin And At Sinners In The World And To Think That Is All That Exists!
   1. I Jn. 5:19 “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”

   2. Ps. 14:1-3 “To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good. 2The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.”

   3. Rom. 1:18-32 “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19because what may be known of God is manifest in them,
for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 30 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”

4. I Cor. 5:9,10 “I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.”

5. Eph. 4:17-19 “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”

B. (►) There Have Been Grossly Evil Times In The History Of The World!
1. Gen. 6:5,6 “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.”

2. Sodom And Gomorrah. Gen 19 a. God sent two angels to Lot’s house in Sodom to prod him to leave the city before God destroyed it.
b. The men of the city, old and young, surrounded the house and demanded that Lot would bring the guests out to them so they could “know” them [NIV “have sex with them.”] 5

c. He offered his two virgin daughters to them and told them they could do whatever they wanted to do to his daughters. 8

d. God struck those immoral men with blindness. 11

e. God sent Lot, his wife, and daughters out of the city; then He destroyed it with fire and brimstone. 24

C. (Slide #4) Even In The Church Christians Can Think All Preachers Are Teaching Error!
1. I Jn. 4:1 “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

2. Heb. 13:9 “Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines.”

D. (►) Elijah Saw The World Through Such Negative Eyes!
1. After the great victory of the Baal worshipers, Jezebel threatened him; he became totally depressed.

2. In a cave he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.” I Ki. 19:14

E. (►) Sin Always Has Been A Reality Around God’s People! We Have To Be Careful That We Do Not Adopt The “Henny Penny -- The Sky Is Falling” Mindset!
1. There never has been a time in the world when EVERYONE rejected God -- not even in the days of Noah!

2. Sin, evil, and rejection of God and His Will may be rampant; it does not mean that no one cares!

F. Personally And Congregationally We Can Wring Our Hands, See No Hope, And Be SO Pessimistic Or We Can Do All We Can To Correct Our Lives Or Situations In Congregations!

II. (Slide #5) Do You View The World Through Hopeful Eyes?
A. Do We See Jesus As The Hope For Sinners?
1. Mt. 2:6 “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.”

2. He is the Savior of the lost!
   a. Lk. 19:10 “for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
   b. Jn. 1:29 “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”
   c. I Tim. 1:15 “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

3. He is the LIGHT of the world!
   a. Jn. 3:19 “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”
   b. Jn. 1:9 “That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.”
   c. Jn. 8:12 “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’”
   d. Jn. 9:5 “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”
   e. Jn. 12:46 “I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.”

4. He provides everlasting life!
   a. Jn. 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
   b. Jn. 6:33 “For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”
   c. Jn. 6:51 “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

5. He brought Heaven’s Will to the world.
   a. Jn. 6:38 “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”
   b. Jn. 18:37 “Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’”

6. He is the door to Heaven!
   Jn. 10:9 “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”

7. He came to provide abundant life!
Jn. 10:10 “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

8. He did not come to condemn the world but to bring salvation!
   a. Jn. 12:47,48 “And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”
   b. Jn. 3:17,18 “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
   c. Jn. 12:47 “And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.”

9. He came to bring peace!
   a. Jn. 14:27 “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”
   b. He provides peace with God and peace within!

10. He delivers us from wrath to come! I Thess. 1:10 “and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

11. Jesus is the HOPE of the world!
   Col. 1:27 “To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

12. The message for Christians -- We MUST be evangelistic!!!

B. (Slide #6) Do You View Sinners As Opportunities To Teach And Guide Them To Christ And Salvation?

C. (►) Do You View Times When Cultures Seems SO Antagonistic To God As Opportunities To Guide People To Christ? Or Are You Convinced That No One Cares?

D. (►) Do You See Difficult Times In Your Life Or In Your Congregation As Opportunities To Be Challenged And To Grow?
E. **(Slide #7) Reasons To Be Hopeful:**

1. Do you see youth as an opportunity to teach, train, and mentor? Paul with Timothy and Titus!

2. Do you see young Christians who struggle with their faith as having potential to be strong Christians? John Mark

3. Do you see vile sinners as possible Christians? Paul; The Crucifiers Of Jesus!

4. Do you see sinful brethren as people who can repent? The Prodigal Son; The fornicator at Corinth, I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2

5. Do you see congregations that drift as opportunities for return to the Lord? Congregations can repent and return to their first love! Rev. 2,3

**(Slide #8) Conclusion:**

A. Let’s All Challenge Ourselves To Fight Negativity!

B. Let’s Try To Always Live With Hope For Improvement In Every Situation And With The Settled And Secure Hope Of Heaven Forever!