

Is Your Glass Half Empty or Half Full?

(video transcript)

By Karen Spiegelberg



What do you think of when you look at this glass? I know what I think. “I’m thirsty, and that looks good!” In a proverbial sense, though, do you look at this glass and think that it’s half empty or half full?

I’m Karen Spiegelberg. Welcome to A WORD for Women—a show by women and for women where we build each other up in our amazing and wonderful God-given roles in life!

Looking at the glass half empty or half full is usually seen as a person’s negative or positive attitude. So, which scenario best describes you? I think the answer for me is “both” depending on the time or day. Unfortunately though, these days it just seems our attitudes are so much more negative than positive! Well, that was kind of a negative on my part, wasn’t it? But sadly it’s true. It seems so much easier to have a negative and crabby attitude than a positive one. It’s kind of like passing by a car accident and we just *have* to look. It’s the same with negativity. We seem to be naturally drawn to it. But, deep down, we don’t want to really be that way. We read books, we attend motivational seminars, Christian women retreats, and we feel pumped up and better, and our outlook improves—for a while. Until we fall back into the same old habit when something sends us down that negative path again. And it doesn’t even have to be something huge and life changing. It’s usually something small like a family member saying something you take personally, someone cutting you off in traffic, a coworker with a big ego, or someone with too many items in the express lane at the grocery store.

It seems like a never-ending cycle. But, we can end the cycle. First and foremost, we need to remember that none of this negative stuff comes from God. There is nothing negative about the way He thinks or acts. When I picture Jesus’ perfect walk on this earth, I don’t quite picture Him saying, “Well I guess it was nice for Mary and Martha to invite me into their home, but the bread was a bit stale, and don’t they know I’m on a gluten-free diet anyway?”

A positive attitude means practicing and living with a habit of putting the best construction on everything. One of my favorite Bible passages is from Proverbs chapter 15 verse 13. I must preface this by saying that I actually like the King James Version of this passage the best: “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.” And then my kids say, “Mom really, *doeth*?” I don’t know, I just kind of like that version—it sounds very Shakespearean or something.

Bottom line, a positive attitude is good medicine for our hearts and souls. And the first motivation for that positive attitude should be our gratitude to our Lord and Savior for what He has done for us.

“Okay, but I’m just not generally a positive person!” you might say. It’s true, some people are born more naturally positive than others, or perhaps it’s a combination of that and the environment they were raised in, but that doesn’t mean that if we’re negative by nature that we can’t change. Psychologists say that you can actually retrain your brain to think more positively. Let’s face it, even with faith, if you’ve been in a lifestyle of thinking negatively most of the time—it’s a habit that may need some human readjustment along with some spiritual encouragement.

Here are just five ways to start being more positive in our lives:

1. Get up every morning and count your blessings. Look right in the mirror if you have to and think of at least five things that you can thank God for: *I have a roof over my head; I have a job...whatever it is.*
2. Put a new perspective on things. Instead of complaining that you have to scrape ice off your car on a cold day, be thankful that you have a car. Instead of grumbling that you can’t find a parking spot close to the store, be thankful that you have legs to walk into that store.
3. Surround yourself as much as possible with positive people. There’s nothing more draining than being around negative people. On the contrary, have you ever noticed how refreshing it is to be around positive-thinking people? One of my favorite movies is “Gone with the Wind.” Remember the character, Melanie, who married Ashley Wilkes? Okay, I know she’s just a character from a movie, but she was amazing! She was so positive about everything. When I watch that movie, I just want to be her friend. So if you surround yourself with positive people, and *you* become more positive, people are going to want to be around you more too.
4. Make a list of all the negative aspects in your life that you want to change, and if you get stuck just ask your family and friends. I guarantee, they’ll help you out.
5. And mostly importantly, study God’s Word, pray for a new attitude—you can’t change all by yourself. But you can spend some time in the Word with the One who can help. Do what you can and let God do the rest.

Thank you for joining us on A WORD for Women.

And finally, ladies, as is told us in Philippians 4:8 “...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

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