



**African Methodist Episcopal Church
Fifth Episcopal District
Midwest Annual Conference
Women's Missionary Society**

June Meditation

Optimist – Pessimist

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my help and my God.” Psalm 42:5 NRSV

PRAYER: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil, for Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

MEDITATION: by Victor M. Parachin, This may be an old idea, but it works. Here is an inspired view of the power that can be yours by opting for optimism. The story is told of two men who occupied adjoining beds in a nursing home. The man in the bed near the door was completely paralyzed and unable to move even his head. His roommate lay in the bed near the window. Although the aging process kept him confined to that bed, he remained both cheerful and alert. The one who suffered paralysis asked his roommate to look out the window and tell him what was going on in the world outside. Day after day the man by the window gave his friend a complete report in vivid detail, he informed him of the postal official making daily rounds, wearing a raincoat and boots in rainy weather and short sleeves on sunny days. In addition, he would describe the activity of young lovers who passed by the window every day during the noon hour. With an eye for detail, the man near the window reported when the young couple first held hands and embraced. He even spoke about the backward glances the two gave each other as they parted. Truly, the paralyzed man in the bed near the door lived for those regular updates on the world outside. One day, however, his eyes to that world came to an end with the death of his friend. Before long another man was assigned to the bed near the window. After introductions, the paralyzed man asked his new roommate if he would be kind enough to tell him about the activity going on outside the window. “Sure,” said the new occupant, “only I don’t know how I can. There’s nothing outside this window but a solid brick wall.”

This story symbolizes the two perspectives people have on life. When looking in the same direction, one person can see beauty, artistry and love, while another remains oblivious or sees nothing but ugliness and darkness. Those two views are summed up by the words optimist and pessimist. Scientific studies on human attitudes are demonstrating, with amazing uniformity, the fact that a positive outlook is a powerful force for personal and professional success. The tests showed that people who felt they had control over their situations were labeled optimists. Those who expected the worst and saw themselves as victims were identified as pessimists.

Psychologists say that a positive attitude makes enormous differences in living, but they claim that anyone who is convinced that they are naturally inclined toward pessimistic and cynical views of life can change their pessimistic thinking. They also claim that anyone can put a positive potent force to work in everyday life. Here are three golden rules for becoming an incurable optimist and enjoy the world around you.

Live Life as an Invocation, Not a Benediction. Surely this is the meaning of the words in Psalm 118:24 “This the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Each new day, with its ups and downs, is a gift from the Creator and should be received with gratitude.

Use Hope to Cope. It is virtually impossible to have hope and be a pessimist. They are mutually exclusive entities. The simple act of hoping releases a positive energy. Hope is a power that can keep you forging ahead.

Balance the Negatives with the Positives. Almost everything about life comes down to perspective. What is an obstacle for one person is an opportunity for another. What one person calls a stumbling block is used as a stepping-stone by another.

A humorous story is told about two men named Sam and Jed who determined they could become wealthy by hunting wolves. In their part of the country, a \$5000 bounty was offered for each wolf captured alive. Day and night the two partners searched mountains and forests seeking their valuable prey. Exhausted one night, they fell asleep dreaming of their potential fortune.

Suddenly, Sam awoke to see that they were surrounded by about fifty wolves with flaming eyes and bared teeth. Sam gently nudged his friend and said: “Jed, wake up! We’re rich!”

In reality, the most successful people in life are those who have been able to balance the negative side of life by looking at the many positives. One example is the ability to remain upbeat and positive in the face of crisis. The other is to have the sense to perceive when things are totally out of balance

Finally, perhaps this additional piece of advice from Ralph Waldo Emerson can be helpful in maintaining an optimistic attitude. He wrote, “Don’t waste yourself in rejection, nor bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good.” This advice was given over a century ago and is valid now as it was then!

AFFIRMATION:

Mrs. Freddye Mae Smith, MWCBWMS, Meditation Chairperson

Mrs. Thelma J. Cunningham, MWCBWMS, President

Congratulations to all who has someone getting married or will be celebrating a June wedding.

Remember:

FAITH sees the invisible.

Believes the incredible.

Receives the impossible.

- Anonymous