



The Trade

Part 2 – Saying No to Negative Thoughts Discussion Guide

A study done by the American Psychological Association determined that people *can* become happier. However, that happiness comes at a cost. Forgiveness, gratitude, and guarding our thoughts are the requirements of that trade. It is a daily choice to be positive. This week we will look at how we can make that trade in our own lives.

Jump Start

1. Would you consider yourself a “glass half full” or “glass half empty” type of person? When you hear, “Remember, who is holding the glass—God is,” how does that shift your perspective?
2. **Read [Proverbs 4:23](#)**. When you think of all the things you say “yes” to in your day, is choosing to be positive one of them? How does this verse help you to see the importance of guarding your heart?
3. **Read [Romans 8:5](#)**. How does this verse help you to consider your thinking through the eyes of faith and not flesh? When you encounter people who complain, murmur, or grumble, what do you perceive about them? How can you look at them through the lens of love, not judgment?
4. **Read [Philippians 4:8](#) and [Philippians 1:6](#)**. Social media, television, and gossiping friends are all sources of negativity. How will you use this verse and choose to say “no” to these things? Sometimes, we are the source of negativity. Spend time in prayer, asking God to help reveal your heart. “Am I becoming who You created me to be? Where am I holding on to things You want to free me from?” Examine your words: what do your words reveal about whether you are walking in the world or according to the Spirit?
5. **Read [Numbers 11:1-5](#) and [Psalm 106](#)**. Think and share about something which you once called a blessing, and in another you either took for granted or totally forgot. How does Paul describe continual gratitude and contentment in [Philippians 4:11-12](#)? **What stood out most to you in Psalm 106?**
6. **Read [Philippians 2:4](#)** How easy would this be to put into action in your daily life? How does [Philippians 4:5](#) describe how we will be received by others when we live this out? Will you make these commitments?
 - **Thank God:** Start thinking about all the good things that God has done in your life.
 - **Filter the input to your heart:** guard your heart from negative influences.
 - **Filter the output:** watch what you say.
 - **Apologize** - reconcile with those you have hurt.
 - **Get around positive people** - examine your relationships and lean into encouraging ones.

Deeper

We will learn how to complete a **S O A P Bible Study** by looking at a passage of Scripture and breaking it down. **S O A P** stands for **S**cripture **O**bservation **A**pplication **P**rayer. Let's get ready to sit down with the Bible and see to what God wants to show us. Completing this study during your quiet time, then sharing with your Life Group, can allow for deeper understanding and revelation of new perspectives. **Things you will need:** Bible, Notebook, Pen.

This week we talked about the trade we make when choose to be Positive and live our lives through the lens of faith, gratitude, and contentment. Our negativity sometimes stems from seasons when we feel alone or forgotten, we feel like we are in the wilderness. However, we can learn a lot from our Wilderness seasons. Seasons that are characterized by the stark need for food or water, isolation like Elijah felt and the still small voice of God that came to Him. The wilderness can also be in the face of danger and divine deliverance like Hagar and Ishmael, or of renewal, of encounters with God like Moses, the burning bush, the revelation of the divine name, Mount Sinai. Through those seasons we grow even though we are challenged. In all these circumstances they could have chosen, and some did choose to be negative, but now you have a choice to live out your faith. This week we meditate on Jesus in the wilderness and how he took the negative words of the enemy even while in the wilderness to overcome and remain faithful. Also, join us for Dig Deep on YouTube for an in-depth for an even further look at this week's message.

7. **Scripture.** Read [Matthew 4:1-11](#) What stood out to you the most about these verses?

Take time to read these passages and allow God to speak to you. Jot down anything that made you stop and pause or anything that you questioned. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you and write it out fully in your journal.

8. **Observe.** What is God saying to you in these verses? What overarching theme or promise did you see? What did the specific verse that you were drawn to teach you?

What do you think God is saying to you, personally and specifically, in these Scriptures? (You can even have a short prayer at this point, asking the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Remember that He promised to give us wisdom and reveal truth to us when we ask.)

9. **Application.** How will you apply this and be bold in your faith?

Personalize what you have read by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, a new promise, or corrections in an area of your life. Write down how this Scripture applies to you today.

10. **Pray.** Pray about what you have read in [Matthew 4:1-11](#) Pray your special verse back to God, asking Him to help you understand and apply it.

This prayer can be as simple as asking God to help you use this Scripture, or even a prayer for a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so take time here! Be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it out. Journaling your quiet time helps you to see what God is teaching you over time.