

**Negative to Positive**  
**Gen 50:15-21**  
By Russell Earl

Thesis: I want to show how we must try to be more positive.

Intro: 1. Negativity abounds, but blessings and reasons to be positive continue to exist.  
2. All we have to do is look around.

I. Negatives in life

A. In the life of Joseph

1. Betrayed by his own brothers

**17 And the man said, “They have departed from here, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’ ” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.**

**18 Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him. 19 Then they said to one another, “Look, this dreamer is coming! 20 Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, ‘Some wild beast has devoured him.’ We shall see what will become of his dreams!”**

**21 But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, “Let us not kill him.” 22 And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him”—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father. – Genesis 37:17-22**

**Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.**

**Genesis 37:28**

**31 So they took Joseph’s tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood.**

**32 Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, “We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son’s tunic or not?”**

**33 And he recognized it and said, “It is my son’s tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces.” 34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. – Genesis 37:31-34**

2. Wrongly accused of actions against the wife of Potiphar

**17 And the man said, “They have departed from here, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’ ” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.**

**18 Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him. – Genesis 39:17-18**

a. Placed in jail

**Then Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. – Genesis 39:20**

3. Betrayed by a fellow inmate

**14 But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house. 15 For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon.” – Genesis 40:14-15**

**Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him. – Genesis 40:23**

B. In the life of Paul

1. Persecuted followers of Christ

**1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. – Acts 9:1-2**

2. Was stoned at Lystra

**Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. – Acts 14:19**

3. Was imprisoned

**But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound. – Acts 24:27**

II. When negatives turn to positives

A. In the life of Joseph

1. After being sold – Joseph was elevated a position of authority in Potiphar’s house

**3 Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days. 4 Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, Genesis 50:3-4**

2. After being jailed

**21 But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph’s authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper. Genesis 39:21-23**

## B. In the life of Paul

### 1. Repented and became force for Christ

**17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.**

**Acts 9:17-18**

**15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” Acts 9:15-16**

### 2. His determination strengthened others as did His exhortation (Acts 14:19-22)

**19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. 20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” Acts 14:19-22**

### 3. Continued teaching from his cell

**12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, 13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; Philippians 1:12-13**

## III. Lessons for Us Today

### A. Negatives can turn to positives.

1. We must make the best of every situation.

2. Jeremiah could have given up preaching because of the resistance he faced

**15 “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on this city and on all her towns all the doom that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks that they might not hear My words.’ ”**

**2:1 Now Pashhur the son of Immer, the priest who was also chief governor in the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. 2 Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the Lord. Jeremiah 19:15-20:2**

but he determined to keep warning and teaching.  
**Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not. Jeremiah 20:9**

B. Surplus of negative and limited stock of positivity.

1. There are always plenty of reasons to become negative if we so desired.
2. Positivity is a choice; we must choose to be positive.

Application & Conclusion:

1. Our outlook on life is dependent on ourselves.
2. The Christian should strive to have an outlook of positivity, who wants to be a part of something else that's negative?
3. Full Invitation

Non-Christians must:

Hear – James 1:22, Romans 10:15,17

Believe – Jn 12:44, Jn 8:24, Mt 16:16

Repent – Luke 13:2-3

Confess – John 12:42, Romans 10:9

Be Baptized – 1 Pt 3:21, Acts 22:16, Col 2:11-12, Mk 16:16, Rom 6:3-4

Live faithfully – John 14:15, Rev 2:10

Christians must:

Repent & Pray: James 5:16, 1 John 1:9