

Missionary Evangelism to Corrections

Sharing the gospel & Christ's love with those in corrections since 1982

I was in prison and you came to me Matt. 25:36cESV



Problem Thinking and the Lord's Healing From Superoptimism to True Confidence

Superoptimism is a puzzling concept to look at because one needs to have hope, faith and confidence that their goals will be fulfilled. It can be hard to identify superoptimism because it can be perceived that you are trying to discourage these positive characteristics. However with superoptimism one feels certain they are in control of all events and that possibilities are already accomplishments (Samenow vol.2 pg.321) or at least sure to be soon.

In identifying the problem thinking with superoptimism, goals or accomplishments that are stated or identified are ones that are beyond reach or are considered already accomplished when they are still yet to come. They are not accurate or realistic. With this thinking when something we expect does not happen it feels like a rejection or put-down. Expectations need to be revised to become realistic but doing so does not become the end. Devising realistic goals is the place where the work needs to begin. When an expectation is not fulfilled it takes understanding that setbacks are inevitable and are not a disgrace or putdown but they can be used by God in our lives for good. This is one of the concepts that James, the stepbrother of Jesus, addresses when he says that we should count trials as joy so that perseverance can work good in us and that we can become mature, complete and not lack anything. (chapter 1). The apostle Paul speaks of this also "...And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." (Romans 8:28). Understanding some of the process of how this happens can



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November 30, 2018

MEC Spotlight

Jan Erickson

One of the most important people in my life had looked forward to joining Jesus for a few years here. Jan Erickson's Celebration of Life brought many thoughts and recollections from her family and those who loved her.



Her children and grandchildren shared many memories. One of her foster children said that she and Bob took her and her siblings in, that she taught them a lot about faith and love. The whole family taking them in said a lot about what she taught them.

Jan was a real prayer warrior for individuals in the jail ministry, a part of churches and fellowships in the area, and prayed for pastors and churches in the community consistently and often. She had received a complete healing from her cancer. She attended life events, sent cards, letters and expressed true concern in her expressions of comfort such as that she would have taken the place of loved ones who died if she could have. Her smile and seeing the possibilities in others, sharing stories, laughing at her own jokes, taking people places, helping with troubles, serving others, and being a Mom to many was an inspiration. Her prayers brought and kept many to and in the Lord. She had deep gratitude and blessing of family and relationship to Jesus. She looked forward to going to heaven and shared a lot of love and reality in lives. She was known as Mama love and would say ... "and remember that Jesus is the Way!" She would write letters and cards to many people, showed tough love, attended shows, supported grand children in their endeavors, and left a wonderful legacy.

At a time when she was going to end her life by jumping off a bridge, something stopped her. She went home sat down, lit up, poured a drink and turned on the TV. Billy Graham pointed his finger at her and said, you there sitting alone, you need to put that cigarette down, pour that drink down the drain,

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Sept.—Oct.

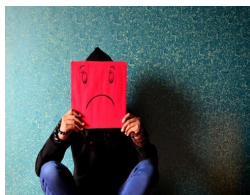
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help us. Setbacks show us our limitations and the areas we need to grow in so that when we see these things can work at changing them and we move forward in a more positive way. As long as we continue to see setbacks as putdowns or rejection and react to them negatively, we are on a downward spiral, hurting ourselves, reacting to the people who we had the expectations of and not finding more positive solutions. Those solutions may involve those we are reacting to or they may cause us to find a solution that does not include that person. Either way the relationships in both cases overcome frustration and grow.

Having put these concepts into practice many times, it is easy to forget when something happens. Failure to achieve what we want is not an injustice. As I was typing this, the man who comes to do our plowing came and plowed, I saw some areas that needed to be cleared of the trash and a car, and rushed out to move them, but he left before he saw me. My initial feelings were to blame the person who left the trash, recycling cans and car in the wrong place and that the man doing the plowing was not paying attention to the full job. I was ready to drive after him and chase him down to call him back to finish. It upset me that no one pays attention to the details that make work for me. As I evaluated my thinking, I acknowledged that this was not a crisis, the person who placed the items put them there for reasons that made sense to him and that I could leave the work of clearing those areas undone or have him do them if I chose to. The line, "Find a solution without (creating) all the chaos", was one I had proposed to a friend more than once. Now it



rang through my head as applicable to me right now. It was still a choice to pay attention to and actually do it. This is a small example where as other situations may have with much bigger implications.



When we are becoming PTLH: Superoptimism to True Confidence cont. on pg.3

find Jesus and change your life. She knew it was God who saved her life and she did let Him change it. She also discovered that He saved two more lives that day, as she was carrying twins. Later she married Bob and they did foster care for years and touched many lives before their divorce. They were going to get back together when Bob died. She worked as a counselor, cleaning lady, with children, had a part in bringing the assisted living concept from Japan to America, taught Children are People Too, spent hours and hours in prayer. She lit up a room, had fun and enjoyed people. Some days before she died, she would look up, saying it is so beautiful, it is so beautiful! She had been sleeping a lot and the evening before she joined Jesus, I was able to spend time with her when she was awake and interacting. I could feel her love and thought this is the spirit of Jan and this is the Spirit of Jesus.



Jan's obituary and a place to share memories with the family is at

https://www.hometownsource.com/forest_lake_times/obituaries/jeanette-jan-ann-erickson/article_e470e275-8333-57a6-abf6-f8f480d06021.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=user-share&fbclid=IwAR3vR8QAJhX42MNwA6t4m5CJawunYj0Gopogzvfkg_701S3X39XF

We know we are not alone in Ministry and so each month do a shout-out to others

This month our

Ministry Friend Shout Out is to

The Union Gospel Mission

<https://www.ugmtc.org/>

Helping men with addiction, discipleship, education, food, health care

Youth - mentoring and case management, Bethel Buddies, Ober Community Center, Youth Connect

and Naomi Family Center Housing, food and programming for mothers and children to help them reach independence/interdependence

more responsible than we were, it is easy to fall into thinking that now everything should be smooth now. Some things will go better and it is important to recognize and celebrate those things, least we forget the progress we have made, the work God has done in us, and take matters for granted. But to expect because we are doing things right now, that everything will go our way and challenges will not present themselves is not feasible. Sometimes we make choices based on the information we have and neglect to see that a piece of information we do not have or which we have heard, but are disregarding as important. This information, can affect or change our situation drastically. Factfinding and weighing alternatives may and probably will change the conclusion that we come to.

One of the dynamics that I see over and over again in trying to help a person change is that they are able to verbalize the concepts needed for healthy change and healthy living, but then when faced with the situation where it needs to be applied, retreat to the old way of thinking takes place. This is why study of the Biblical concepts is important and memorizing and music are helpful, they change the areas of the brain where ingrained thinking has resided. Bible Study Tools lists 21 verses that help in changing our thoughts. Romans 12:2, Phillip. 4:8, 2 Tim. 1:7, Jer. 33:3, Prov. 28:6, Prov. 4:23, Eph. 4:22-32, and 1 Jn 1:8, are some of them. It takes putting the concepts into practice just as playing a sport or practicing a profession takes clinical practice to better understand the entire situation. Reading and or studying lay the foundation and are precursors to accomplishing our dreams and goals. Even when we are putting them into practice further studying and learning needs to take place.



Another area to understand is that to change one or two areas does not mean that all is well and other areas are now fine. Contact and communication do not always mean a relationship will be renewed to what it once was. Saving some money does not mean that you will always be able to save in the future so can spend it all now. Because you have the money now does not mean that you can get what you want without considering what you will need for future or legitimate bills. Because you are struggling now does not mean you always will be. Discussing these situations with someone who can provide feedback and allowing accountability comes into play again. Understanding that our dependence is on God and that He will take care of us as we seek and follow His precepts underlies the change needed to recognize and overcome superoptimism. Changing it to confidence based on His provision and the honest work and skills necessary to achieve realistic goals is so much more solid.

A life of integrity is a higher honor than any amount of status. It is a higher station in life than any job, number of material items or respect from education or position. "He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest, sound wisdom to the upright. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity." (Proverbs 2:7) People with integrity walk securely; crooked or perverted ways will be exposed, found out. (Prov. 10:9) The way of the Lord is a stronghold to those with integrity, but it destroys the wicked. NLT "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the duplicity, crookedness or unfaithfulness of the treacherous destroys them." (Prov. 11:3) Combined versions



Please let us know if something is difficult to understand or if it helps you! We hope PTLH articles can be published. Your feedback included in changes to this will help those who are coming to Christ and changing lives .

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