

Rocks And Candy (Thankfulness) (Positive Attitude)

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live. Deuteronomy 30:19

The Basic Bible Truth

While this verse was addressed to Israel as Moses neared the end of his life, the concept of the verse hold true still today. Daily we are presented options. Moses called out the opposites of life and death, and blessings and curses. As we go through life, things happen to us and we can choose to view them through a negative lens or a positive lens. Do we get up in the morning and say, “Good. Lord it’s morning.” Or is our thought, “Good lord, it’s morning.” Punctuation makes a big difference. Our attitude towards life makes an even larger difference.

The Object

A Box Of Rocks That Are About An Inch Or Slightly Larger In Size

A Box Of Small Candy Bars

A Roll Of Masking Tape

Small Slips Of Paper



Each person is asked to remove their right shoe, take a rock from the box and a candy bar from the other box. They are then instructed that from this moment on, they are not allowed to say anything to anyone whatsoever. They are to listen to instructions and follow them. They are to place the rock in their shoe. If they are wearing open toes sandals and such, I provide tape to hold the rock in place. Then they are to put their shoe back on, stand up and walk around the room while eating their candy bar. They are not to speak to anyone during this whole ordeal. When they have finished their candy bar, they may take a seat, and remove the rock from their shoe. They are then to take the small slip of paper and write, using one word only, how they feel about what they just experienced. They are not to sign the paper. I collect the papers and read each response in class, keeping a tally on a white board of the words written down. I have a “Positive Comment” column, a “Negative Comment” column, and a “Don’t Know If It Is Classified As Positive Or Negative” Column. Every time I have done this lesson, I have less that 30% of those who participated give a positive comment. As humans, we tend to focus on the bad stuff and overlook the good things that God does for us each day.

The Lesson

God is a good God. James 1 states that every good and perfect thing is from above, coming down from the Father. Typically, we have so much going on in our lives, our lifestyle is so fast paced and hectic, we miss much of what God does for us each day. The end result is that our human nature kicks in and we see things through the eyes of our frailty. The bad things in life tend to shape us more than do the good things. And that is our fault. Moses' final word to Israel was to look at the things in life and choose how you will view them.

It is easy to see the bad things. Our memories are tuned to catch everything that goes wrong for us. And what we miss, Satan is more than happy to remind us about later. This exercise is a very simple, unscientific method of calculating how we respond to difficulty. But as often as I have done this lesson, the results are remarkably the same. We are consistently focused on the bad around us.

I asked you to walk around the room with a rock in your shoe. Some mild discomfort for just a short period of time. All the while, you were feasting on a delicious gift from me, that I spent my own money to buy, and then my time, to give this special gift to each of you. And yet, as generous as I was today, look how few of you noticed. The rock, the wrong you had to endure, overshadowed the good that was also in your life at the same time.

Moses was warning his people of the difficulties they would be facing. He was also telling them that God would be very generous. We are given a few hints of what the people of Israel saw during their 40 years in the desert. They never had to go without a meal. They never had to go without water. They never had to walk in the direct sunshine. They always had a warm night light over their heads at night. Their shoes never wore out. Their clothes never wore out. They saw the presence of God every day. But we find through the Old Testament that they tried God's patience over and over with complaining and grumbling.

Let me give you a personal challenge. Take your rock home and put it up on a bookshelf where you will see it often. May it bring this lesson to mind, and may you spend your life seeing the good things that God does for you and let the difficult times slide on by.