

Week 31—Optimism

Read

In 1997 the journal of the American Heart Association reported on a remarkable study. Researchers found that people who experienced high levels of despair had a 20% greater occurrence of arterial sclerosis, the narrowing of the arteries, than did optimistic people. This is the same magnitude of increased risk that one sees in comparing a pack-a-day smoker to a non-smoker says researcher Steven Everson. In other words, despair can be as bad for you as smoking a pack a day. Hope is essential not only for physical health but far more important for spiritual health. ¹

Reflect

*Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you.
(1 Peter 5:7 NLT)*

Respond

Optimism is related to faith. You have optimism not because of how much faith you have, but who your faith is in. God reminds us that He has a plan for us. Plans to prosper us and not to harm us. Plans to give us a future filled with hope. Realize that despair not only effects our minds but our hearts and, by the story above from the American Heart Association, despair even erodes our bodies physically. How can you be optimistic this week? If despair has come into your life, how can you cast these cares on God? Write a prayer below giving all your worries to Him.

Write your thoughts here:

Prayer Requests for yourself, your students, and others with whom you serve in ministry:

Remember

An optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity; a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity.²

¹ *A Children's Leader Devotion*, (Lake Forest, CA: Saddleback Church), Week 28.

² *Ibid.*