

Remnant Life Church
Sunday, January 10, 2016

Must Expectation Lead to Disappointment?

Matthew 16:1-12

- Tell me about your expectations, especially as it relates to people, and I will tell you about the disappointments in your life
- Tell me about the details of what you expect to have fulfilled in your own life and I will tell you of the discontentment you live with
- Expectations are like a ceiling – people may be able to run, jump, and touch them from time to time but they could never stay there
- The greater the expectations and the greater the detail of them, the greater the disappointment in your life
- Think back to a disappointing time that was brought on by someone letting you down
 - How fresh and real might that pain still be after you think about it?
 - Yet many somehow feel as if there is never a reason, no logical explanation as to why their expectations were not met
 - Dennis Wholey (American author mostly of self-help books) *“Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is a little like expecting a bull not to gore you because you are a vegetarian.”*
- Definition of expectation – a belief that something will happen in a particular way
- Question: Why do people place expectations on one another, many times that they themselves could not live up to, and then become so angry, offended, bitter, and unforgiving when it doesn't happen the way they thought that it should?
 - Placing unwarranted expectations on another person is very often a powerful tool that satan will use to bring division in your home, your marriage, your relationships, and even your church
 - Notice though that I said very often, not always.
- **READ Matthew 16:1-12**
- The Pharisees and Sadducees were similar in their function among the people but very much opposed to one another in their philosophies
- What could get two adversarial camps to unite together? A common enemy.
 - 4th century BC saying - *The enemy of my enemy is my friend*
 - The enemy of both these groups was Jesus Christ
- Both groups were very strict adherents to the law given by God through Moses (Mosaic Law)
 - The law had actually taken the place of God
 - Nothing and no one was more important to them

- What was it about Jesus that could unite these two groups of vehemently loyal extremists?
 1. With the Sadducees – Jesus taught and spoke often of the resurrection of the dead and the presence of both angels and demons – something that the Sadducees denied to be true
 2. With the Pharisees – Jesus was consistently showing them to be imposters and exposing their hypocrisy, pride, and tyrannical way of ruling over the people they were supposed to help guide, protect, and love.
 3. Finally for both groups – Jesus did not meet the expectations they had of who and what the Messiah would be

- So they were demanding a sign from Jesus that He was the Messiah
 - They wanted again what happened when God gave the law to Moses (Ex 19:16-20:25)
 - They wanted the thunder and lightning that to them confirmed the power of the Law of God
- Second, their expectation was not being that Jesus would come as a political and even military might to subdue and drive out the Romans
 - They were expecting the “Son of David” to be a conquering king just like David back in the times of the years of Israel’s glory and splendor – which were the times of the Law
 - They certainly already knew of the miracles Jesus
 - Jesus performing for them would have simply been another way for them to exalt themselves and secure their power
- But Jesus was not in any way like what they wanted Him to be
 - He was humble, unobtrusive, avoided the lime-light; discouraged publicity, and even gave instructions to people that He had healed not to tell anyone
 - Contrast that to the actions of the Pharisees and even the actions of many in ministry today
- Jesus did not meet their expectations and they were disappointed and discontent with Him

- Jesus came with one primary message and it still resonates today – they were His very first words recorded at the outset of His ministry – Matt 4:17 – *From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*
 - Were the Pharisees and Sadducees interested in repentance? Not at all!
 - They only wanted their expectations met and their positions maintained and solidified

- Now before we get too high and mighty in our judgement consider the second half of the story
 - The disciples, often used in the Bible as a representation of us – the everyday Christian - showed their own on-going struggle with faith
 - When they got across the Sea of Galilee they discovered that they had brought no food (16:6-7)
 - Jesus reminds them of what they had seen Him do on a much greater scale (16:9-10)

- But it was not about bread to eat it was about guarding their hearts against the false and selfish teaching of the day
- That is a very real threat to us today and will continue to increase as the last days intensify
- How do you avoid placing unrealistic or inappropriate (places they should not be) expectations on others?
 1. Don't allow dependency on others to become your source
 - # God first as my source of all things (**Phil 4:19**)
 - # He has created in you and blessed by His presence an ability
 2. Honestly consider the motivation of your expectations
 - # Who benefits from what you expect to happen?
 - # Most often when we are disappointed it is because what we want did not happen
 3. Make a conscious effort to stop trying to control the environment of your life as it relates to other people
 - # What does our desire to control everything say about our faith in God?
 - # Understand and accept the foolishness of pre-determining someone else's decisions, behavior, or actions.
- Over the last 10 years or so of my life I have come to the place of, with the exception of a few select people and situations, stopped expecting anything from anyone.
 - That way I am delighted when someone does or says something nice for me
 - I am not disappointed when they don't because I wasn't expecting them to anyway
- My exceptions:
 1. I expect God to always be true to who He says He is in the Bible
 2. I expect my wife to love me unconditionally
 3. I expect my family to love me in spite of myself
 4. I expect my closest friends to have my back
(This is a very small group of people)
- Notice the absence of specifics even of those I expect these things from – my only specifics are what God's Word tell me about Him
- What do I expect from God?
 - Listen to **Isaiah 9:6** - *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*
 - Wonderful counselor – expectation of His wisdom (top advisor)
 - Mighty God – expectation of power (mighty warrior)
 - Everlasting Father – expectation of care (provider forever)
 - Prince of Peace – expectation of wholeness (life calmer)

- When we become willing to stop placing expectations on others in order to satisfy our own wants and desires, we will cut off a constant stream of disappointment flowing into our lives and instead we can then make our focus the only true source of real contentment – our Heavenly Father and a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Must expectation lead to disappointment? It does not have to but it almost always does.
- Stop hurting yourself and others by placing your belief in what will happen in places that it does not belong.
- In 1922 Helen Lemmel, a songwriter and composer born in England; directed the chorus group for many of Billy Sunday's evangelistic meetings; wrote a song called "The Heavenly Vision"
- Biblical source: *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus* – **Heb 12:2**
- You know the title of the song by the words of the first line of the refrain and they tell us exactly what we need to do in order to avoid the disappointment and discontentment that come from foolish expectations

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim; in the light of His glory and grace