

Expectations

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I. Introduction.

- A. You have certain expectations for life and as a Christian.
- B. Topics that will be addressed:
 - 1. Where your expectations came from.
 - 2. What are realistic expectations.
 - 3. What can you expect God to do.
 - 4. What will God do.
 - 5. What expectations you have that have nothing to do with God, despite what you think.

II. History Lesson.

- A. People worked hard prior to, and during, World War II in America to ration for the troops.
- B. When the soldiers came home, there was a baby-boom.
 - 1. Generation values education and hard work.
 - 2. Income was doubling between 1950-1970.
 - 3. Factories for war materials were converted to make consumer goods, and America consumed most of those goods.
 - a. Explosion in products sold to children: Roy Rogers pistols, Davie Crocket hats, hoola-hoops, etc.
 - b. Baby-boomers were taught that they would have the best of everything (62,000 new classrooms were built in one year for the baby-boomers).
- C. Baby-boomers were standing in line to get in all their life; there are a great number of people from this generation that were growing to adulthood.
 - 1. Baby-boomers were taught that they were special, but they went into the market finding that reality was harsh. The job market had become saturated.
 - 2. Divorce rates exploded. Television became the babysitter in homes. One car was not enough for the family.
- D. The newest generation is the second largest group to have been born in the United States.

1. A different attitude to what at one time was a privilege is now a right: education, health care.
2. There is an unbelievable sense of expectancy.
3. “Americans think they can have it all”

E. Somehow, Christianity became deeply influenced by the material culture that developed.

1. Even prayer has become affected by this desire for affluence.

III. We must get some realistic expectations.

1. There are places where you can completely support a full time missionary for \$100.

A. In hard times.

1. No one knows what is going to happen in America.
2. It is wrong to try to force our expectations on God.
3. It has formed some negative theology: name it and claim it theology.

B. In prayer.

1. According to the Scripture there are some things that we pray for that we may not get.
 - a. it is not guaranteed we will get it just because we believe it.
 - b. Jesus in Gethsemane asked for relief, but accepted the cup regardless.
2. Sometimes God will give us affirmation of what we are supposed to receive and we can pray for that in faith, but there is a proper way to go about it.
3. We need to be careful about our theology toward prayerful expectations. (Matthew 22)
 - a. Example of a woman who believed that her daughter would be healed of a coma and was bitter towards God when her daughter died.
 - b. Many Scriptures such as Isaiah 53 (“by his stripes we are healed”) are twisted to mean physical healing, not spiritual healing.
 - c. Example of a friend who was sick physically, but knew that he was right with God.
 - d. Be wary of those emphasizing “healing”.
 - e. God can do miraculous things as happened to many of the heroes of the faith, but many were also heavily persecuted. (Hebrews 11)

C. In wealth.

1. Recommending a book: *The Cleavers don't Live Here Anymore*.

a. Example from the book: breaking through to the baby-boomer generation. A change of values—the house that they lived in didn't have anything to do with what the woman really wanted.

2. Godliness with contentment is great gain...(1 Timothy 6:6-10)

a. Give your life to the Lord.

b. Decide what you really want out of life; you don't have to have it all.

c. It's not what house you live in, it is what happens in that house that really matters.

Application Questions:

1. How has the overview of the last American century given you perspective about our current cultural values?

2. In what areas of your life can you see an overemphasis on consumerism? Be specific.

3. What values should be emphasized in your life that are currently not being emphasized enough in the present culture?

4. How should we pray differently in light of this?

5. What do you really want out of life?

6. How do think these values measure up to what God values?
