

Holy Spirit's Help in Handling Your Unrealistic Expectations

Have you recently experienced frustration? Something or someone irritated you? Plans didn't go your way?

That seems to be happening more lately. Increased seasonal traffic annoys me. People who don't follow through on what they said they would do end up frustrating me. I'm irritated by circumstances that cause me to make two separate trips to purchase the same item.

But what if the cause of the irritation is not external at all? What if *I'm* the cause of my own frustration?

Someone once said, "The level of your frustration is directly related to the level of your expectations."

Read that again.

Ouch.

So the real cause of my own grief is most likely ... me.

Knowing we live in a broken world, why do I go through life expecting people to respond perfectly? Especially when I know I don't!

Understanding that our little town experiences a population surge during the winter season, why do I get annoyed at the increased traffic?

Failing to take the time to plan properly, why am I surprised that one task requires multiple trips to the store?

Unrealistic expectations. Expectations grounded in reality as I want it to be, rather than the way it is.

Ancient Israel had a similar problem. Their expectations of the coming Messiah were based on cherry-picked prophecies. The sad result was that they didn't recognize Him when He did come. They were so busy looking for a victorious military leader that they missed the Suffering Servant who came to redeem humanity.

So what's the answer?

I believe the answer for a Christian is to live *expectantly*.

To live expectantly is to live in eager anticipation for how God will work in our life, without setting specific expectations or demands on what that will look like. Living expectantly allows us to recognize where the Holy Spirit might be moving in areas we would not normally look for Him. And it communicates that we are satisfied with whatever the Lord does, allows, or gives—without comparing it to our own agenda or shopping list.

Those who live expectantly have the privilege of living out a truth understood by martyred missionary Jim Elliot: "God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with him."

Will you join me? Together, let's put aside our expectations and live in daily *expectancy* for how God will show Himself active in our life. And as He does, share your experiences with others to increase their own sense of expectancy. {eoa}

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