

Not Seeing God Move in Your Life? Your Expectations Might Be Too Low

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (CPI) released its Consumer Price Index for December. Inflation was tame. Compared to a year ago, the CPI was 1.9 percent higher (in line with pre-report forecasts of 1.9 percent but down from November's 2.2 percent). The CPI was down 0.1 percent for the month, which was expected. Energy sector prices fell 3.5 percent for the month.

Although U. S. inflation is tame, inflation is causing havoc in Venezuela. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), inflation in Venezuela will top 1,000,000 percent for 2018 and hit 10,000,000 percent in 2019. Output is expected to fall by 18 percent this year.

Inflation is defined as "a sustained rise in the general price level." It reduces the purchasing power of the dollar (or other currency) and can be particularly troublesome for those on fixed incomes. Some describe inflation as a situation when too many dollars chase too few goods. The U. S. Fed has been contracting the supply of money, while Venezuela has been increasing their supply. The U. S. economy has one of the strongest in the world, Venezuela has one of the weakest economies.

Price expectations play a key role in sustaining and increasing inflation. Anticipation of higher prices tomorrow, causes buyers to make more purchases today, causing current prices to increase, which increases price expectations for tomorrow, increasing current purchases even more— and the cycle continues. Price expectations can be self-fulfilling and cause an inflationary spiral.

Expectations play a critical role in the life of a believer. The dictionary lists hope, desire, belief, faith and anticipation as synonyms for expectation. Expectations based upon our circumstances, past failures or previous disappointments can be self-fulfilling and lead us to sadness and failure. Expectations based upon the promises of God lead to righteousness, peace and joy. God's promises, correctly interpreted, have the integrity of the Creator behind them, and He cannot lie.

Scriptures tell of a woman who had an issue of blood (hemorrhage) for 12 years. She had been to physician after physician with no results. We can only imagine the hopelessness she must have felt. She remembered when she was healthy. At first, she had expected that the issue of blood would be quickly cured. She had hope in the expertise and skills of the doctors. Even when the first physician failed to provide relief, she expected the next doctor to heal her. But now she had seen many physicians and had run out of money. She had no hope. She had endured much.

When she had first heard about a man from Galilee named Jesus, she didn't know what to think. But as time passed, she heard more and more stories about people whom He had healed. She had never heard about Him healing a woman with an issue of blood. Is He a prophet? Could He be the Messiah? Could He heal her? After all, she was deemed unclean.

But suddenly, a ray of hope started to develop in her. The Holy Spirit began to fill her with expectation. She didn't know how, but somehow, she knew that if she just touched His garment, she would be healed. She was nervous about an unclean woman approaching the Master. But she saw her chance. There He was, standing in a crowd, with many people touching Him. She could touch His garment and not be noticed. She would go up, touch His garment, and be healed.

And a certain woman had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and

had suffered much under many physicians. She had spent all that she had, and was not better but rather grew worse. When she had heard of Jesus, she came in the crowd behind Him and touched His garment. For she said, "If I may touch His garments, I shall be healed." And immediately her hemorrhage dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction (Mark 5:25-29).

She pushed her way through the crowds. Suddenly, she could see Him. She reached through the throng of people and touched His garment. She felt the hemorrhage dry up. She was healed! But suddenly, He stopped and asked who touched His garment. Fear gripped her. She started sweating and trembling. He looked around and saw her. She came and fell at the Master's feet and told Him the truth. Jesus told her that her faith in Him had made her well, and that she should go in peace with her healing. A peace that passed all understanding filled her where hopelessness and fear once resided. Her expectation had not disappointed.

And immediately her hemorrhage dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.

At once, Jesus knew within Himself that power had gone out of Him. He turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?"

His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing against You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"

And He looked around to see her who had done it. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the entire truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction" (Mark 5:29-34).

The Israelites had witnessed the Lord deliver them

supernaturally from Egypt – the strongest nation on earth. They had walked across the Red Sea and had even been promised a land flowing with milk and honey. Now was the time to go up and possess it. As the direction of the Lord, Moses sent 12 spies to find out about the land. Upon return, all 12 agreed that the land flowed with milk and honey.

But 10 of the spies expected the Israelites to be defeated if they tried to take the land. Two spies (Joshua and Caleb) expected victory for their faith was in the Lord. The 10 unfaithful spies stirred up the people to take their side. Only Joshua and Caleb obtained the promised land. The rest of the people wandered in the promised land for 40 years (Num. 13,14). Expectations matter!

Let us each base our expectations on the grace, goodness and faithfulness of the Lord—led by His Word and empowered by His Spirit. {eo}

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