

RUNNING ON EMPTY

When Expectations Don't Deliver
Scott Hansen, Lead Pastor – April 14, 2013

EXPECTATION DEFINED

- ▶ Expectation = The anticipation of a future outcome.
- ▶ Expectation = A belief that is centered on the future which may or may not be realistic.

PRINCIPLE #1: Faulty thinking will lead to unrealistic or inappropriate expectations.

ALIGNMENT QUIZ

- Who knows more about truth, reality and how life works?
a. Me b. God
- In light of answer #1, who should bend to who with regards to truth, reality and how life is lived? (Hint: Matthew 6:10; Isaiah 55:8-9)
a. I should bend my thoughts & agenda toward God
b. God should bend His thoughts and agenda toward me
- How close do you think the natural alignment is between God's thoughts and the thoughts of someone who doesn't know Him? (Hint: Proverbs 1:7; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Colossians 1:21)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

- How close do you think the alignment is between God's thoughts and the thoughts of a believer? (Colossians 3:2)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Romans 12:2 - Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

EXAMPLES OF FAULTY THOUGHTS/EXPECTATIONS

- ▶ I am a Christian, therefore God owes me...
 - A trouble-free life (without a lot of bumps in the road)
 - Good health (being disease free... certainly no cancer or mental illnesses)
 - A long life span
 - A great, secure job (earning more than I deserve or merit!)
 - Money for the things I want
 - Safety / being free from harm
 - A perfect spouse (who serves me and adores me)
 - Obedient, believing, healthy children
 - Exemption from ongoing battles with temptation & sin

THOUGHT ALIGNMENT

PRINCIPLE #2: If you want thought alignment with God, you have to know His Word.

PRINCIPLE #3: The Bible is your counterbalance to “stinking thinking” & the pull of culture.

- Hosea 4:6; Psalm 119:105
- ❶ Be born again (John 3:3)
- ❷ Ask God to make you hungry for His Word
- ❸ Start eating
- ❹ Write down your “thought adjustments”

WILL ALIGNMENT

PRINCIPLE #4: A good relationship with God requires that you be committed to aligning your will to His.

- John 14:15; Ephesians 5:17
- ❶ Repent of thoughts & actions which are contrary to God's will
- ❷ Remove yourself from mental input that is destroying you
- ❸ Obey your new marching orders



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Lesson Aim: To grow in our ability to have God's perspective on expectations and to align faulty thinking with His Word.

Prayer: Ask the Holy Spirit to lead your personal study time and/or discussion.

Icebreaker: As a teen, how did peer pressure affect the way you dressed?

1. Briefly share about an expectation you've had in life that was fulfilled as you had hoped for (this can be anything).
2. Briefly share about an expectation you've had in life that was NOT fulfilled as you had hoped for (again, this can be anything).
3. Look over the section from Pastor Scott's teaching entitled "Examples of Faulty Beliefs & Expectations." Have you (in the past or present) struggled with any of these? How so?
4. **READ Romans 12:1-2.** In what ways are Christ-followers tempted to "conform... to the pattern of this world"?

5. How can this increase our tendencies to be upset or disappointed with God when expectations go unfulfilled?
6. Why should we "offer our bodies as living sacrifices" and "be transformed by the renewing of our minds"?
7. Practically speaking, what are some ways we can do these things?
8. How can this help us when expectations don't deliver?
9. A key principle from this weekend's teaching is that our thinking needs to be transformed by God's Word, the Bible. **READ Psalm 119:9-16.** What do these verses say about the attitude we should have and the actions we should take in regards to God's Word?
10. What is one thing you can do to ensure you have a healthy intake of the Bible this week?

Close in prayer as the Lord leads you.

This **LifeGroup** Study Guide is designed to help you apply Sunday's message. You can do this homework on your own; however we encourage you to check out our warm and friendly message-based **LifeGroups!** Get a copy of this Study Guide at theBridgeFresno.com by clicking on the "Messages" link.