

Expectation

We all have expectations of ourselves and of others. We also, maybe without realising it, have expectations of God.

Expectations can be good if you understand and know what they are. But they can also cause problems when you are expecting someone and they are not meeting that expectation.

It may be because they are unaware of the expectation we have of them. It may be because that expectation is too high, or it may just be because that person is not willing to meet that expectation.

Either way it can be very frustrating when expectations are not met.

For example, when Cameron and I first got married we made sure we told each other our expectations of each other, when it came to the big things. However it is the expectations of the little things that sometimes get overlooked, and trust me, they can cause problems. Frustration and anger can escalate when you hold it all in and allow it to build up.

In our home I expect Cameron to put the rubbish out for collection. This doesn't mean just putting the black bag (that I have got all ready for him) out by the gate. This means emptying the rubbish bin inside when it is full, into the outside bin and also putting out the recycled rubbish. It means replacing the rubbish bag inside both bins and not leaving it for me when I have a handful of rubbish and a bin with no liner in it!!! Are you hearing me?

Sometimes the expectation has to be explained in detail as your partner or whoever it is, may think they are fulfilling their role (he *has* after all put the rubbish out) when in reality all they have done is make you mad and frustrated, because to you, they have only done half the job.

Here is a prime example for you. I have unrealistic expectations when it comes to going to the hairdressers. Not just because I want to come out looking like a celebrity, although that would be nice but because I have unrealistic expectations of how my hair is going to look afterwards. I always seem to leave the hair dressers looking much the same way as when I went in and it disappoints me every time. This actually has nothing to do with the hairdresser, it has to do with me. I am not equipping the hairdresser with enough information to

achieve what I am wanting so I am really, unconsciously, setting them up to fail.

I am a bit of an odd ball when it comes to having my haircut. If you asked most women, they would love to go to the hair salon for a couple of hours and relax and feel pampered.

Not me, I hate it, I feel intimidated, I can't relax and I am disappointed every time. This actually goes back to my childhood and a haircutting incident that has stayed with me. It is kind of funny when I look back now, but it has obviously affected me to some degree. This is my recollection of an incident from when I was younger.

I have an older brother and an older sister. Obviously my brother was the boy, my sister was the girly girl with really long hair and then there was ME. The third child, the supposed tomboy, who really wanted to be a girly girl and have nice long hair.

Apparently, I suited short hair so dreaded every hair cutting session. My aunty was a hair dresser so mum or dad would take us to her salon where my sister would have a little trim and I would come out looking like a boy!!!

I remember one time (and I feel real bad for my aunty) where I cried the whole time she was cutting my hair, then when we got home I went and hid behind the

caravan and cried and wouldn't come inside. The next day at school, I wore my raincoat and refused to take the hat off because I felt I looked too much like a boy. So, I guess you can kind of see where I get the whole dreading the hairdressers thing from.

When I was a teenager I somehow got through the awkward ugly in between short and long hairdo and my mum said "You know, your hair actually looks nice long."

I have had my hair long ever since!

My hair was waist length all through high school and up until I was 25 and had my first son. I guess I was defined by my hair in some ways, people knew who I was by my long hair. It was my security blanket in other ways too, long hair is good to hide behind. However, we can get too comfortable with the status quo and not want to change it.

I do want to be like other women who see going to the hairdressers as such a treat but I just haven't got there yet. I go in thinking 'Yes, this is the time that I will do something different, something a little bit more dramatic,' and then I walk out looking the same. I can't have an unrealistic expectation of the hair dresser, that she will somehow know that when I say I want it cut shorter and the shape/layers put back in, that she will

magically know that I really want a different style altogether.

Like I said, the problem is me. I don't give proper instructions. I fail to clearly communicate my expectations, I let myself be overwhelmed with insecurities and then get disappointed.

If you can't stand up for yourself or give clear expectations to other people, then don't be surprised when you get disappointed, in reality, you are just getting what you asked for!

Take Valentine's Day. To some people this is really important. I know for us, we don't really celebrate Valentine's Day but to some couples it is really important.

If you can't give clear expectations to other people, then don't be surprised when you get disappointed, in reality you are just getting what you asked for!

I was talking to one lady who was saying how her husband never gets her anything for Valentine's Day. She said early on in their marriage she would get really

upset but now she has come to accept it.

Because she had an expectation for her husband that he was not meeting she was getting hurt and upset. He

wasn't aware that she had this expectation of him, so he was not intentionally making her feel unloved and neglected. However, just because he wasn't aware of it, didn't mean it wasn't happening. His wife was feeling unloved and like she didn't really matter to him.

Expectations do matter and even little things can cause a big problem. Now she knows that they are not going to celebrate Valentine's Day she no longer has that expectation of him. She no longer gets hurt and upset because she understands he is not purposefully neglecting her, and they show their love for one another in other ways.

This is a fairly minor expectation, but what about when it comes to having children!

As unbelievable as it sounds, I have heard of couples getting married without first talking about whether to have children or not. One partner wants them and one doesn't, now they are already married and 'oh boy' do they have an issue!

Cameron and I discussed this issue before we got married. Cameron didn't want any more children and I would have liked one more, but because we already had children it wasn't a deal breaker. It things were different and I wasn't already a mum and Cameron was definitely against having children, then I am not so sure whether

we could have got married. For me having children *was* a deal breaker. I always wanted to be a mum and I don't think I could have gone through life without ever having a child, or at least been given the chance to have a child. As it turned out we did have another child together but we both knew before going into our marriage how we both felt concerning children. I wanted one more, Cameron didn't want any more, but we were aware of it and like I said, for me it wasn't a deal breaker. I knew that we would be ok if we didn't have any more children. I would have learnt to live with that decision.

For some people however not having children, or having a child when one partner hasn't wanted to, has caused difficulties in their relationship. Like I said, unmet and unspoken expectations can cause *big* problems. Make sure you talk to your partner so you know what your expectations are of each other, even with the little seemingly insignificant things.

*Wrong expectations can cause a lot of damage so take the time to deal with them. You never know when little issues can turn into **big** problems.*

You never know when *little* issues can turn into a **big** problem!

There are many different reasons for our expectations of

each other and of ourselves, whether they are realistic or not.

Take the time to look a little deeper and find out why you have that expectation and whether it is beneficial for you. If it is not the best expectation to have, find out where that expectation has come from and then deal with it. Yes, it may be painful but it will benefit you and others in the long run.

I may end up with short hair one of these days! Seriously though, wrong expectations can cause a lot of damage so take the time to deal with them.

Expectation: to believe that a particular thing will take place, to suppose or presume, full of anticipation.

In the definition of expectation it says, a particular thing that *will* take place.

It isn't something that we think *might* happen, it is something that we are pretty sure *will* happen. This is where the problems can start.

Even though it is an expectation, we are pretty much thinking it *will* happen, when in reality it is something that *may* be done and even then it *may not* be done how we are thinking it *will* get done.

Confused! That's the problem right there!

What we expect of people and then what we actually receive from them, can be sadly lacking. The definition of expectation also says ‘full of anticipation’ and we all

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know what it feels like when something we have been anticipating does not happen how we thought it would. There can be a lot of conflicting, hurting, angry feelings flying around. This is where communication comes in. Communication is a very important, if not the most

important key in any relationship, whether it be between you and another person or between you and God.

We also need to have a clearly defined understanding of our own expectations for ourselves. You can expect *too* much from yourself at times and this can lead to total break down if you aren’t careful. Putting too much pressure on yourself to perform is not going to make you into ‘supermum’ (or whatever your role is), it is more likely to make you into ‘super melt down mum.’

We need to be realistic in our expectations for ourselves and others. You know what it is like striving to meet somebody else’s expectation of you.

Sometimes our own expectation of ourselves can be unrealistic too. I know at times I am trying to be supermum and I turn into ‘not so much fun mum,’ ‘stressed out mess mum,’ or ‘you just don’t want to know mum.’ Not good. We can be our own worst enemy when it comes to setting expectations for ourselves.

Yes it is good to try to do better, but if you are putting too much pressure on yourself (or someone else is), you are going to become a stressed out wreck. You will probably accomplish less than if you set realistic goals for yourself. When you achieve these more realistic goals, you will feel so much better about yourself, which will then build your self-esteem, instead of destroy it.

You may fall short in your expectations of each other or even yourself, but God will never disappoint you.

Right, now to hear some good things about expectations.

You may fall short in your expectations of each other or even for yourself, but God will never disappoint you.

I believe you can never have too high expectations of God, rather He will always exceed your expectations! Often our expectations of what God can and will do in our lives is too small, too limited.

Ephesians 3:20 – *“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,”*

God can and will meet our expectations and at times He will even exceed them without us even asking Him to.

However in saying this I sometimes think that some Christians use this to bail out on any work themselves and leave it all up to God. Just because you are a Christian doesn't mean you now do nothing and God does everything. No, you still need to be plugged in, communicating with God and moving forward into the things He has for you.

Also don't forget the second part of this scripture, people like Ephesians 3 verse 20 but what about verse 21?

“to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.”

It is for God's glory, not yours. If what you are trying to achieve is God's purpose, is God's mission for your life, if your heart position and motives are correct then yes, hold on to this scripture. If it is all about you then no matter how many times you read this scripture, confess

it, print it out and pin it to your wall, if it's not for God's glory it's not at all.

The good news is, if you are in God's will, if your motives are right, if your heart position is for God's glory, you can be confident. God has your back, He will come through for you. If you truly believe and expect good things from God, He will deliver.

Philippians 4:13 – *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*

Again take this scripture in the right context. I have been learning a lot lately about making sure you are reading scripture correctly and not misinterpreting it because you are only taking the part that works for where you are at.

If you read the verses before and after this one you will realise Paul is saying that he has learnt to be content whether he has a little or a lot and he can do all things through Christ in either situation. He is not saying we can do everything, because we can't.

God gave us all our own purpose here on earth and each of us is unique and our talents, gifts are unique also. We cannot do it all and we are not meant to do it all.

We are meant to do *all* we can with the one thing that God has given us to do and we can overcome *all* the things that come along whilst doing this through Christ

who strengthens us. We can overcome the obstacles in our way, we can keep going through storms, adversity, grief, life, we can do it *all* for God as He strengthens us along the way.

When life gets on top of you, this is where **Philippians 4** comes in. You can do all things, all that God is asking you to do. Maybe not in your strength, actually we can hardly ever do it in our own strength, if we could what would we need God for?

It is a lot easier (not to mention a lot wiser) to have God come alongside you and do life with you. Expect God to step into your situation, expect Him to move on your behalf. Expect Him to strengthen you as you do His work. Let your strength be in God. You can do it.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!”

Expectation can be a negative or a positive thing in your life, the choice is yours.

Keep your expectation of God high as He can go higher still.

Isaiah 26:3 – *“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You. Because he trusts in You.”*

Keep your mind on God and you will have peace as you trust Him.

I could tell you so many stories of when I have had to really lock into God and keep my mind focused on Him because otherwise I would have totally lost my peace.

No, at times it is not easy but it is so reassuring knowing you can trust God and live in peace when in reality life is chaotic. There have been many times when I have struggled and even times when I have failed to do this but every time God has reminded me, to keep my focus on Him. Then peace comes and I know, like I know, like I know that I can trust Him.

My expectation of God is huge and I know He can fulfil and often times exceed my expectations.

Expectation can be a negative or a positive thing in your life. The choice is yours.

Where does your expectation come from?

Choose wisely, it can bind you or set you free.

Rachael Lock – Chapter 6 – Hope’s Story