



Expectations

Leaders copy

Strength
dignity
WOMEN
WITH PURPOSE



LESSON FIVE: Rachael Lock

Expectations

(Introduce yourself and the evening's topic)

(Read aloud) Expectations: We all have them, rightly or wrongly, we all live by them. We have expectations for ourselves and we have expectations we place on others.

The word **expectation** means - A strong belief that something will happen.

I think that is where the confusion comes in, right there in the definition of expectation it states: a strong belief that something **will** happen.

Even though it is an 'expectation' we are pretty much thinking it will happen, it will come to pass, it will be reality, when in fact, it may not. Our expectation may be wrong, unattainable or just not right for the situation. This is why expectations are such a tough area of life, but one that is definitely worth taking some time to look into.

(Activity: The purpose for the following activity is to show that God's love can remove all the heavy burdens we place on ourselves through unrealistic expectations. You will need a white board and post it notes for this exercise. Read the following three questions out asking the ladies to think about the questions and write down any expectations they have on a post it note or if they are comfortable you can write it straight on to the white board, allow a certain amount of time for this).

Answer the following questions on expectations.

- Q.** What expectations do you feel you have placed on yourself?

Q Do you think these are reasonable expectations?

Q Why do you think we burden ourselves so heavily with expectations from others?

(Once the ladies have had time to think, either write some things on the white board or get them to stick their post it notes with their expectations written on, onto the white board.

Have a discussion on some of the expectations we place on ourselves that maybe burden us rather than lift us up. (later on in the evening we will come back to this to show how God's love can remove this burden).

(Read aloud and stop to discuss along the way if there is something you would like to pause on). 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, however at times, I think we give ourselves a hard time also.

Sometimes our own expectation of ourselves can be unrealistic. I know at times I am trying to be 'Super (insert name)' and I turn into 'not so much fun mum,' 'stressed out mess wife,' or 'you just don't want to know friend.' Not good. We can be our own worst enemy when it comes to setting expectations for ourselves.

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 for yourself, but God will never disappoint you. The even better news is that God will often times exceed your expectations!

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 (if they are the correct ones) and at times He will even exceed them without us even asking Him to.

Also don't forget the second part of this scripture, *“to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.”*

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.

(Read aloud) Get your expectations from God. Build them around who He says you are, with the expectation that He is going to be there with you, helping you to achieve all He is calling out in you. Have a ‘strong belief’ in who God says you are.

(Read the following questions and lead a group discussion around them, putting emphasis on the importance of where our expectations come from).

Q Where do your expectations come from? Why is this important?

Q Do you think God has expectations of you?

(Read aloud). Allow God to speak to your heart because unrealistic expectations can hold us hostage, burden us with pressures that aren’t ours to carry and lock us into the fetal position where we stay scared and unable to move.

It is important to get our expectations for ourselves and others right. The consequences if we don’t may be detrimental and can side-track us from the life God has given us to live.

Now let’s get some good news on expectations. God has the perfect expectation of you, and you probably have no idea what it is.

(Introduce Rachael Lock –Rachael is the founder and facilitator of Strength and dignity – Women with Purpose. Her heart’s desire is to see a New Zealand based women’s curriculum and website that is accessible and relatable to every woman. Rachael has written, developed, dreamed and contributed to this resource to help teach, encourage, equip and release women into all God has called them to be.

Watch AV clip “Expectations” 3.37mins and encourage ladies to take notes on anything that resonates with them).



(Read aloud) God's expectation of you is: TO LET HIM LOVE YOU!!

(Go back to the white board and clear it of all expectations and write on it in big capitals GODS LOVE. Explain how God's love sets us free from all unnecessary burdens, how God has taken the burden for us and we can live in freedom. Talk about how important it is to get our expectations from Him, to allow His words to define us not those of others.

(Read the following questions and discuss as a group).

- Q When Rachael says, "God wants you to let Him love you," what impact has this had on your expectations?
- Q What is one next step forward you could make on your journey to right expectations?

(Read aloud). Let God love you.

Get that right and everything else will fall into place as He guides you through the journey He has placed you on. Remember He doesn't expect us to do it alone, He is right there with us traveling the road by our side.

"He has stamped His value on you, and that is enough." Priscilla Shirer – Fervent.

We need to 'see' ourselves through God's eyes and let go of the unnecessary burdens we have allowed into our lives. Let God's words be the words that define us and give us strength.

You, just the way you are, are enough!

Galatians 5:1 (NIV) *"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."*



Allow God to love you and lead you through your everyday. Let those unnecessary expectations go and step into the freedom God has set before you.

Free Indeed!!

Encourage the group to take a look at the extra study and website:

www.strengthanddignity.co.nz

Wrap up lesson five and give details for the time and date of next Strength and dignity – Women with Purpose session.



John 10:10

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

Jesus came to give us life and life more abundantly. This abundant life is not in any way, shape or form burdened by unnecessary expectations we have put on ourselves or allowed others to put on us.

The life Jesus gave us to live is free of burdens, it is life more abundantly.

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT) – *“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.”*

Q “What does ‘life more abundantly’ look like for you?”

Q “What are some expectations (*worries and cares*) you need to let go of in your life?”

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV) - *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Again, Jesus didn’t come to burden us down; He came to give us life. When we are feeling heavily burdened we can go to Him and He will give us rest. *“For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”* Jesus took our burdens so we don’t have to carry them anymore.

When we are free from these unnecessary burdens we can live the life God gave us to live. When we are free we have the ability to know when God is asking us to do something and when He is not. Accepting the things God has placed in our life to do and letting go of the rest. Living with Purpose the life God has set before us.

www.strengthanddignity.co.nz for further reading and study.