

High Expectations

- * Fans expect their team to do well.
- * Parents expect their children to get good grades and/or always act appropriately.
- * Business owners expect their employees to put the company first.

As Christians, we are held to high expectations by God.

* ²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20

Which of Jesus' teachings are the most difficult for you to follow?

- * Turn the other cheek.
- * Forgive seventy - seven times.
- * Love your enemies.

Turn the Other Cheek

* ³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.”

* Matthew 5: 38-39

How do we react when someone hurts us?

- * **God does not expect us to be happy when we are hurt by others.**

- * ²³ Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

Matthew 26:23-24

- * **God does not expect us to seek revenge.**

- * ⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.” ⁴⁹ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.

- ⁵⁰ Jesus replied, “Do what you came for, friend.”

Matthew 26: 48-50

What can we do?

- * God does not expect us to let ourselves be pushed around.**
- * Jesus stood up to his persecutors and those he felt were leading people astray.**
- * Pray for the strength to not seek revenge, but ask for wisdom in how to handle the situation.**
- * Pray the other person realizes their sin and ask for forgiveness.**

Forgive Seventy -Seven Times

* ²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” ²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

* Matthew 18:21-22

A Merciful Response to a Horrific Crime



- * Ethel Lance, 70, left five children, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren behind. A daughter spoke for the family.
- * "I will never be able to hold her again. But I forgive you and have mercy on your soul," she said. "It hurts me, it hurts a lot of people, but God forgive you and I forgive you."

How easily do we forgive others?

Is this true for us?

- * I forgive, but I will not forget.
- * Just a thought...
- * If God lived by those words, what would our future hold?



How many times have you been forgiven by God or by others?

- * When is the last time you had to humble yourself and ask for forgiveness?
- * How did you feel when the person accepted your apology?

**A GOOD APOLOGY
has 3 parts:**

1st - I'm sorry

2nd - It was my fault.

3rd - How do I make it right?

But a lot of people usually miss the 3rd part

A little reminder...

* ¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

* Matthew 6:14-15

* Forgiveness can be healing for both parties.

Love Your Enemies

* ⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

* Matthew 5: 43-48

How do we treat our enemies?

- * Do we speak harshly against them?
- * Do we do anything we can to hurt them?
- * Do we forgive them even though they might not ask?
- * Do we help them when they are in need?
- * ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

* Luke 6:35-36

Are we anyone's enemy?

- * Can you think of anyone who does not want to be around us because of our treatment of them?
- * What can we do to resolve the situation?

Can we live up to the God's expectations?

- * We need to be willing to turn situations over to God.
- * We need to see things from others' perspectives.
- * We need to remember how many times we have been forgiven.
- * We need to remember that Gods loves ALL people, not just those we like.
- * We need to pray for strength, guidance and compassion each day.