

Series Title: At the Crossroad: From false beliefs to Freedom

Sermon Title: Week 3: The Lie of Expectations, Part 1

Date: 10-13-19

‡ **Review! False belief #1: Pain is BAD and I need to protect myself from it.**

- **TRUTH: Pain is actually one of God's greatest gifts**
- **NOW! FIRST OF TWO PART MESSAGE....**

An all too familiar story *Luke 9:46-56*

- **Go with me to LUKE 9. Amazing chapter, and we're picking up around verse 28. Incredible story we call the Transfiguration**
- **Jesus takes Peter James, and John up on a mountain... there, while they are praying, Jesus' body begins to glow, his appearance changed, his clothes became like 'flashes of lightning'. THEN, Moses and Elijah appear, in 'glorious splendor'. THEN, a cloud covered them, and they hear the literal voice of God say "THIS IS MY SON, WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN, LISTEN TO HIM!!" And then they were back with just Jesus.**
- **WOW. HOW WOULD THAT IMPACT YOU! Well, we see... NEXT DAY, they come down from the mountain... Jesus drives demon from a boy, heals the boy...**
- **VERSE 43... Everyone amazed... while they were still marveling, Jesus turns to his disciples and tells them that he was going to be 'delivered into the hands of men'... they didn't know what he meant, but it didn't sound good. SO, what did they do next? Remember, the amazed people are still surrounding them... ARGUMENT ABOUT WHICH OF THEM WOULD BE THE GREATEST.**
- **Jesus knows this, brings a child with him, corrects them "the least among you will be the greatest".**
- **In response, JOHN SAYS "Jesus, someone else was driving out demons in your name, we tried to shut him down, because he wasn't us"**
- **Jesus corrects them again... "Why? Who ever isn't against you is for you"**
- **VERY NEXT THING Luke records... Jesus and the guys were headed toward a Samaritan village, and they received word the village didn't want them. James and John (at Transfig!) said... JESUS! Do you want us to call down fire from heaven and destroy them?" Great understatement, 'Jesus rebuked them'**
- **CONTRAST! Transfig... "call down fire".... What is going on here? Friends, what is going on is an all too familiar story. What are the disciples doing through this whole passage? They are DEFENDING THEIR STATUS. Building themselves up. Completely missing point of what Jesus is doing. BUT WHY?**
- **Look back at verse 40. The man brought his son to Jesus, and in front of everyone said, "your disciples couldn't do anything about this". Ouch. Moments later, John is saying "Hey Jesus, that other guy we saw driving out demons (that they couldn't do), we made him stop.**
- **Friends, even though they had been in the presence of Jesus now for some time, they got caught up in the trap that has plagued humanity since Adam and Eve ate the apple. THEY WERE MEASURING THEIR VALUE BY THEIR PERFORMANCE. And when they failed, all of their focus turned to defending their status, which caused them to look at other people with jealousy, fear, and anger.**
- **Even in the presence of Jesus, they were operating with what may be most common FB in all humanity...**

† **False Belief #2:** My well-being depends on meeting the EXPECTATIONS of OTHERS.

- *Anyone here every been stressed because you failed to meet someone's expectations? Let's get under this a bit. REALITY, WE ALL HAVE PEOPLE who place expectations upon us!*

Who are your *expectors*?

• PARENTS and FAMILY • TEACHERS • PEERS • COACHES • SPOUSE • BOSS • SOCIETY • KIDS • SELF

- *We start life learning to be pleasers. We learn that if we please those most important to us, we receive affirmation.*
- *COMMON FOR OUR EXPECTORS respond to us based upon what they SEE- our behaviors, appearance, quality of our PERFORMANCE.*
- *IF LIFE TEACHES US that our identity, our validity, comes from the acceptance of others, then we are very likely to step onto the performance treadmill.*
- *Problem is that we're not in control of it... and the better we perform, the more is expected... and things just speed up, and we can't get off... can't say no... overcommit... we don't stop because we think the treadmill will get us what we want the most...*

† The performance treadmill: We step on it because we want to be LOVED.

- *We tell ourselves, or life teaches us "I will be loved if I measure up". We come to believe our sense of love and acceptance is contingent upon what people can see- the part of the iceberg above the water...*
 - *When being loved is contingent on what is seen in our 'above the water' life, this is the trap of PERFORMANCE BASED ACCEPTANCE.*
- *This is such a trap because...*
 - *Performance based relationships are based upon EXTERNALS.*
- *Behaviors. Appearance. Image. Results. How well we meet expectations!*
- *REALITY! Life is full of expectations that we do need to work toward. That's not the problem. Problem is when we believe that our value, identity, sense of WELL BEING is a function of how well we meet those expectations, because that puts us on the treadmill, and there's a place the treadmill always leads...*

† Where the treadmill leads

- *STRESS! This is what we feel when the EXTERNAL expectations placed upon us exceed the INTERNAL resources we have to meet those expectations.*
- *Early in LA career... lead on Lionshead MP. Manifested symptoms of colon cancer... diagnosis "you're stressed out, not sleeping, eating bad"*
 - *The stress of unmet expectations leads to:*
- *Overwhelmed. Anxiety. Depressed. Hopeless*
- *FEAR. Fear of failure. Rejection/abandonment. EXPOSURE... "What if I fall off this treadmill and people see me for who I really am"*
- *GUILT and SHAME. "I'm not doing enough"... "I am not enough. I am less than" IN BOOK, Pete points out that when we are dealing with guilt and shame over our performance in life, we are really vulnerable to people SHOULDING on us. You should do this. You should do that. We love to should on each other.*
- *One of the worst place the treadmill leads is to fear of intimacy. We come to think our value is based upon our performance, and we are afraid to let people see who we really are. Afraid to let people in.*

The tragic irony: We get on the treadmill because we want to be loved, but maintaining an external image leads to loneliness and isolation.

– **Surely we don't do this in the church, do we?**

† **The religious version of performance based acceptance**

- **In Matthew 23, Jesus warns people about the legalism of the Pharisees.. “They load you up with rules, regulations, obligations.. that they know you can't keep, they don't themselves”.**
- **The christian performance treadmill can be incredibly stressful. How are we supposed to live?**
 - **SHOULD be kind. Giving. Unselfish. Obedient. Servant. Perfect. WHEN. ALWAYS!**
 - **“After all that Christ has done for you, can't you do this for him”? BURN OUT FOR JESUS**
- **Too often, when people try to live the christian life by their own effort, they do burn out, and they check out.**

† **The lens of the New Covenant: Attempting to establish our well-being by meeting others expectations is trying to live by LAW. **Reality!** In Christ, we have been set FREE from the motivation of law!**

Colossians 2:20-23 *Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? ²² These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.*

- **Important context to this, but here's principle: A life based upon rules, upon meeting others expectations, is a life based in externals. Shallow. Surface.**
- **We will have rules and expectations in life, but on their own, they have no power to change our HEART. AND FRIENDS, JESUS IS AFTER OUR HEART.**
- **Famous story...MARK 10**

Mark 10:17-22 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” **Emphasis on I DO**

¹⁸“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

²⁰“Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

– **Hey! I'm performing well!**

²¹ Jesus looked at him and **loved him**. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

²² At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

- **Why did Jesus say this? He knew the source of this mans identity, his façade he had built. It was his success. Jesus LOVED HIM ENOUGH to say... if you want to be complete, lay down your surface identity. Surrender your performance identity. Stop seeking your validity, love, and well-being in how well you measure up, your performance. Instead, FOLLOW ME. FIND YOUR WELL-BEING, your heart, in ME.**
- **I've wondered if Paul might have had this story in mind when he was writing Romans 7.... This is the hope of Christ to all of us performers who need to be delivered from the treadmill...**

Romans 7:4-6 *So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. ⁵ For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶ But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.*

– **THERE IS A NEW WAY! DON'T MISS NEXT WEEK**