

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

Sermon Title: Week 4: The Lie of Expectations, Part 2

Date: 10-27-19

False belief #1: Pain is BAD and I need to protect myself from it

False belief #2: My well-being depends on meeting others EXPECTATIONS

– **Good news that this is NOT true, because it is endemic to the human condition to believe this. We ended last week with the christian hope that IN CHRIST, there is a NEW WAY...**

Romans 7:6 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 are two great distinctions- contrasting concepts- in scripture that are essential to understand, otherwise the Christian message doesn't make sense. FIRST is contrast between OLD COV and NEW COV.**

– **THE SECOND is the chief expression of the difference between the OC and NC, and it is the...**

OLD WAY of living ⇨ versus the ⇨ **NEW WAY of living**

The Flesh and LAW

The Spirit and GRACE

† **Reality! The old way of our flesh trying to keep the law (performance treadmill) focuses on the EXTERNALS of life. The New Way of our Spirit choosing to live by Grace focuses on the INTERNALS of our HEART**

– **And God is after our heart! Emotional health, freedom, security, contentment... these are fruit that grow when we allow God access to who we truly are, what's truly going on inside of us.**

– **We make the choice of faith to live by GRACE when, in increasing measure, we look to God as our source for what we truly believe, our source for all of these most important matters of our heart.**

– **SO, let's talk about this a bit...**

† **Old vs. New: Achieving vs. RECEIVING**

– **It's been well said that God's Grace is not against effort- Grace is against EARNING. When what we are trying to earn is what God freely gives, and invites us to RECEIVE... our well being, matters of heart...**

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

– **By GRACE we receive, as part of our very identity, God's righteousness. We are RIGHT WITH GOD, and nothing we do or not do changes that. This often comes as a blow to legalists, but IN CHRIST our good behavior does not make us more righteous, and our bad behavior does not make us less righteous. Through His Grace, our righteousness- RIGHTNESS with God- is NOT A FUNCTION OF OUR BEHAVIOR. IT IS A GIFT...**

Romans 3:21-22 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

– **Because we are right with God, always, we are called to extend this faith into the entirety of our lives...**

Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him

– **How did we receive.. BY FAITH. BY GRACE.**

– **How do we live? BY FAITH. BY GRACE**

- **THINK OF EPHESIANS 2:8-10... IT is by Grace you have been saved, through faith- and this is not of yourselves, it is Gift of God, not by works, no boast. For we are Gods handiwork... masterpiece, created..**

† Old vs. New: Compliance vs. OBEDIENCE

- **Compliance is doing something you otherwise wouldn't without an external motivation. Could be either rewards or consequence.**
- **OBEDIENCE is a matter of heart. Desire. Even when I do something unpleasant- such as working out or eating healthy (smile)- this is obedience if I do so because of a deeper desire of my heart to be healthy!**
- **THERE IS LOTS of teaching about obedience in NT! AND EVERY LAST ONE is based on the motivation of GRACE. We obey God, follow him, because we LOVE HIM, TRUST HIM, BELONG TO HIM**
- **POWERFUL illustration of this in Ephesians 6...**

Ephesians 6:5-6 *Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶ Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.*

- **Imagine you are slave in roman empire. No way you are not going to be slave. How, in this instance, could you be free? Only one way... if your obedience to your master- even if unjust- comes not from fear of punishment but from love of God... from your heart. HERE our obedience ceases to be to the unjust slave master, but to GOD. THIS IS POWERFUL...**

The vocabulary of the law...

- **Should. Must. Obligation. Have to. Controlled. Pressured. Forced. Coerced. NOT OF GOD!**
- **I've know people over the years who would be freaking out a bit now. NO! Don't tell people they have no obligation! They will run wild, might stop tithing!! ONLY IF WE DON'T LOVE GOD! And if we don't love God, it's not obedience, it's compliance, and it will never last.**

† A little psychology: The important concept of LOCUS of CONTROL

- **Degree to which your own power of choice influences your behavior. Are you CHOOSING based on demands of external influences, or are your actions reflection of WHO YOU ARE, YOUR HEART!**
 - **External locus... vocab of law.**
 - **WWMD. What would mother do?**
 - **Lead to victim mentality... everything about me is what people do to me. Lead to resentment, bitterness.**
- **Often, try to find freedom in rebellion... but think- if our life is defined by rebellion, our actions are still influenced by who we are rebelling against. NOT free**

• Freedom! In Christ, God restores to us an INTERNAL locus of control

- **How?**
- **Think... Why do we allow external influences to have power over our choices? Why grant them power? BECAUSE we have choose to look to them as sources of our deepest needs and desires.**
 - **Approval- acceptance. Whoever I look to for approval holds great power over me.**
 - **Security. Protection. Contentment.**
 - **Hope. Peace. Ability to rest. Joy. LOVE**
- **Deep in our heart we long for and desire these things, and whatever, or whoever, we look to to provide them holds authority in our lives.**
- **BUT!!! WHEN WE RECEIVE THESE FROM GOD, BY FAITH, WE NO LONGER ARE BEHOLDEN TO THE INFLUENCERS IN OUR LIVES.**

- **MOVE from vocabulary of law to vocab of grace... move from the “HAVE TO’S” into “WANT TO”**
- A great gift of salvation is restoration of our true power of **CHOICE**
- **KEY!! Is it possible that in our freedom to make our own choices, we make bad choices? YES! God designed the Garden of Eden so that Adam and Eve had the freedom to CHOOSE to love him, live in obedience to him. THEY MADE THE WRONG CHOICE, disaster...**
- **KEY! When our freedom of choice comes from DEPENDENCE UPON GOD, LOVE OF GOD, LOVE OF PEOPLE, RELATIONSHIP with God, experience of his Goodness and presence... then our POWER OF CHOICE is guided by PRESENCE OF SPIRIT, and OUR DESIRE will be conformed to GOD’S DESIRE, our hearts aligned with God’s heart. WE WILL MAKE GOOD, HEALTHY, SPIRIT LED DECISIONS.**

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

- Irony! True freedom of choice only results from true **SURRENDER** to Christ
- **True independence comes from dependence/Christ**
- **My life belongs to myself when I understand that my life truly belongs to God**
- **Begin to experience control, when surrender control**
- **True freedom from sin... slaves to righteousness**

Romans 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

✠ Reality! God is the only person whose expectations are healthy and realistic! God’s expectations of us never exceed the **RESOURCES** He provides to us.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:13, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Colossians 1:28-29 He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

Psalms 3:3-6 But you, LORD, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. ⁴ I call out to the LORD, and he answers me from his holy mountain. ⁵ I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me. ⁶ I will not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side.

✠ **True Belief #2:** My well-being is in **CHRIST** and comes from living by **GRACE**, not by keeping the **LAW**.

Matthew 11:28-30 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

- **COMMUNION**
- **Passover, story of deliverance from Slavery**
- **Jesus took this, gave it entire new meaning**
 - **By his sacrifice, deliverance from slavery to sin**
 - **Deliverance from slavery to death**
 - **Deliverance from slavery to performance treadmill**
- **Deliverance from... sacrifice... bread**
- **Deliverance INTO... cup/ new covenant.. resurrection**
- **Brought into new life of Grace of God.**

- **As we take bread and cup.. RECEIVE gift of Christ meeting deepest needs of our heart, entering into a life of living by grace... it's all possible because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross**