

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Exodus: Set Free to Live Free

TITLE: Expecting the Unexpected

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 5:1-23

DATE: October 2, 2016

PASTOR: Charlie Boyd

We are in a series on the Book of Exodus from the Old Testament. Why study this book? Exodus is the Old Testament story of the salvation of God's people that points forward to the great salvation that comes to us by faith in Jesus. Exodus helps us better understand what it means for God to *set us free* from our broken, messy lives so we can *live free* in loving, personal relationship with God.

Dealing with Unmet Expectations

We can be told ahead of time that something will be hard (like marriage or parenting, for example), but when those hard times come, knowing ahead of time doesn't make them any easier. This is because we still *expect* things to be easy.

Virtually all disappointment in relationships comes from unmet or unrealistic expectations. Raymond Causey puts it this way: "When your experience doesn't match your expectations, it's a prescription for conflict and disappointment."

The same is true for our spiritual lives. **God tells us that following Jesus won't be easy, but that doesn't make it easier when the hard times come. "Hard" is hard even when you know it's coming.** When your experience with God doesn't match your expectations of God, it's a prescription for disappointment with God.

Why Read Exodus?

The way God dealt with people then, is the way God deals with us now. The way "life" happened to people in the past is the same way "life" happens to us today. God works in our lives today in the same way he worked in the lives of the Israelites. And just like those Israelites, we approach situations with *unmet, unrealistic* expectations, which makes hard times even harder.

Expect the Unexpected

Unmet, unrealistic expectations can quickly become your greatest source of disappointment. Even though God says to expect things to be hard, we don't live that way. So, when we fail to expect the unexpected, we either turn on people or turn to God.

We need to expect the unexpected, especially when the unexpected is *exactly* what God said we should have expected.

When we turn to God in prayer about our unmet expectations, God is not put off with us. He is patient with us.

For Discussion:

1. How do you respond when you follow God's leading in your life, but things turn out to be a lot harder than you expected? Do you find yourself confused and disappointed with God?
2. God tells us clearly in Scripture to *expect the unexpected* and that being a follower of Jesus is not easy. What Scripture can you recall that gives us this reminder?
3. When you face unmet expectations, do you tend to turn *on people* or *to God*?