

Expect God to Meet Your Needs

My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

Unrealistic expectations are fleshly attempts to meet our needs through perfect performance or success, to acquire other's approval of our actions, or to insist that others meet our needs. They are unrealistic because only God can meet our needs. While people are great, or endeavors are fun, they cannot be a substitute for Jesus. **Expectations generate resentment and resistance because they unintentionally imply something or someone is not good enough.** Yet, it is true. Nothing but Christ is good enough to meet your needs. Unfulfilled expectations are a primary source of our conflict, frustration, defeat, and anger at ourselves or others.

These learned behaviors can be replaced by trusting God to meet our needs. Instead of trying to prove worth, milk it from others, or achieve success, we can receive God's acceptance and just enjoy ourselves, others, and life.

Core Needs

- Love
- Acceptance or approval
- Worth or value
- Identity or importance
- Significance
- Security
- Adequacy or ability
- Heard
- Understood
- Belong
- Helped

Other's Expectations of Me

Others may have placed expectations on you to meet their needs. These expectations may have been presented "for your own good" and therefore seemed normal. But God never asked you to meet the needs of others. To the degree that you met their needs, you received some affirmation, which may have caused you to believe worth comes from others' approval. When you couldn't meet their need, you could sense their disapproval or were told of their disappointment in you, reinforcing the performance-based worth lie.

My Expectations of Others

Accepting others based on them meeting your needs can be a learned pattern from previous generations or a brand new way you are trying to meet your needs for love, acceptance, worth, and security. When people "fail" you, it reinforces your lies about yourself or others.

My Expectations of Myself

Those who are talented or strong-willed may place unrealistically high expectations on themselves to perform and prove their worth. Anything less than perfect or anyone's real or perceived disappointment in them is defeating and depressing. Expectations suck the joy out of your life because you must be in control and always perform perfectly to prove you are good enough.

Others who believe they are not competent or smart enough may choose low or no expectations to keep their sense of worthlessness from being exposed. Anticipating failure, they become passive, avoidant, and "easygoing." Your low expectations may not suck the joy out of your life, but they keep you from realizing your dreams and all that God has for you. Either way, spontaneity and enjoyment of learning and growing are undermined and rare.

Free Indeed

Christ has liberated you from the need for acceptance based on performance, allowing you to enjoy yourself, others, and life itself. You now have the freedom to choose what you will engage in, what you will not or cannot do, and how you wish to contribute or get involved. Let go of any false guilt stemming from old habits or subtle hints from others suggesting you fail to make them happy.

- Stop regarding men, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; for why should he be esteemed? Isaiah 2:22
- Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. Psalm 146:3
- Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind [self or others to meet his needs], and whose heart turns away from the Lord. Jeremiah 17:5

Indicators of Unrealistic Expectations

- Stressed, defeated
- Upset with self/others
- Critical of yourself/others
- Fixate on details/words
- Can't be spontaneous
- Have to stick to the plan
- Often angry/frustrated
- Do everything yourself

There is no need to earn or seek what you already have in Christ from others. Embrace that God's unconditional love, acceptance, and approval are based on being "in Christ," not your performance. **Only God can fulfill your needs, so you can stop trying to satisfy your or others' expectations.** You can now love and enjoy yourself and others. Embrace your best efforts, learn from your experiences, and release yourself from the burden of perfectionistic performance.

Unrealistic expectations create frustration, conflict, and defeat.

Expectations Placed on Me by Others	Expectations I Have Place On Others	Expectations I Have Placed On Myself
<input type="checkbox"/> To reassure them.	<input type="checkbox"/> To remove my fear or angst.	<input type="checkbox"/> To maintain a sense of security.
<input type="checkbox"/> To pick up their slack.	<input type="checkbox"/> To pick up my slack.	<input type="checkbox"/> To keep everything under control.
<input type="checkbox"/> To conform to their ways, beliefs, and preferences.	<input type="checkbox"/> To conform to my ways, preferences, and beliefs.	<input type="checkbox"/> To conform to specific standards, attempting to prove worth.
<input type="checkbox"/> To pursue things that they enjoy and be their constant companion.	<input type="checkbox"/> To pursue things that I enjoy and be my constant companion.	<input type="checkbox"/> To place excellence or order above or before enjoyment.
<input type="checkbox"/> To excel in school/sports to validate their parenting.	<input type="checkbox"/> To excel in school/sports to validate my parenting.	<input type="checkbox"/> To excel at and maintain everything for self-validation.
<input type="checkbox"/> To attain an image that validates them.	<input type="checkbox"/> To maintain an image that reflects me well.	<input type="checkbox"/> To earn an image that promotes me.
<input type="checkbox"/> To fill some of the roles of a spouse.	<input type="checkbox"/> To fill some of the spousal roles.	<input type="checkbox"/> To be all things to all people.
<input type="checkbox"/> To keep the family secrets.	<input type="checkbox"/> To tell me what I want to hear.	<input type="checkbox"/> To only share what looks good.
<input type="checkbox"/> To listen/solve all their problems.	<input type="checkbox"/> To side with and agree with me.	<input type="checkbox"/> To confront or blame others.
<input type="checkbox"/> To read their minds and know what they think/feel.	<input type="checkbox"/> To read my mind and know what I think/feel.	<input type="checkbox"/> To assume responsibility for others' feelings and quality of life.
<input type="checkbox"/> To meet some or all their needs.	<input type="checkbox"/> To meet some or all my needs.	<input type="checkbox"/> To meet some of my own needs.

Prayer

Father God,

I have tried to meet others' expectations and set some expectations for myself and others. I tried to meet my needs by creating and fulfilling expectations. Today, I proclaim that You have and will meet all my needs in Christ Jesus. I forfeit all expectations and choose to trust you and rest in Christ.

Thank you for strengthening me in the inner man with the knowledge that I am loved, accepted, approved, have worth and value, and a new identity. Holy Spirit, renew my mind in Christ. Amen.