

## DESIRE VS EXPECTATIONS

Some time ago MediaPost.com announced results of research done to identify and quantify the American citizens' concerns. Among the top ones are terrorism, war, the economy, education, health care coverage and other health issues. The leading concern among personal challenges and problems is the cost of living.

Like you maybe, I had high expectations for my stock portfolio two years ago. But now I've shifted those to my longevity, which I'll need if we're to continue our habit of eating into our 80s.

I've always wrestled with unreachable assumptions, presumptions, suppositions, speculations.....

My late father was a tyrant whose goals for me I never measured up to. Or if I did, he never told me. And he made me pay dearly, physically and emotionally, for not meeting them.

I attended very demanding schools where good grades were the coin of the realm. Our GPA's were posted in the hall and in the school paper.

In my years in broadcasting I lived and died by the performance sword. First, it was the Ratings monster when I was on the air and in management. Then in Sales, it was monthly billing goals.

Of course, my wife and I both placed high expectations on me, and I on her and our children!

Now, as a grandfather, I'm dealing with a whole new set of expectations. My "fun" outings to Toys-R-Us and PetSmart with our Anacortes granddaughter, Emily, 11, used to always end in frustration 'til we recalibrated our expectations. She'd been operating under the illusion that Grandpa would buy everything she wanted. And, silly me, I thought she'd be reasonable! So, now, going into the store, I give her a budget, and she has no problem staying within it. Harmony!

The potential, disastrous results from shattered expectations include disappointment, grief, depression, anger, ruptured relationships, even violence (11 p.m. news!).

I've been learning the hard way that there's a big difference between DESIRES and EXPECTATIONS. I battle setting ridiculous expectations for myself, but my expectations of others have now been softened by what I'm learning about getting and receiving GRACE.

**The Big Question today is a two-parter:**

- (a) **Whose and what expectations have you been unable to live up to?**
- (b) **And on whom are you placing unreasonable expectations, and why?**

(DISCUSSION)

My earliest perception of God was shaped by how I viewed my Dad. Two forces are vying for control of our lives: Performance-based living and Grace-based living. Moving from being graded on your performance to being accepted -- and loved -- just as you are is like being transported to another planet. You need to learn a new language and lifestyle for this strange, new culture.

When I turned 30, I began to hear what the "grace of God" was all about. I learned that God loves me "unconditionally." But that seemed outlandish for a perfect God to love me with all my warts and screw-ups. It was a totally foreign concept! And I fought it.

Somehow holding high expectations gives you a sense of being in control, so the tendency is to think that by giving them up, you'll lose control.

But by consistently being exposed to learning about God's grace (His lovingkindness that gives me what I don't deserve), my hurts from broken expectations began to heal.

It was that foundation that put me on a journey of trying to love others without expectations, as God does. And when you get a whiff of that rarified air, it's like exiting 405 in rush hour, and merging onto the autobahn.

The only way I can continue to live this way is to be regularly reminded of how much God loves me, of how He's saved me from a fate worse than death, and of how He's keeping me in His grip.

NONE of us deserves to be loved THAT way. That's why it's called GRACE.

It's a GIFT to be received from God, and a gift for us to give to others. And, men, I cannot give you any more valuable gift than to help you understand this grace, and apply it in your life.

**Let's read 2 Corinthians 15-21.**

His Deal

[www.HisDeal.org](http://www.HisDeal.org)

[george@HisDeal.org](mailto:george@HisDeal.org)

Copyright © 2022. George Toles. All Rights Reserved.