



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to Jeremiah 29: 11

Title: High Expectations

Theme: Grasping the Promises of God in the Lord's Work

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Introduction: *Often after men and women of God have taken time to fast, pray and surrender their hearts over to the cleansing work of God they will be lead of the Holy Spirit to special promises found in the Word of God. As the Holy Spirit brings revelation of these promises, illumination of these truths will keep obedient Christians steadfast, faithful, and joyful in their work with Jesus Christ.*

Proposition: *I would propose to you that there are promises of God found in His Word that bring “High Expectations” in service to the King of kings and Lord of Lords. Christians can expect success in their labors with the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, “...stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” Galatians 6:9 says, “...at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just what can the obedient children of God expect in their labors with the Lord and in their walk with Christ? There are four truths that the Holy Spirit of God wants you to grasp as you labor diligently in the work of the Lord.*

Transitional Sentence: *The first truth worth grasping in this message today is that the obedient, faithful Christian can expect to be rewarded as he diligently seeks the Lord in faith. Hebrews 11:6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”*

Let the Holy Spirit of Christ put these truths deep within your heart. “He rewards those who seek Him.” Those who enjoy God’s promises in service to Him are those who have genuine faith. Faith (*pistis*), means to be loyal and steadfast in devotion and allegiance to the Lord. (Practical Word Studies of the New Testament)

Reward getters are those who are worshippers of Christ. They are surrendered to the Holy Spirit and understand that their real reward is what God told Abram in a vision, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward. ” (Genesis 15:1) They know that Jesus is the greatest reward that anyone can receive.

The Bible tells about King Asa, who reformed Judah and reigned in Jerusalem from 911-870 B.C. (Who's Who in the Bible) He was a great grandson of Solomon and the Bible says, Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD." (1 Kings 15:11) In Biblical history we read that the "...Spirit of God came upon Azariah... He went out to meet Asa and said to him, 'Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you when you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.'" (2 Chronicles 15:1-2)

This passage of scripture holds a great promise to the child of God who expresses true faith by a surrendered heart to God's will. At the same time holds a curse to all who reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The warning is for those who refuse to gain His counsel through the written Word, who waste their Holy Spirit gifts and talents upon themselves and do not exercise them for the glory of God. There are blessings for the child of God who sacrificially exercises his Spiritual gifts for the good of the Body of Christ and for the well-fair of the lost. They will know God's greatest reward, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and will enjoy a Holy Spirit led and empowered life on this earth. They also know God tells His children in regards to do the work of reformation, "But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded." (2 Chronicles 15:7)

Matthew 28 gives Christians the same promise that was given to Moses as they go forth under the authority of Christ to preach the gospel. Jesus Christ says, "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20) The King James and the New American Standard Bibles have the best translation with "I am with you always..." As God sent Moses, He sent His apostles and this promise goes on to His obedient as they teach others how to become disciples of Christ.

Obedient Christians in making disciples of Christ will have His comfort (John 16:7) and have His present help (Psalm 46:1). He will carry them through difficulties, plead their case before God, be in all their services, strengthen them in all their suffering. He will make their ministries effectual in due time. He will break down the strongholds of Satan.

The King James Bible says that Christ will be with us until "the end of the world." As long as this dispensation continues the Lord will be with His church empowering those who are now faithfully working with the Lord. He will continue to rise up followers that will answer to the call to make disciples after we are gone. The Lord's work will continue on and on and on until this world as we know it has passed away and the Lord makes all things new.

Satan has many ways to make the servants of God think that their labors are in vain. Hebrews 11:6 says otherwise and it is a truth to be grasped. God rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Count the souls that have been saved, the ministries that continue on, the many times the Lord has provided for your needs, simple answers to prayers and the fellowship that is among the believers.

Transitional Sentence: *Because He is faithful, Christians can expect that He rewards those who diligently live a life of faith and seek His will for their lives. The obedient can expect to see evidence of God's Hand working among them.* Mark 10:27 says, "Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.'"

This passage of scripture is found in the teaching of Jesus in His dealing with a young man whom Luke said was a ruler (Luke 18:18). It is a key text to bringing understanding that the salvation of a man's soul is the work of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. In Mark 10:17-27 we read of a rich young man who came to Jesus and asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17) He had good morals and wealth. He kept the Ten Commandments by not committing murder, adultery, stealing, giving false testimony, nor defrauding people. He honored his father and mother. Jesus told the man he lacked one thing. He needed to sell all he had and give it to the poor and he would then have treasures in heaven. (Mark 10:21) Jesus also said, "...then come, follow Me." (Mark 10:21)

In the discourse with the young rich man Jesus is not teaching that wealth is evil and He did not teach that poverty is better than riches. He did not teach that only the poor can be saved. He did teach that discipleship is very costly and having wealth and depending upon one's good morals can be a hindrance to repentance and acceptance of His being Savior and Lord.

Most people live in a false security. They have several good churches in their community and have more than they need. Compared to the poor who live in third world countries, most Americans are wealthy. There is a powerful form of Godliness that denies the power of God in our country. The true gospel is probably rejected by most in America because they feel that they are Christians simply by their belief in Jesus. They are impossible to reach because they feel they are good enough to go to heaven.

Jesus has great news, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." Just as Christ brought the attention of the young rich man to what it takes to inherit eternal life we can expect God, by His Holy Spirit to do a work in our families, among our friends, co-workers and community. Jesus came to seek and save the lost in this world (Luke 19:10) and He has commissioned Christians to go and make disciples under His authority. (Matthew 28:18-19)

Jesus promises power from the Holy Spirit to all Christians who will answer the call to make disciples. Jesus said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

While living lives surrendered to and empowered by the Holy Spirit of Christ, Christians can expect Him do His work in and through them. Jesus says the Holy Spirit's work is to, "...convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in Me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see Me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned." (John 16:8-10) The Lord will work in Christians and through them by the Holy Spirit. He will give all who come in contact with His children the opportunity to choose this day the God of whom they will serve.

Transitional Sentence: *Christians can expect to see God's hand working in their lives and through them as they become involved in the battle for the souls of men and they can expect His peace while doing His work.* John 14:27 says, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

The peace that Jesus spoke of here is not exemption from conflict and trial. The peace He spoke of is the calmness that comes in confidence of God. (The Expositors Bible Commentary) Jesus knew this peace and He promises to give it to those who would but trust in Him.

Christians are going to face trials and even persecutions. Thus the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul instructs Christians on how to get God's peace. Philippians 4:6-7 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

His peace is an armed guard around their spiritual heart and puts restless thoughts to rest. His peace is too subtle for intellectual analysis yet steadies the heart. His peace cannot be fully explained but can be experienced. Christians may not fully understand how God puts His peace within them but many have yielded to the call to prayer and enjoy it.

Transitional Sentence: *When Christians pray they can expect God's peace. Jesus promises His peace to the children of God. Christians can also expect the Holy Spirit's presence daily.* 1 Corinthians 6:19 says, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own..."

The Holy Spirit prompts every Christian today to remember that they were purchased at a great price. God sent His one and only Son to be mocked by man and die upon the Cross of Calvary so they can have a relationship with God. "You are not your own," you belong to God. "Therefore, honor God with your body." (1 Corinthians 6:20)

Are you enjoying and responding to His urgings to read the Bible and pray?

The Holy Spirit will guide you through your day and remind you that everyone is watching the way you live and respond to life's difficulties and God's blessings. You can ask God to make you sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings. Obedience to His guiding will enable you to live a joyful and victorious life.

If you allow Him, He will guide you throughout your entire day. You can know what King David came to know, "guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." (Psalm 25:5)

Walter Baxendale wrote about a man who put his hope in God all day long and was very sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading. "Admiral Sir Thomas Williams:"

All of us have family members, friends and co-workers who are stranded on three islands. The flesh, the world and the devil holds many captive and they are without hope. Being led by the Holy Spirit whom lives in you continually can steer you into their lives at just that right moment so they may hear the words of the gospel, which can save their souls.

In Closing: *In closing, let the Holy Spirit of God place these four truths within your heart. Live in expectation that God wants to and will enable His obedient children to;*
One: Enjoy His rewards for diligently seeking Him in true faith. **Two:** See Him work in reaching out to family members, friends and co-workers. **Three:** Enjoy His peace. **Four:** Experience daily the presence of God's Holy Spirit in their life.

Let us pray!!!!