

## Jesus – Beyond Expectations

#8 in a series on – *Jesus' Way Is Like No Other Way*  
Texts from New Living Translation unless otherwise noted  
Major text included from John 5 -- NIV-2010

Today I want to talk about e-x-p-e-c-t-a-t-i-o-n-s.  
We ALL have them. All kinds of them. Scads of them.  
Most of them we don't even realize how we got them  
or where they came from.

We don't know if they are sensible or not.  
Many of them we apply more rigorously to others  
than to our own selves.

I want you, today, please... make a promise to me...  
and I will make the same promise to you...  
especially make this promise to your own self...  
for the rest of your life....  
"I hereby promise to examine my own expectations  
every time I think somebody else is wrong...  
wrong about A N Y T H I N G ... Every thing."

OK... I haven't made the case for doing that. Not yet.  
So if you are saying to yourself, why should I do that...???  
Here, from the Scriptures is why I think  
moving beyond our expectations  
is what God expects of us.

Wm. Barclay, one of the greatest Christian writers of the last  
century, made this observation (*in The Mind of Jesus,  
opening sentences*)

"there are two great beginnings in the life of every person...  
the day we are born into the world...  
the day we discover why we were born."

Barclay believes that for Jesus, the 2<sup>nd</sup> day was when he was 12  
years old and came to Jerusalem for the first time.

In those days, every Jewish child in the Holy Land in an  
observant family like Joseph and Mary surely had,  
would probably make his/her first pilgrimage to Jerusalem  
at age 12. That is still the approximate time of *bar/bat  
mitzvah* today. And it is the approximate time of  
confirmations today which essentially carry forward the  
same sort of practice in Christian circles.

Jesus had heard all about the amazing temple... huge gold  
plates on the East wall, facing the morning sun, white  
washed all the rest... looking like snow on the mountain  
top. This was the place where God dwelt. And the family  
either brought their lamb to be sacrificed for their sins, or  
they sold something at home and brought the money to  
purchase one when they got there. There were Psalms they  
recited... e.g. 122.1, "I was glad when they said to me, Let  
us go to the house of the Lord..."

Now after walking about 100 miles with a large group of  
people for nearly a week, camping out at night, the last day  
they climbed uphill for 20 miles or so and then crossing the  
Mount of Olives .... there was the magnificent temple.  
And like any boy he was thrilled and amazed with its glory.

But then they went to sacrifice...  
slit the lambs throat and watch it die.  
the priests lined up with gold and silver bowls to catch the  
blood  
splashing it on the side of the altar  
cutting up the lamb and burning part of it.

What a disgusting sight, smelly, slippery... 250,000 lambs every  
year at Passover according to one Roman count.

Later that week, Jesus had another 'disappointment' or 'eye-  
opening realization' ....

during the great feast of Passover, the Sanhedrin met in public for their discussions (debates). Jesus, the precocious boy, already an advanced student of the Scriptures, eagerly looked forward to hearing great scholars discuss the Law.

But imagine his disappointment when he sat in on their public discussions. He must have thought they would be talking about mercy, and love, and holiness.

Instead, they were talking about . . . minute little details about Sabbath law.

*If a cripple had a wooden leg, how far could he walk on the Sabbath to avoid carrying a burden?*

*Could you wear a false tooth on the Sabbath and not carry a burden?*

*How big of a stone could you pick up to scare birds away from the grain bin, or to keep a predator away from the flock?*

*This is not made up... these were actual topics as listed in the great collection of Jewish books, the Mishnah.*

What did any of this have to do with healing broken hearts? How did these discussions give hope or insight to people who were feeling immensely guilty for their sins?

Jesus criticized these teachers of the Law at a later time, saying they were neglecting the weightier matters of the Law, justice and mercy.

So, at just 12 years old, Jesus began to realize what HIS whole life's purpose would be. That was his 2<sup>nd</sup> birth.

Now (as we will read in John 5) nearly 20 years later, with much more study of the Scriptures and personal examination behind him, Jesus comes to Jerusalem READY to publicly embark on the purpose for which God sent his one and only to these people (and all the rest of us).

## John 5 - The Healing at the Pool

[NIV-2010, my emphasis & text footnotes added]

- 1 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda [aka Bethsaida, Bethzatha] and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. 3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. 4 [and they waited for the moving of the waters. From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease they had.] 5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, **“Do you want to get well?”**
- 7 “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”
- 8 Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” 9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.
- The day on which this took place was a **Sabbath**, 10 and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”
- 11 But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’ ”
- 12 So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?”
- 13 The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.
- 14 Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”
- 15 The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

## The Authority of the Son

- 16 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. 17 In his defense Jesus said to

them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working." 18 For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

*[I strongly advise the reader to continue to the end of the chapter and study Jesus' discourse with the Jewish leaders. BT]*

For three fast moving years, Jesus consistently and courageously went everywhere with this purpose... to get people to **move beyond their own expectations.**

Isn't that what Jesus asked this man to do?

With the simple words to just pick up the mat and walk away, he asked that man to set aside 4 decades of his assumptions. To set aside all his experiences of not being able to walk... never... not his whole life.

But that nameless fellow...

**DID move beyond his expectations... and he experienced a miracle.**

Matthew and Mark and Luke and John all tell us about score of events, about hundreds of encounters Jesus had with people, about many personal traits of Jesus, about scads of teachings of Jesus.

As John succinctly put it, all the things he wrote about had one purpose, (20:30-31) to help everyone believe in Jesus. And by having that belief ... everyone will have a whole new experience of life.

Of all the amazing things Jesus said, these words seem most important to me...  
"I am the way, the truth and the life.  
No man comes to the Father, but by me."  
[John 14:6]

### **Moving beyond our expectations... In the final analysis... isn't THAT just another definition of... F A I T H?**

All of us, are created with the possibility of moving beyond our own view of things. God has given us that when he breathed into the first person... Everyone has inherited that.

Always before...

Now...

And for the rest of our lives... there is the possibility of looking beyond... **the possibility of living by faith.**

As we sing...

"My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

**will you make a promise to God,  
that because of Jesus Christ  
in whom you believe,  
you will never again allow your expectations  
to cloud your mind, or limit your soul,  
or let them stop you from doing new things  
by faith.**

And if you are ready to step forward and say in front of others that you will follow where Jesus leads you, this song is your invitation to do that, too.