

Prayer Focus This Week

“Expectations - Part 2”

In Acts chapter 3, Peter and John were on their way to the temple to pray. Outside the gate called Beautiful sat a lame man who was carried there daily to beg from people entering the temple. When Peter and John drew alongside the beggar, he asked them for money, expecting maybe a few coins from them. But God had other plans!

There was another man in John chapter 5 who had been crippled for thirty eight years; his greatest expectation was that someone would help him into the pool called Bethesda, but on the day Jesus came by, God had other plans! Day by day, week by week, year after year, these men took up their positions at the gates, never expecting things to change in their lives, content with receiving just enough to get through each day. If we aren't careful, that's how we can become when we come to church week after week, hoping we'll get just enough to get us through our week, then returning the following week for another meager handout.

Ephesians 3: 20 says God "...is able to do exceedingly abundantly **above** all that we ask or think (imagine)..." God has given us so many great and precious promises, but more often than not, we are like the lame men - we have a "beggar" mentality when it comes to the things of God. 2 Peter 1:3: "His divine power has given us **everything** we need for life and godliness through our **knowledge** of Him..." This is why it is critical to **know** (and apply) what the word of God says - the more we know, the better we understand, the more we understand His promises, the higher our **expectations** will be, the higher our expectations are, the more we are likely to receive!

Let's look at Isaiah 43:18-19: "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a **new thing!** Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" (NIV) It is human nature to get into a routine and not deviate from it, because most of us don't like change, but here God is telling us to not dwell on (or **in**) the past because he wants to do a new thing in us; He doesn't want us to be stuck in the ruts or routines of the past.

Some might say "But that's the OT and it's different now!" Not really - listen to what Paul said in Philippians 3:13-14: "**Forgetting what is behind** and straining towards what is **ahead**, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." If Paul, one of the most powerful and influential Apostles wasn't satisfied with all he had accomplished and how far he had come, do we dare get complacent going through our weekly rituals at church and thinking we're okay? No! We need more!

We need to confess to the Lord our "beggar" mentality, and the fact that we've been satisfied with what was! God has so much more for us! If we will read His word more expectantly, we'll find treasures we never noticed before! If we pray more expectantly, we'll be rewarded with answers to our prayers we never thought possible! If we praise Him more expectantly, we'll experience His Presence like never before! Dare to let go of the past, and ask Him to do a **new thing** in your life!