

Expose Your Expectations Small Group Guide

Warm-up Questions:

1. What's the most unexpected or "unique" gift you've ever received, and did you end up loving it or re-gifting it?
2. If you had to live one day with everything going exactly as planned or one day of unexpected adventures and surprises, which would you choose and why?

Key Passage: Luke 1:26-38, Luke 2:33-35

When things in life don't go as we planned it exposes our expectations. Mary and Joseph's story shows that God's plans often come wrapped in disruption, challenging us to trust Him even when the path is unclear. This story encourages us to release our expectations, embrace divine disruptions, and trust that God's plans, though often different from our own, are always better. In the end, we know that God's Word never fails and He will see through everything that he has promised us. That gives us the strength to face loss and disappointment with hope and a victorious spirit.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. After the angel Gabriel delivered God's message to Mary, she experienced a gap between what she thought her life would be like and what God chose for her. What gaps are you currently experiencing between what you expected your life would be and where you currently are? How are you dealing with those gaps?
2. In order for expectations to be valid they have to be conscious, realistic, spoken, and agreed upon. What frustration are you experiencing in your relationships with people because your expectations of people lack one or more of those elements?
3. What unmet expectations have you been silently carrying, and how have they shaped your view of God and His faithfulness? Consider Mary's story in Luke 1:26-38. How might God be using unexpected circumstances to prepare you for something greater?
4. Reflect on Matthew 16:24. How does self-denial, dying to your own way, and following Christ lead to a new life? What do you have to leave behind today to follow Jesus' way?
5. Read Luke 1:37-38 and 1 John 5:3-5. God hasn't made us to just wrestle with the challenges of life but to overcome them. What role does the Word of God and faith play in overcoming the challenges of this life?
6. What promises in the Scriptures do you draw strength from to live in victory over sin, the world, and the devil?

Pray