

### 30 GOD EXPECTATIONS

*Psalms 62:5 My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him.*

*Psalms 131:1 LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor my eyes lofty. Neither do I concern myself with great matters, nor with things too profound for me.*

We learn to recognise that grovelling in disappointment is really a sin because in essence it is an inverted form of self-indulgence. Self gets stepped on and begins to smart. Disappointments are directly linked to expectations. If there are no expectations, there would be no let-downs. This is why some prefer to immunise themselves from the pain that may come with disappointments by having low or no expectations. High expectation always carries with it the risk of big disappointment, but also the potential of great reward. The way to prevent disappointment is not to dismiss expectation, but to deny self. Our expectations should be from God, not ourselves. Any great expectations should be 'God expectations'. What is His appointment cannot be a disappointment. It is what Amy Carmichael referred to as the 'hope which no disappointment tires'. The absence of self takes the sting out of a situation which looks hopeless. When self is crucified, one can go on with divine optimism and quiet confidence in the face of every setback, knowing that God always has the last word.

The practical test is to look out for our reaction where it hurts. Recognise it for what it is and take it as another opportunity for the outworking of the cross. At the same time, we also need to ensure that our expectations are rightly and realistically pitched. In *Psalms 131* we find a description of the experience of coming to terms with our real selves and our plans before the presence of God. There needs to be a right balance of idealism and realism in our expectations. Without idealism, there will be no venture and no gain. But without realism, it is all vision and no action. Expectations are a relative thing. They should take into account one's proven capacity, present capacity, and potential capacity. It is better to aim a little lower and achieve something concrete, than aim for the sky and build only castles in the air.

When I am so full of myself and my own expectations, it may take a few knocks to the ground to wake me to the fact that mine may not be such a great idea after all. Rather than dashing off headstrong and falling headlong into a pit of our own digging, we learn to be guided by what God expects of us before we begin, as well as all along the way. It takes the sweat and the swagger out of our stride.