

Friday

Read 1 Corinthians 2:9. Meditate on this verse for a while. What does this mean for you ultimately? Is this also true for our earthly lives, as well as what God has for us in heaven? How so?

What are you expecting God to do in and through you today? This weekend?

Give your expectations and plans to God right now. Ask Him to give you an optimism based on His promises and power.

Saturday

Please pray for the services this weekend! Ask God to continue to develop in you an optimistic spirit of expectancy that's based on the reality of His nature!

Expecting God's Best

René Schlaepfer
March 14 & 15, 2009



“According to your faith will it be done to you.” *Matthew 9:29b* (NIV)

“And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.” *Matthew 13:58*

Three approaches to life:

- **Pessimism**

“Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” *Numbers 14:3*

- **Blind optimism**

“... they lead my people astray, saying, ‘Peace,’ when there is no peace... when a flimsy wall is built, they cover it with whitewash.” *Ezekiel 13:10*

- **Biblical optimism**

“I live in **eager expectation** and hope that I will always be ready to speak out boldly for Christ **while I'm going through these trials here**... for to me, living means opportunities for Christ, and dying — well, that's better yet!” *Philippians 1:20a,21* (LB)

- It _____
- It _____
- It _____

Five strategies for biblical optimism (in discouraging times)

1. Initiate _____

“In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in **expectation**.” *Psalms 5:3*

“**This** is the day the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it!” *Psalms 118:24*

2. Meditate

“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**.” *Jeremiah 29:11*

“And we know that in **all things** God works for the **good** of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” *Romans 8:28*

3. Eliminate

“Do not let any **unwholesome talk** come out of your mouths, but **only what is helpful** for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” *Ephesians 4:29*

“By our **speech** we can ruin the world, turn harmony to chaos, throw mud on a reputation, send the whole world up in smoke and go up in smoke with it, smoke right from the pit of hell.”

James 3:6 (Message)

4. Participate

“... as we have opportunity, let us **do good** to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” *Galatians 6:10*

5. Concentrate

“We were really **crushed** and **overwhelmed**, and **feared** we would never live through it. We felt we were **doomed** to die and saw how **powerless** we were to help ourselves; **but that was good**, for then **we put everything into the hands of God**, who alone could save us, for **he can even raise the dead**. And He did help us... yes, and we **expect** him to do it again and again.”

2 Corinthians 1:8b–10 (LB)

What am I expecting God to do
in _____
in the next _____?

Daily Meditations

Monday

Read Psalm 5:3, Psalm 118:24, and Mark 1:35. Do you consider yourself to lean toward optimism or pessimism? How would those around you answer that question?

How would you define “biblical optimism”?

List the two most biblically optimistic people you know. What can you learn about a positive outlook from them?

continued 

As you initiate your day, think of things about today that are gifts from God in which you can choose to rejoice. Write down five right here:

Thank God for today! Ask Him to help you see things all day long in which to rejoice! Ask Him to give you a spirit of “eager expectation”.

Tuesday

Read Numbers 14:1-10. This is a fascinating story about the Israelites. After they were freed from Egyptian slavery and crossed the Sinai desert, they had an opportunity to go into the land of Canaan. But there was disagreement about what the future held there! Who displays pessimism here? Who shows biblical optimism?

What makes Caleb and Joshua biblically optimistic, not just blindly optimistic?

Do you think you would have sided with Caleb and Joshua, or the rest of the people? Why?

Ask God to help you see not just the challenges of the future, but the God-given opportunities!

Wednesday

Read Jeremiah 29:11, Romans 8:28-29, and 2 Corinthians 1:8-11. What do these verses tell you about God’s power?

What do they tell you about God’s plans for those who love him?

List one area of your life that currently has you pessimistic. What would biblical optimism look like in this situation? How can you move in that direction today?

Meditate today on the power of God. Thank Him for His power.

Thursday

Read Ephesians 4:29 and James 3:5-6. Think back over the last 24 hours. How would you characterize your speech — as harmful or helpful?

What role does negative speech, said to others or even just to ourselves, play in pessimism? How have you experienced this personally?

How have you experienced positive speech leading you to a more positive outlook?

Ask God today to help bring your speech and even self-talk under His control. Pray that your words will spread optimism to those you’re near!

over 



“Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish **infinitely more than we might ask or think.**”
Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)