

The
Attitude
of
FAITH



Saying Yes to
God's Power in Your Life

FRANK DAMAZIO

****Advanced Reader Copy—for Review Purposes Only****

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *New King James Version*, © 1979, 1980, 1982, 1984 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (KJV) are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible. Scripture quotations marked (WEY) are taken from *The New Testament in Modern Speech: An Idiomatic Translation into Everyday English from the Text of "The Resultant Greek Testament"* by R. F. (Richard Francis) Weymouth. Scripture quotations marked (MSG) are taken from *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* by Eugene H. Peterson, © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are from the *Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, © 1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*®, NIV®, © 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NCV) are taken from the *Holy Bible, New Century Version*®, © 1987, 1988, 1991 by Word Publishing, a division of Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (WUEST) are taken from *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation* by Kenneth S. Wuest, © 1961 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (AMP) are taken from the *Amplified Bible*, © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

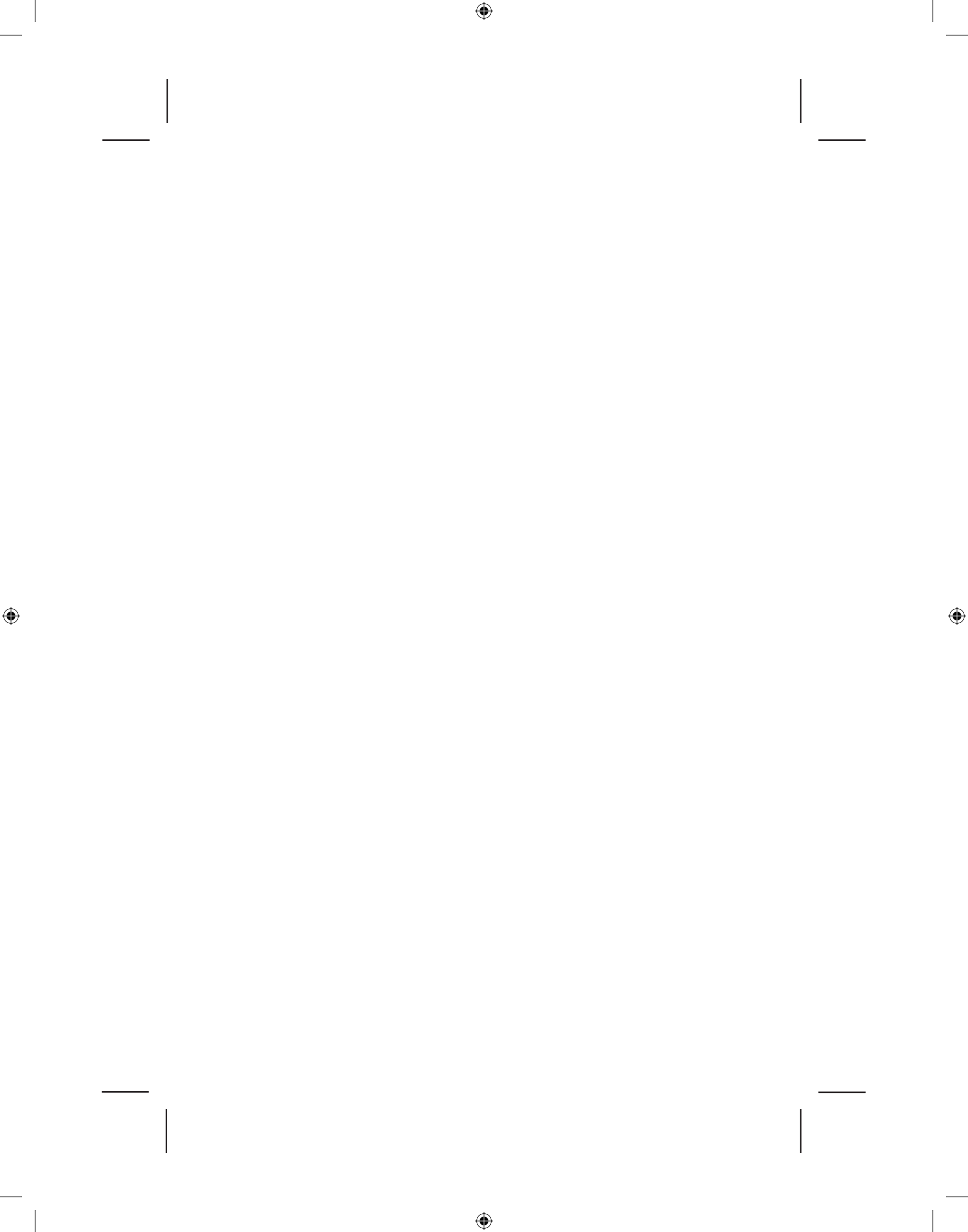
The Attitude of Faith:
Saying Yes to God's Power in Your Life

© 2009 by Frank Damazio
ISBN: 978-1-60374-114-9
Printed in the United States of America

Whitaker House
1030 Hunt Valley Circle
New Kensington, PA 15068
www.whitakerhouse.com

****This advanced reader copy has not been fully edited and is for review purposes only****

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical—including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system—without permission in writing from the publisher. Please direct your inquiries to permissionseditor@whitakerhouse.com.



CHAPTER 1

Yes to Expectation

Two men walked through an empty field. One saw exactly what he expected to see—nothing. He waded through tall weeds toward a desolate orange grove, thinking, *What a useless wasteland!* The other man bounced over the weeds with excited expectancy. “This is it! This is the place! This is where my dreams come true! Can you see it? Over here is going to be a merry-go-round and over there I will put a roller coaster. This is what I have always wanted!”

The second man knew beyond the shadow of a doubt exactly what was going to happen with that empty field and its surrounding orange groves. He could not see it with his physical eyes, but he knew inside what it was going to look like, and he knew what it would take to make it happen. He could not see the dream; he could not touch it, but he lived with expectation for the day when it would become reality. It was a wild expectation that his friends laughed at, but today that wild expectation is a multi-million dollar theme park called Disneyland.

Nobody succeeds beyond his or her wildest expectations unless he or she has wild expectations. If Walt Disney had been willing to settle for a small dream, not only would Disneyland never have happened, but neither would Disney World in Florida, France, or Japan.

Have Great Expectations

What are your expectations for life? Do you have high expectations or low expectations? Or do you not have any and do not care? Are you excited about your future or are you facing it with deep apprehension and perhaps with fear?

Say “yes” to expectation. Expectation determines what you will have in your life and future, but it also represents what you are willing to settle for. Are you going to settle for an empty field or are you going to expect the fulfillment of the lifelong dream? Expectation is a very

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH

powerful force in your life, and you must learn how to fully cultivate it. If you believe that whatever you expect with faith and certainty will enter your life, you will examine your expectation level and fully cultivate it to its highest potential.

Expectation is the power to have an idea that becomes so real that you see it and feel it before you can hold it. It is like a giant magnet that attracts into your life what you expect. Expectation empowers you to think the unthinkable, do the undoable, and it turns uncertain hoping into certainty.

Everyone has expectations, and these expectations come in a variety of sizes. Some are huge, such as the dream career job, the business you hope to create, the person you dream of sharing your life with, or the family you hope to raise. You may have expectations about how you will live life, about your health, about your happiness, or about your level of success.

Expectation can simply be defined as fixing your eyes on the promised blessing with an eager anticipation of its arrival. An expectation is a strong desire that is filled with anticipation and confidence in obtaining what is expected. To live with expectation is to live with hope, dreams, imagination, and desires.

Desire Is a Strong Feeling with an Intentional Aim

Desire is more than just wishful thinking. It is passionate and resolute determination of the will to achieve that which is sought after. When you desire something, you long for it and crave it. You have a passion for it, yearn after it, and strive to obtain it. A desire is a strength of deep feelings, and it often implies strong intention and aim. It is not simply a bland wish, but a desperate yearning that will give anything to obtain that which is desired. Desire is a longing for something that saturates the entire soul.

Psalm 20:4 encourages us, “*May He grant you according to your heart’s desire, and fulfill all your purpose.*” God can grant you your heart’s desire. The thing you long for—that you earnestly and passionately reach for—God can give to you.

The famous evangelist D. L. Moody reportedly spoke powerful words of expectation to his sons from his death bed: “If God be your partner, make your plans large.” God *is* our partner, and our plan can be and should be large. Will you allow the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see what God has in store for you?

Desire Is Focused in Christ

Psalm 37:4 says, “*Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.*” Desire is a God-given purposefulness for your life that is first fulfilled when you surrender your life to Christ and allow Him to take control. When you surrender to Jesus, you belong to Him, and He has the keys to your life’s fulfillment. As you allow Him to be the Lord of your life and as you walk in obedience to Him, He will direct your path, focusing your desires into alignment with His will for your life. He will give you the strength and ability to see those desires become reality.

The Message Bible says it well:

Calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, “Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You’re not in the driver’s seat; I am. Don’t run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I’ll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to saving yourself, your true self.”
(Mark 8:34–35 MSG)

The disciples made the decision to walk away from their own desires and to follow Christ’s desires. We scarcely lack desire; we just focus it on the wrong things. Pure desire to follow Christ cannot be achieved until your desire for self is extinguished. Make a decision to focus your desire on loving and serving Christ; then, God will take your life and fill it with the desires that bring true success and true satisfaction.

Desire is anticipation that is founded in God, an attitude of the soul that believes in the greatness of God’s will and in His work yet to be done. It is the cry of the soul as heard in Jeremiah 33:3: “*Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you*

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH

do not know.” You cannot know God’s desires until you know Him and He reveals them to you.

You have a choice. You can slumber and sleep your way through life, or you can wake up and live life to the maximum. Life is meant to be filled up with all the great things God seeks to do for you, in you, and through you. Expectation is best received and lived out as you align your total life to God and His Word, living with abandonment to His desires for you and setting yourself to be in agreement with God. Jeremiah 29:11 declares,

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Expect Good Things from God

This is the part of your life I hope to help you change. I want to see you begin to recover real, heart-felt expectation. I want you to recover your will to desire. Without the power to desire something good, you will have great trouble nurturing expectation for your life.

Proverbs 10:24 says, *“The fear of the wicked will come upon him, and the desire of the righteous will be granted.”* Proverbs 13:12 states that, *“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.”*

Hope by itself does not bring expectation. Desire by itself cannot bring expectation. It is the desire to see the promises fulfilled, fueled by faith in God, that brings a sense of expectation. The power to hope comes from a faith in God and a belief that He is good and that He will be good to you. Romans 15:13 in *The Message* reads,

May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

The Best Is Yet to Come

A common story is told about a terminally ill woman who had three months left to live. She was the last person you would expect to have

hope, but hope is exactly what she had. She sat down with her pastor and discussed her own funeral arrangements—her favorite songs to be sung, the Scriptures to be read, the dress to be buried in, and finally, the most important part of the funeral arrangements: “When you place me in the casket, put a fork in my hand.”

The pastor sat there, his mind racing as he tried to figure out how to respond. Was she beginning to lose her mind?

The woman smiled at him and explained, “When I was a little girl and we had guests for dinner, I always waited with baited breath at the end of the meal. Sometimes my mother would simply clear the dishes and the adults would sit around and talk. But sometimes, my mother would say, ‘Keep your fork,’ as she picked up the plates. Then, I would get excited because I knew that the best part of the meal was coming. It could be my grandmother’s deep-dish apple pie or my mother’s velvet chocolate cake, but it was always the best part of the evening.”

Her eyes glistened with joyful tears as she continued, “As my family and friends come to my funeral and see me lying in the casket with the fork in my hand, I want you to give them a message from me. Tell them that I said I’m keeping my fork because the best is yet to come.”

As you read Romans 15:13 from *The Message* again, I want you to reach out and take hold of it in faith, knowing that the best is yet to come.

May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

What Are God’s Thoughts Toward You?

Before you read any further, think about that question. What are God’s thoughts toward you? What does He think about you? What does He have planned for your life? What desires does He want to plant into your heart? What does He want you to expect?

You have been called to greatness. You must grasp how good God is and how great His thoughts toward you are. Right expectation is rooted in God’s thoughts, intentions, and purposes for your life. In Isaiah 55:8–9, God tells you what His thoughts toward you are.

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

You have been called to walk through doors of opportunity that you have not yet seen. God said He has plans for your future, and they are good plans. Expect good things from God. Expect Him to open new doors for your life. As you travel your personal Christian road, God will set doors of opportunity in front of you for your personal life, your family, your business, your relationships, and your church. In Revelation 3:8, Christ declared,

I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Let me paraphrase this verse. “I have set before you an open door, and it will remain open until you are able to enter it. You will enter in sooner than you think, and when your moment of opportunity comes, your strength will not be wasted in efforts to make the conditions favorable. You will enter in at once because I have opened the door!”

Expect new doors of faith adventures that will necessitate getting out of your comfort zone, the area where you feel the most comfortable trusting God. Getting out of your comfort zone requires a leap of faith. When the door is open, move through it. Take a risk. Move into the unknown. To find bigger oceans, you must not be afraid to lose sight of the shore.

What doors might the Lord open for you if you *expected* some new doors? What doors have you ignored or fastened with a “No Entrance” sign, even though you could hear God saying, “Go through the door”? Expect new doors. Knock on doors of opportunity and keep knocking.

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.
(Matthew 7:7 NLT)

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Mark and Jennifer, Married Couple in Their 30s

Since our courtship time, we knew that God would lead us to adopt. We decided that we would have three children and then adopt a fourth. After twelve years of marriage without children and the disappointments and heartbreaking effects of infertility, it seemed that our dream of a family would never happen. That is when the Lord told us in a very clear way that we should start the adoption process, so we did. In our quest for the rest of our family, we faced even more heartbreak.

While we waited, we even built a four-bedroom house to have room for our children, knowing for sure that they were coming. We didn't expect this new season of adoption to be even harder than infertility! We were to adopt twin baby boys and excitedly waited for their birth. The day they were born, the fifteen-year-old birth mother changed her mind, and our hopes were crushed. We knew all along that God wanted us to have children. We just didn't know when, who, or how, so we pressed on in what seemed to be an uphill battle, trusting and believing that the Lord is the one who would form our family.

After two years of looking for our children, God gave us a set of four—yes, four—siblings. They had been in foster care for two years, and we were chosen as their placement family. What a joyful day it was when we brought them home! A couple weeks after they arrived, we found out that one of the birth parents was trying to get our four-year-old back! After several months, he decided to relinquish all parental rights. We are now a family of six, with a house reverberating with noise and overflowing with love.

Expectation Requires Faith

Cultivate an optimistic faith outlook based on God's desires for you and His commitment to you. Psalm 37:23 promises, "*The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way.*" Tell yourself, "My steps are ordered by God Almighty. My life and future are in His hands. I expect good things to happen, and I declare the greatness of God to be released upon my life. The same God who has supported me in the past, who met the needs of those in Scripture, who faithfully takes care of other people today, can do the same thing for me."

Faith is an exceedingly hopeful perspective of confidence and trust.

Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Expectation moves us to pray for great things from God. This is the attitude that is constantly diligent in fully expecting God to do the impossible. Remember: if God be your partner, make your plans large.

How is your expectation right now, today, at this precise moment? How filled with faith and expectation are you about your future? Do you have a heart that throbs with deep feelings of hope and a great outlook on the future? Do you believe Psalm 16:6? "*The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance.*" Do you believe Ephesians 3:20? "*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us...*"

The Enemies of Expectation

Natalie's dream was to become part of the Olympic swim team. She spent hours training and preparing, expecting to make the team. At age sixteen, she barely missed qualifying for the 2000 Sydney games but knew that she could make the 2004 games. But in 2001, she was hit by a car, crushing her left leg.

If you had known Natalie, which of the following two responses would you have given her? The first option was, "Don't give up. You

can still expect to qualify for the Olympics. You still have a chance.” The second was, “That’s one dream that has died. Such a shame. She gave her whole life to one dream and then had that dream crushed in a few short seconds. What a waste! She will never know what she could have done if she had not had that accident. She will never reach her full potential or come close to realizing her dreams.”

Expectation doesn’t just drop into your lap without a fight. When you begin to look to the future with faith, when you begin to step through new doors of opportunity, there will be challenges and adversaries. In 1 Corinthians 16:9, Paul stated, “*A great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.*”

Natalie had many adversaries. Her first adversary was her physical limitations. She was a swimmer with only one leg. Her other adversaries were her own doubts, fears, and the negative words that others spoke to her, telling her that her dream was over. Her expectation should have been crushed with her leg, but it was not. She refused to give up. She continued working out, doing physical therapy, and eventually began to train again. In 2008, she qualified for and went to the Beijing Olympics.

Expectation is willing to take on the adversaries that lie in wait at the doors of new opportunity. *The Message* translation 1 Corinthians 16:9 reads, “*A huge door of opportunity for good work has opened up here. There is also mushrooming opposition.*” *The Amplified Bible* says it this way: “*A wide door of opportunity for effectual [service] has opened to me [there, a great and promising one], and [there are] many adversaries.*”

The Hebrew word for *adversary* contains the idea of someone who fights against you and endeavors to shackle you and push you into a tight and cramped place where you have no way out. Your adversary hates you and is determined to defeat and overcome you. He is your enemy. What adversaries stand between you and your open door? What adversaries endeavor to bind and limit your opportunities? What is it that tries to defeat you and prevent you from seeing your expectations become reality?

1. The Enemy of Expectation Is Fear and Worry

Walter Chrysler, founder of Chrysler Motor Company, had a box sitting on his desk. Every time he worried about something, he would not deal with it then but would write it down and put it in the box to deal with the following week. When he opened the box later, he found that most of the worries from the previous week had already resolved themselves without any ongoing concern or attention on his part.

The word *worry* can mean “to choke or strangle.” The idea is to harass by tearing at or disturbing repeatedly. It is a nagging persistence that drains you of energy. The things you worry about and the fear you bring upon yourself must not be allowed to have power over your life or rob you of expecting great things from God.

What are the things that persistently whisper in the back of your mind? What are the nagging worries and fears that eat at you? Peter tells us to “*Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you*” (1 Peter 5:7 NLT).

A farmer was sitting on his porch and looking at his fields when a friend stopped by to visit. Any visit between two farmers inevitably comes around to their crops, so the friend asked, “How’s your wheat?”

The farmer replied, “Ain’t got none. Figured the weevils would get into the wheat and ruin me, so I didn’t plant any.”

The friend nodded his understanding and asked, “So how about your corn?”

“Ain’t got none,” was the reply. “Didn’t plant any because I was afraid the crows would eat it and ruin me.”

“Well, what about your potatoes?”

“Ain’t got none of them, neither. Was afraid to plant it because the ’tater bugs will get to ’em, and I’d be ruined.”

By now the friend was perplexed. “Well, what did you plant this year?”

“Nothing. I just played it safe.”

Don’t allow your worries to determine your future! If you play it safe, you will have nothing. So throw all your hopes and all your fears into God’s hands and know that He cares about you.

2. The Enemy of Expectation is Negativity

Expectation can easily be drowned in our lives by tragedy or disappointment. A sense of hopelessness or failure can kill the desire or ability to expect things to change. Deep inside, a voice whispers, “You want to be somebody, but it’s not going to happen.” In the inner place of your soul, deep in your heart, a war rages against expectation with thoughts such as, *You don’t have a chance. It’s just not going to happen. Life is against you, so give up. You can’t recover from this. People like you should never have dreams like this. Why expect anything when you know you will be disappointed?*

Proverbs 4:12 promises, “*When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble.*” Do not let pessimism hinder your steps from fulfilling your God-given expectations. Dread and fear feed a pessimistic attitude that seeks to make God smaller than your problems. Pessimism makes it easy for you to visualize a negative outcome for your life and then live in a way that fulfills that negative outcome.

Say “*No!*” This is not what God desires for your life. Make a concrete decision to remove the negative spirit, attitudes, and thoughts from your life. The mind-set that says, “God is not for me,” is destructive and is an expectation killer. Do not allow yourself to become a doom and gloom forecaster of your own life. A negative outlook builds a wrong mind-set that dominates your thinking and results in a negative belief that your expectations cannot and will not come to pass. Compare the size of your problems to the greatness of God. The size of your God must grow!

3. The Enemy of Expectation Is Apathy

Another adversary of expectation is an apathetic mind-set that resists change and is content with the status quo. This is the attitude that thinks expectation costs too much: *It requires breaking habit patterns that are impossible to stop. It requires change—and maybe the cost won’t be worth the reward. It is safer to not dream, not hope, and not expect good, because you will be disappointed. Instead, be satisfied with where you are at today, and do not expect anything better for tomorrow.*

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the primary crop in Alabama was cotton. As you traveled across the state, cotton fields stretched out as far as you could see. Then, in 1915, the boll weevil immigrated into Alabama from Mexico and began a rampage of destruction. By 1918, farmers were losing entire crops and going bankrupt.

A man named H. M. Sessions refused to give up and determined that the success of their small town depended on finding a new crop to plant. After research, he determined that peanut farming would restore their success as farmers. The problem was that these farmers had planted cotton their entire lives, their fathers had planted nothing but cotton before them, and their grandfathers had planted cotton before their fathers. They did not want to take the risk and try something new. It took Sessions a year to find someone who was willing to buck the status quo and plant this brand-new crop. One year later, those who followed Sessions had paid off their debts and were in the black. All of the other farmers quickly followed suit, and not only the town but the entire county was saved from bankruptcy.

All people have boll weevil times in their lives. Things are at a dead end, and the problems facing them are huge. It is easier to simply give up than to expect that something better is ahead. It is easier to keep doing what you are doing than risk something new to discover God's best.

If you are in a boll weevil time, you must remember that you were created for more than this! God has a plan for your life that is a plan for a good future—a future of hope and fulfilled expectations. (See Jeremiah 29:11.) God promises that hope placed in Him is hope that does not bring disappointment. It is hope fulfilled.

Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

(Romans 5:5)

Abraham Overcame Discouragement

Be like Abraham. In Genesis 13, Lot had just turned his back on Abraham and walked away. Abraham had treated him like a son, given him everything, and Lot had washed his hands of their relationship and

walked out. Abraham could have given up. He could have cried out to God, “Oh God, I’m so discouraged. My family has left me all alone in a strange country. I have nothing to show for it. Maybe I should just go back to Ur where life was easier before you called me out here to this strange land.” What did God tell Abraham during this time?

The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.” (Genesis 13:14–15)

Lift up your eyes and look out from the place where you are. Do not wait for things to look perfect before you begin looking for hope and expectation. Start now. Look from where you are right now. Look north, south, east, and west from right where you are, because that is the land that God is going to give you.

By faith Abraham, while he was being called, obeyed to go out into a place which he was about to be receiving as an inheritance, and he went out, not troubling his mind as to where he was going. By faith he lived as a foreigner without rights of citizenship in the land of the promise as in a land not his own, having settled down to live in tents with Isaac and Jacob, joint-heirs with him of the promise, the same one, for he was constantly waiting for and expecting the city having the foundations, the architect and builder of which is God.

(Hebrews 11:8–10 WUEST)

Abraham had an expectation that God was going to fulfill His promise and that this land was going to belong to Him and his descendants. Hebrews says he was “*constantly waiting for and expecting*” the fulfillment of the promise. Abraham did not allow fear of the future, worry about the present, or regret about the failures of the past deter him from that attitude of faith and expectation in God.

Abraham knew that the chances of becoming a father were diminishing as he got older, but he persistently held to the promise God had given him of being the father of many nations. Even though he had walked away from a land of comfort and ease, Abraham knew in faith

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH

that he would see the promise fulfilled. And Scripture never shows him looking back to the land of his forefathers. Instead, he always looked ahead for the city whose “*architect and builder...is God.*”

Life is filled with expectation robbers, people and circumstances that seek to steal your expectations. Fear and anxiety grip people’s minds with uncertainty and fear of what may happen, overshadowing hope. One of the great challenges of life is to lift yourself out of your current circumstances and up to the level that your expectation can take you.

Jabez Overcame Negativity

Jabez had an excellent reason to have low expectations. When his mother named him, she did not give him a name that indicated she had great hopes for his future. She named him for pain, sorrow, and affliction. (See 1 Chronicles 4:9.) He was not reminded of who he could be; instead, he was constantly reminded of the pain he had caused. Yet Jabez was not content to live within those low expectations.

Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, “Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!” So God granted him what he requested.

(1 Chronicles 4:10)

Jabez had large expectations that God could surpass the stigma placed on him by others. He believed that God would bless him and use him to be a blessing to others.

God’s blessings for us are limited only by ourselves—not by His resources, power, or willingness to give. Refuse any obstacle, person, or opinion that restricts your expectations for your future. There are great, God-given opportunities before you, great open doors, and great rewards lying within your reach. Stretch. Expect. Believe. Persist. Possess.

The culture around you says, “Don’t get your hopes up. You may be disappointed. Aim low and be safe.” You have to break away from the autopilot of the masses that settles for the ordinary life, the no-hope life, the aim-low-and-be-happy life. This is not the expectation that

God has for your life. Think of yourself as the pregnant mother who expects only the best from her pregnancy. With her imagination, she is able to live the result in magnificent detail until eventually the baby is born and she physically holds her “expectation” in her arms.

You do not need a high IQ, special skills, or an amazing education to raise your expectation. You simply must make a decision to partner with God and His word and to believe what He says about you and your future. Lift your vision to match God’s vision for your life. Decide. Expect. Change. Lift your vision and take the limitations off your life.

Ruth Overcame Apathy

When Naomi’s husband and sons died, her two daughters-in-law were faced with a difficult choice. If they stayed in their homeland, they returned to the security of their families, but it was security with a limited future. They were widows, but they were widows with family who would care for them. If they chose to go with Naomi, they risked losing everything.

When Ruth chose to follow Naomi back to Israel, she walked away from a life of security into a life of the unknown. As a widow in a foreign land, she had no husband, no family, and no protector. There was no security for her future and no reason for her to expect anything other than an arduous and lonely life.

Ruth refused to give in to apathy and reluctance to change. She declared to Naomi, “*Your God will be my God*” (Ruth 1:16 NLT), and she walked into the unknown with the confident expectation that she had all she needed for a full life. In so doing, she walked into a future that extended past her present-day fulfillment of a life with a rich and good man, Boaz, and into the fulfillment of being the great-grandmother of the king of Israel and part of the lineage of Jesus.

Simeon Overcame Prolonged Waiting

Luke 2 tells the story of Simeon, who expected to see the Messiah before he died. He waited for years with an attitude of expectancy for

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH

the fulfillment of that promise. He did not give up, but he persevered in waiting, expecting, and knowing that God would fulfill His promise.

When he finally held the child Jesus in his arms, he said, “*Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation*” (Luke 2:29–30). He had waited for years, faithfully coming to the temple, knowing that if God had told him this was going to happen, it was as good as done. There was no doubt, no questioning, no fear—only a simple faith that God would do all He had promised.

The Best Is Yet to Come

Abraham could have spent his life looking back at Ur of the Chaldees in regret for what he had left. Ruth could have looked back to the life that she could have had in her home country. Simeon could have looked back at a long and happy life and been satisfied with settling for the blessings he had already received. But none of these people was content to settle. None was willing to give up his or her expectations. They set their faith in the God who does not change, who promises and fulfills every word. They set their hope on His words and lived lives of expectation, alert and waiting for the fulfillment of all that He had spoken.

Whatever your situation today, whatever your fear of the future, whatever your regrets of the past, lay them aside and fix your eyes on God. Set your hopes on Him. Set your faith in His word. Focus your life and your desires on Him. The best is yet to come.

Prayer of Expectation

Lord, I believe You are good and You desire to release into my life wonderful, unimaginable, miraculous, great, and mighty things. Today, I pray with large expectations by the power of the Holy Spirit. Enlarge my vision. Increase my faith. Secure my future. Amen.