

Week #16

When Your Life Looks Different Than You Thought It Would - The Problem

A couple, whom I will refer to as Jerry and Laura, lived a fairy-tale existence until the day they discovered she was expecting quadruplets. As if their plate wasn't full enough, their two-year-old toddler was diagnosed with leukemia. Their fairy-tale life barely had a chance!

Many of us can relate to the overwhelm and the unmet expectations of Jerry and Laura. The result? When our reality is at odds with our hopes and dreams, we become hard to please. In our marriages, nothing that our spouse does becomes acceptable, because we are living in a perpetual place of discomfort. If we really want to have a better marriage, we must be open to self-examination.

Warning signs that we are mired in unmet expectations include:

1. Are we complaining to others about our spouse?
2. Are we steeped in negativity?
3. Do we have a critical spirit?

If so, we have an angry heart. Ideally, this discovery should propel us toward spiritual growth!

Often, if our lives don't turn out as expected, it can unsettle us. We can question who we are and what our purpose is. In extreme cases, we may ask ourselves if what God says is true. *Proverbs 3:6* tells us, *"In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."*

Our paths may not be what we expect, but that doesn't mean God has made a mistake. Consider the list of those whose lives did not turn out as expected: Job, David, Jonah, Paul. Yet, God used each of them in profound ways.

So, how exactly are we to deal with unexpected life changes?

Next Week - When Your Life Looks Different Than You Thought It Would - The Solution