

If Jesus Couldn't, Why Do We Think We Can?

By Steve Higginbotham

Expectations have much to do with our contentment. Those who place unrealistic expectations upon themselves are generally discouraged, and feel as though they are a failure. I'm convinced that if people had proper expectations, they would not be so soon moved to discouragement, depression, and despair. An obvious step to "reeling in" our expectations is to understand the fact that "if Jesus couldn't do something, we need to stop believing we can.

Consider:

- Jesus couldn't make his own family believe that he was the Son of God (John 7:1-6), so why then do we beat ourselves up for sometimes failing to do the same?
- Jesus couldn't avoid sadness and sorrow (Isaiah 53:5), so why do we sometimes act as though we expect life to be a bed of roses?
- Jesus couldn't go without rest (Mark 6:31), so why do we feel guilty if we aren't on the go 24/7?
- Jesus couldn't avoid making enemies (John 15:18), so why are we so surprised when people hate us for our faith?
- Jesus couldn't cause all men to repent (Matthew 23:37), so let's be content with our best efforts. We can't obey for others.
- Jesus couldn't even forgive all men of their sins (John 8:24; Luke 17:3) though he was willing, so why do we think we can forgive those who will not repent?

Maybe the first step to contentment is in shedding the guilt that comes from the unrealistic expectations we place upon ourselves. After all, if Jesus couldn't do it, why do we think we can?