

Cultivate Reflection Guide

Holy Shift: Changing My Expectations of God February 5/6, 2022

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Jesus gave his followers practices, rhythms and habits to follow that He knew would change them. Holy Shift invites us to consider our habits and shift our spiritual practices toward God.

Our weekly Reflection Guide equips you to start a REAL conversation in your community group, as well as cultivate God's word into your life through personal bible study. Choose the questions that challenge you to reflect and respond to what we're learning. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

Read: [Matthew 13:31-32 CSB](#)

Reflect: As we close our Holy Shift series, reflect on the ways you've experienced growth/change and how you'll continue to cultivate that into your life.

Respond:

1. Make some time to **inventory your expectations** of self, God and others. You might write down what comes to mind immediately, as well as ask God to show you any blind spots you're missing.
 - Be REAL with self: what happens when your expectations are not met? Consider both your internal reaction (thoughts, emotions) and your outward response (words, actions, choices).
 - How does that reaction/response impact how you see yourself? What about your relationship with God and others?
2. God is working in what appears to be **insignificant**.
 - Think of a circumstance or situation in your life that seemed insignificant, but turned out to have purpose or meaning. What does that reveal to you about God's faithfulness?
 - We mistakenly believe that influence = significance. Is there anywhere in your life you're wrestling to create influence, significance, value or worth apart from God? Remember, hard work and success are not bad, but our accomplishments, or lack thereof, do not define our worth or God's love for us.
 - Read [Ephesians 2:10 NLT](#). How does this verse encourage you to trust God?
3. God is working in what appears to be **too small to notice**.
 - Are you someone who sees God in seemingly small, ordinary moments? *If yes*, how has that perspective increased your faith? *If not*, where do you need to embrace the smallness and trust that God is working?
 - Read [Psalm 139:1-18 CEB](#) and be encouraged by God's attention to every detail of your life.
4. God is working when it appears that **I am defeated**.
 - Jesus' death on the cross proves that He knows what it's like to have a prayer request denied, and yet obey God despite it. Where in your life do you need to set aside your own preferences, plans, opinions or ideas and instead trust and obey God?

Prayer: God is committed to keeping his promises, not our preferences. Unmet expectations are a reality of life, but rather than allow disappointment to grow into anger, bitterness and resentment, God wants us to trust that He can work all things for good. *"Lord, I confess the unhealthy and unrealistic expectations I've placed on you. Help me shift my perspective and remind me of your presence and power in all things, no matter how small or insignificant they seem. Remind me that your love for me surpasses achievements and accomplishments. I release my plans and expectations and instead, I will trust you."*

Live it Out: As you reflect on this message, identify those areas where you need to make a shift in your expectations of self, God and others. What is a practice, habit or rhythm you want to cultivate into your life so that you choose to trust God even when you can't see or feel Him working? Ask God to give you the courage to walk by faith, not sight.