

Truth Stays the Same

Expectations are often different from reality. Expectations are strong beliefs that something will happen, while reality is the state of things as they actually are. The problem comes when our expectations do not meet up with reality, which leads to discontentment, disappointment, and dissatisfaction. For example, we expect to get into our dream college, find a well-paying job, and we assume we will find a perfect spouse. We look forward to becoming pregnant when we are ready, having a healthy child, and maintaining our youthful bodies and minds forever. Our expectations are not always God's reality.

Growing up, I regularly visited my town's nursing home. Because of the age of the residents, I assumed they would be unable to remember me, and our time together would be brief, boring, and burdensome. Yet week after week, they continued to remember and look forward to our visits. Disregarded by many of their families, the residents needed connection from the outside world, and I provided it. The residents imparted tradition and wisdom on me. I soon realized a different reality, as I was looking forward to my weekly visits. I loved playing games with them. I enjoyed talking with them. I appreciated the residents for who they were. It would have been tragic if I thought less of these residents only because of their age and ability.

This summer I had the opportunity to work at Beloved and Beyond- a camp for special needs children and adults. Initially, I assumed because of the campers' disabilities, our interactions would be awkward and forced. I expected the week to be hard and unmeaningful. My reality was quite different, as I met some of the most caring, compassionate, and courageous campers.

Experiencing excitement during activities, joy during worship, and sadness over the week's end,

the campers were just like me. Yearning to be loved on and valued, the campers looked to me for connection. In actuality, the campers became my friends, and I cannot wait to reconnect with them next summer. My assumptions were wrong. If their disabilities had prevented their chance at life, it would be devastating.

Our grasp of what makes someone “worthy of life” is troubling. We seek importance in temporary accomplishments, ignoring this truth: our value is determined in Christ, not in other’s acceptance or validation. Society places unrealistic expectations on us, leading to disappointment, but God’s outlook is different as He sees us as uniquely perfect. We need to change our outlook on life. All life, young or old, healthy or disabled is fearfully and wonderfully created by God for a purpose.

I am pro-life because I believe all life is significant and capable of impacting our world. All life has a purpose. All life is deserving. All life is treasured. Our worldly expectations are not always going to line up with God’s will. When things do not go as expected, we can trust that God’s truths stay the same, and that is promising.