

Great Expectations Satisfied with Lesser Expectations Selected Scriptures

1. **Attendees** (Luke 4:14-30)

The gospel of Luke introduces the public ministry of Jesus in a synagogue in His home region (Matt. 2:22-23; Luke 2:39). Jesus has already earned a reputation for working miracles (v.23) and is welcomed into their synagogues to teach. The people's response to Jesus went from universal approval (v.15) to attempted murder (vs.28-29). This change of attitude came as they listened to His preaching and to His identification of their own spiritual bankruptcy because they saw themselves as the ones who ought to be first to receive God's favor (vs.24-27).

2. **Disciples** (John 6:26-66)

Following the amazing and miraculous feeding of 5,000 men and those who were with them (John 6:10-14), the people wanted to make Jesus the king (John 6:15). Jesus begins to teach these disciples that they must believe in Him in order to have eternal life. An unwillingness to learn from Jesus and to believe in Him was evidence that they were not yet among those who would enjoy the resurrection of the righteous (John 6:40, 44, 54). Jesus' teaching of their need of God's grace (v.44), their need to learn from Him (v.45), and their need to believe in Him (v.47) was too much for many of His disciples (v.66).

3. **Believers** (John 8:31-59)

This dialogue is between Jesus and those who have believed in Him (v.31; cf. Luke 8:13). These believers recoil at Jesus' statement that they are the spiritual slaves of sin (vs.33-34) and therefore they are the spiritual sons of the devil (v.44). They respond by accusing Jesus of being a son of fornication (v.41). Jesus defends the truth of His message and His own sinlessness (v.46) and says that their unbelief is because they are not of God (v.47). He further says that those who believe in Him will never see death (v.51) while the believers balked and responded by saying that the holy men of Israel have all died (v.53). When explaining how Jesus could claim that Abraham would have rejoiced to see Him, He asserts His own pre-existence of Abraham (v.58). The believers respond to Jesus' clear claim of divinity by trying to kill Him (v.59). These were people who had a belief in Jesus but did not have a saving faith in Him. This was evident at their rejection of Jesus' teaching about their own sinfulness and His deity.