



**IT'S ONLY A DISASTER IF WE DON'T ACT AS GOD EXPECTS
(Sabbath School Program)**

May 11, 2024

**Jefferson Kern
Pastor at the Living Word SDA Church**

Objective:

To teach our members that God expects us to care about others in the same manner we care about Him.

To the director:

This is to be presented by four people, one will be the presenter and three others representing a portion of the Bible. There is no need to make any decorations on the platform.

Suggested Hymn:

Adventist Hymnal 578 – So Send I You

Bible Verse:

Micah 6:8; Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 13:13.

Good morning and Happy Sabbath.

I am [**Name of Presenter**], and I will be your host today. This morning, we have a special Sabbath School program to talk about something very important: God's expectations!

Today we have three important guests, and we will introduce them to you now.

Please welcome [**participant number one**]. He/she is representing an important part of God's revelation that will help us understand our subject: the Old Testament.

Our next guest is [**participant number two**], who is representing all the sermons and words of Jesus. We will use his/her wisdom to help us on the subject.

Lastly, [**participant number three**], is representing the remaining of the New Testament revelation that will clarify this subject: "What does God expect from me?"

Since we have three participants, we would like to explore a little bit about a writing rule called: "The rule of three." Have you heard of it?

The rule of three is a writing principle suggesting that concepts or ideas presented in threes are inherently more interesting, memorable, and effective. This rule is evident in various aspects of communication, from speeches to storytelling, where groups of three elements are used to create a rhythmic and impactful message. It taps into our natural pattern-recognition tendencies, making information more engaging and easier to remember.

Here are some examples:

- Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness – Rights outlined in the *U.S. Declaration of Independence*.
- Liberté, égalité, fraternité – The slogan of the French Republic predating 1790.
- A Mars a day helps you work, rest, and play – Mars advertising slogan since 1959.
- Stop, Look, and Listen – A public road and level crossing safety slogan.
- Stop, Drop, and Roll – A fire safety slogan listing the steps to take if one’s clothing has caught fire.
- *Veni, vidi, vici* – A triad translated from Latin as “I came, I saw, I conquered,” popularly attributed to Julius Caesar of Rome.

These examples are easily memorable, and it just feels natural to repeat them.

You might ask what does this have to do with our subject? Let’s invite our first guest to talk about this:

Hi, **[participant number one]**. Our subject this morning is God’s expectations. Do you remember any verses in the Old Testament that can present an answer to that question?

[Participant number one] Sure. If you open your Bible to Micah 6:8, you will find a great example of the rule of three answering this:

“He has shown you, O man, what is good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly,
To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?”

Do you see? Justice, mercy, and walking humbly with God stands out as three important expectations.

[Presenter] That is great! Thank you for that. How would you define walking humbly with God?

[Participant number one] That’s an easy one. Faith. For you to trust in God more than your own strength, we need faith.

[Presenter] So, we can say that God expects justice, mercy and faith?

[Participant number one] Yes, that's right!

[Presenter] Thank you for that. What about **[participant number two]**? What can you say to us about Jesus' conversations, sermons, and messages regarding God's expectations?

[Participant number two] Oh, we have many, but to follow the rule of three that you have suggested, we can go to Matthew 23:23:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”

Jesus mentions clearly what were the most important matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith. Again, these three.

[Presenter] Can you define mercy?

[Participant number two] Oh, sure. In this context, mercy refers to the compassionate treatment of those in distress, showing kindness and compassion to others, especially to those who may not apparently deserve it. It is highlighted as a fundamental aspect of Christian ethical behavior, emphasizing that adherence to religious practices should not overshadow the deeper moral obligations of compassion and empathy towards others.

[Presenter] So an important expectation! Thank you. **[Participant number three]**, your turn. What about in the remainder of the New Testament, any important information regarding to this?

[Participant number three] Sure thing, and I will follow the same logic. In 1 Corinthians 13:13: “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

Here the apostle Paul discloses an instrumental statement about the most important gifts of the Christian: faith, hope, and love.

[Presenter] So, here, no Justice?

[Participant number three] Apparently, Paul is emphasizing hope, but is there any possibility of attaining hope without justice?

[Presenter] That is a good point. Any other closing insights?

[Participant number three] Yes, have you perceived that of these requirements we have values that are needed for our relationship with God, such as faith, but justice and mercy is towards ourselves?

[Presenter] Just like the 10 commandments? That we have laws for our relationship with God . . .

[Participant number three] Exactly, and more laws for us to reflect God's character towards how we treat ourselves.

[Presenter] This is just perfect. Thank you for your participation.

So, remember: God expects us to treat each other in the same manner that we try to treat Him. And it is a disaster when we don't. Happy Sabbath to all!