

Loving Well:

Expectations and Agreements

Our expectations on others:

- Recognize them.
- Let go of the unrealistic ones
- Communicate them
- Find an agreement

2 Corinthians 12:20-21 For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.

Expectations of others on us:

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ... I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

- Clarify what others expect
- With a heart to care for them, decide what we will agree to

1 Corinthians 10:31-33 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

Romans 15:1-2 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. 2 Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.

Galatians 1:10 Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

We are not responsible to make others happy or to become someone we are not.

We are responsible (before God) to care about what pleases others and to build them up.

As far as my identity (sense of worth and value), it doesn't matter what others think of me, it doesn't matter if they are pleased with me.

As far as others are concerned, to show love, it matters what they think, it matters if they are pleased.

May we be responsible for what we are called to be responsible for and may our agreements to love each other truly communicate God's love.

For additional reading on pleasing someone who has different convictions than you, see 1 Corinthians 8:1-9:23; 10:23-33; Romans 14:1-15:7.