

# EXPECTATIONS

# Giving It UP

*A Lenten Sermon Series at Verona UMC -  
What are you giving up for Lent?*

FEBRUARY 26

**CONTROL**

MARCH 4

**EXPECTATIONS**

MARCH 11

**SUPERSTITION**



MARCH 18

**ENEMIES**

MARCH 25

**OUR LIVES**

APRIL 1

**POPULARITY**

APRIL 8

**DEATH**

# GENESIS 12

## Abraham's Expectations at the age of 75

Live out his years in  
peace in his own country,  
with his own people and  
family.



# God's Expectations for Abraham at the age of 75

**Leave family and native  
land to live as a stranger  
among the Canaanites.  
I will bless you to be a  
blessing to all nations.**



# JOHN 3

**Nicodemus: a Pharisee  
and a member of the  
Sanhedrin who showed  
favor to Jesus.**

**John 3:1–21;**

**John 7:45–5;**

**John 19:39–42**



# JOHN 3

## Nicodemus' Expectations

- 1) His standing before God depended on his obedience to God's Law
- 2) Life was rigidly rational



# God's Expectations of Nicodemus

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a gesture of praise or prayer, set against a bright green background that fades into a darker green at the bottom. The person's right arm is raised higher than their left, with fingers spread.

- 1) His standing before God depended on faith in God's grace and redeeming power
- 2) He was to be transformed not by his own righteousness but by the transforming power of the Spirit of God – a Spirit he could neither control or anticipate

# EXPECTATIONS

## The World vs. Jesus

### The World

Retribution

Condemnation

Proof

Control

Guarantees

### Jesus

Forgiveness

Salvation

Mystery

Surrender

Faith



# The Lord's Prayer

**Our expectation:**

**Fame, power, wealth,  
advantage, independence**







# The Lord's Prayer

**Jesus' expectation:**

**Glory to God, power to God,  
daily bread, forgiveness,  
dependence on God**

# Expectations of Youth, Old Age and Eternity

## Our expectation:

It's all downhill from here.

Wrinkles, sore knees, failed  
dreams, wrecked marriages...

The best we can do is forestall  
and cover up our age, and hope  
the end isn't too painful. After  
that, we're just dust in the wind.



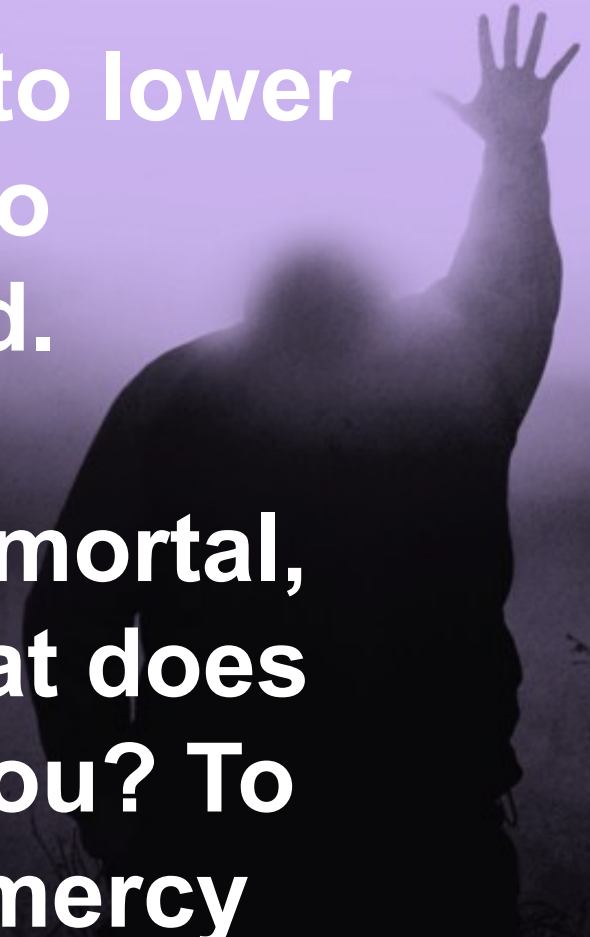
# Expectations of Youth, Old Age and Eternity

## Christian expectation:

**“Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made. Our times are in his hand who saith, 'A whole I planned, youth shows but half; Trust God: See all, nor be afraid!'”** *(Robert Browning)*

**Jesus isn't asking us to lower our expectations but to surrender them to God.**

**He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Amos 6:8)**



**We walk by faith, not  
by sight – II Cor. 5:7**

**Our expectations of  
God are an attempt  
to put the infinite  
God into a finite box.**



**We walk by faith, not by sight – II Cor. 5:7**

**But God's ways are beyond our ways.  
His mind is unsearchable,  
His will beyond our understanding.**



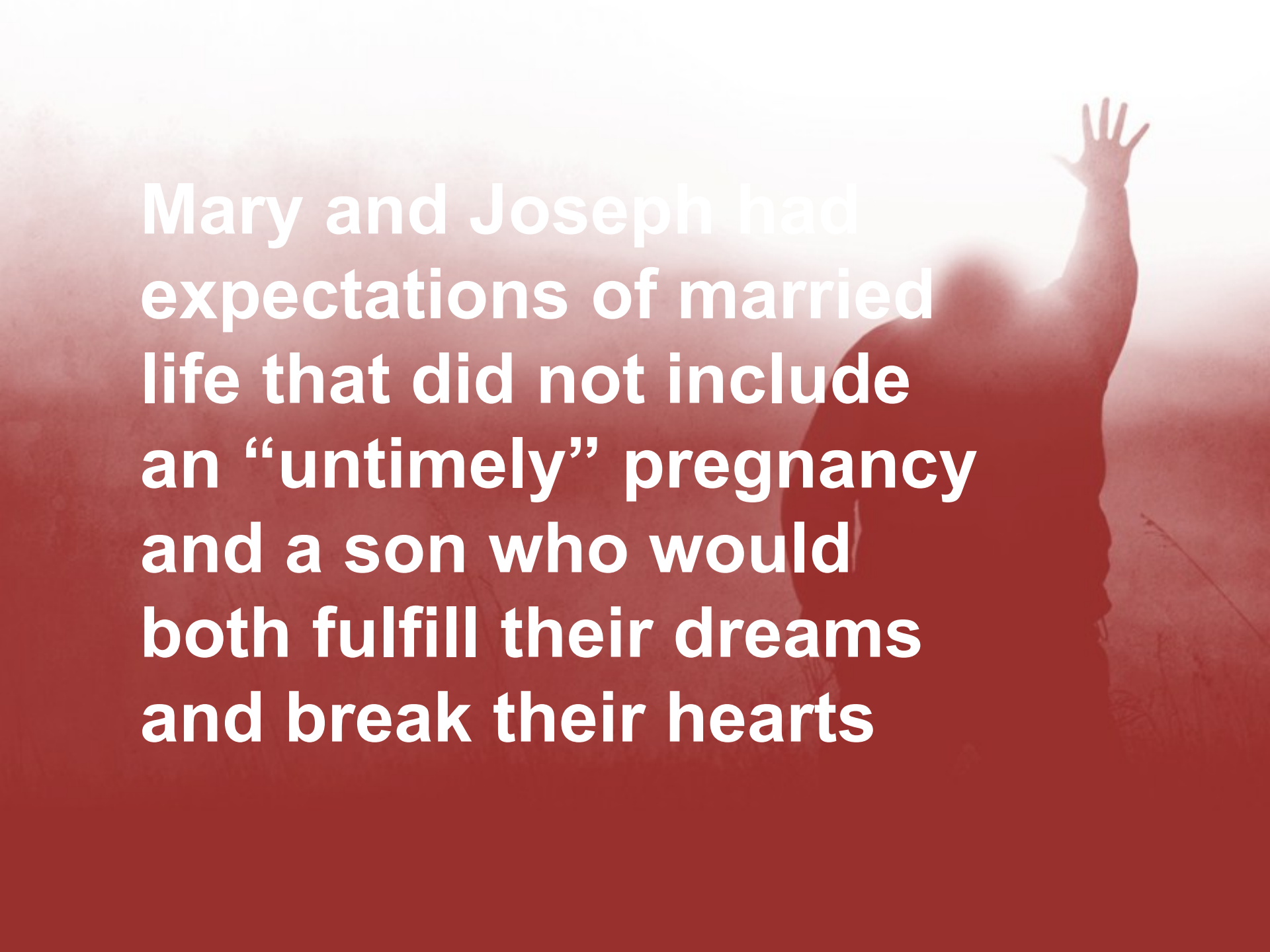
**Noah's expectations of life did not include becoming a boat builder in his old age. He was a righteous man who was forced to endure the taunts and doubts of his neighbors for a greater purpose .**



**David's expectations  
of life after  
becoming King did  
not include shame  
and heart-break**




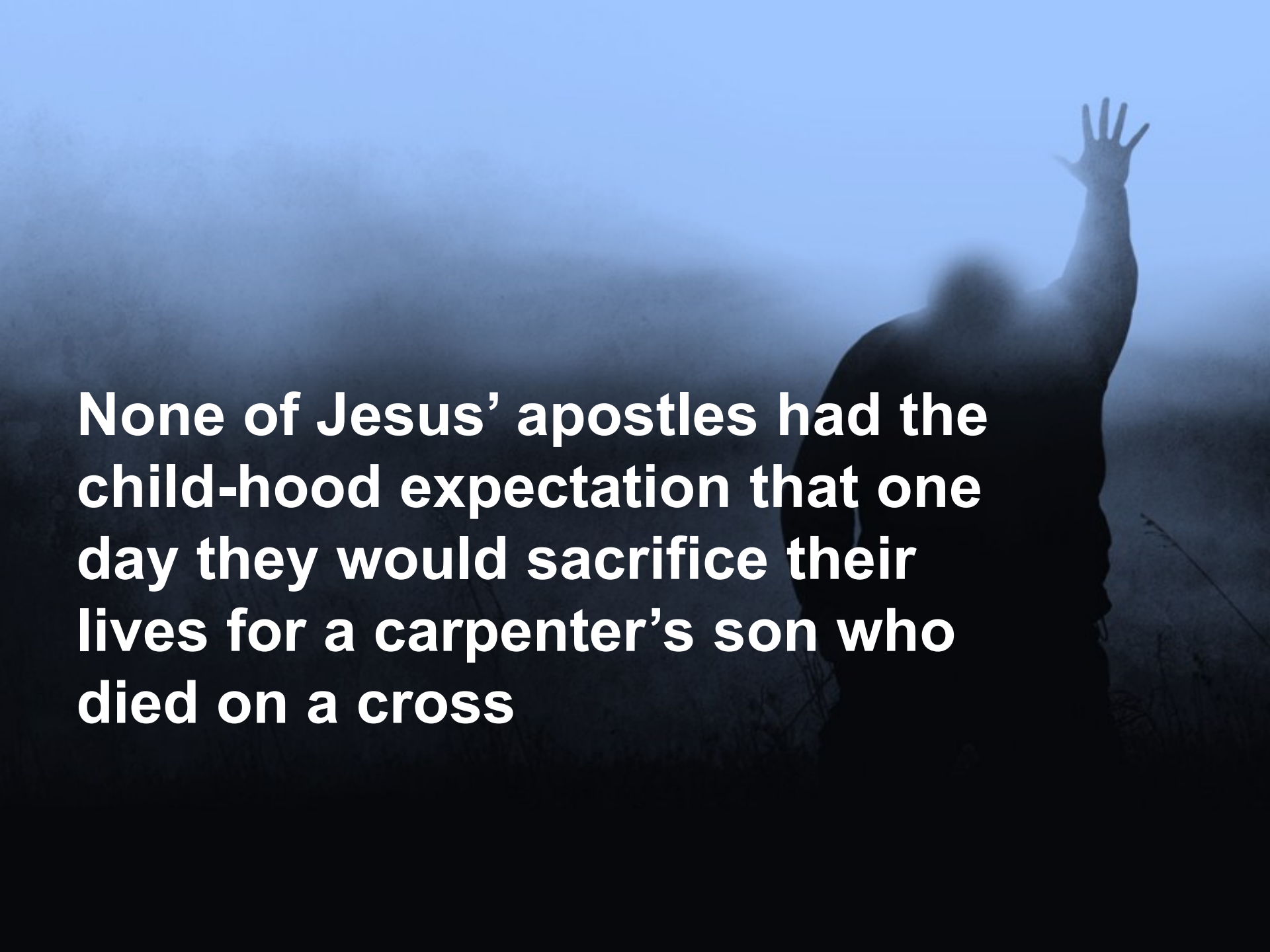


A silhouette of a person standing with their right hand raised towards a bright, hazy light source, possibly the sun. The person is positioned on the right side of the frame. The background is a gradient of light to dark red. Overlaid on the left side of the image is white text.

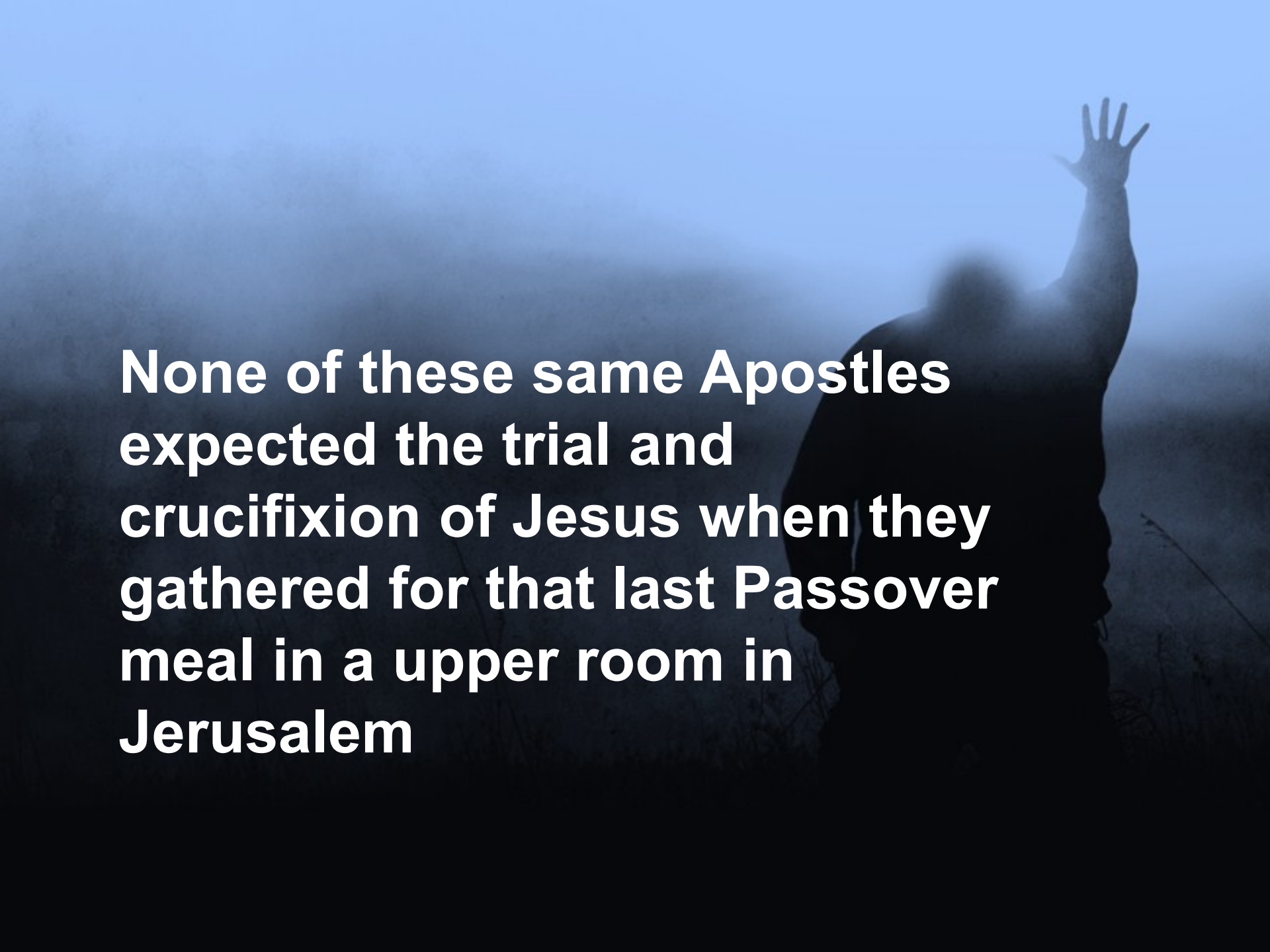
**Mary and Joseph had expectations of married life that did not include an “untimely” pregnancy and a son who would both fulfill their dreams and break their hearts**

**The career plans of Saul of Tarsus did not include a name-change to Paul, a conversion to a heretical faith, a life sold-out to spreading the radical message of a crucified man. He was beaten, stoned, cursed and dismissed as a lunatic – not what he expected out of life.**

A silhouette of a person standing with their right arm raised, palm facing forward, against a purple gradient background. The person's head is slightly tilted back, and their hand is open with fingers spread. The overall mood is one of surrender or prayer.

A silhouette of a person standing with their right arm raised, hand open, against a blue background. The person is positioned on the right side of the frame. The background is a gradient of blue, darker at the bottom and lighter at the top. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**None of Jesus' apostles had the child-hood expectation that one day they would sacrifice their lives for a carpenter's son who died on a cross**

A silhouette of a person standing with their right hand raised, set against a blue, hazy background. The person's hand is open and fingers are spread. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the person appearing as a dark shape against the lighter, misty blue background.

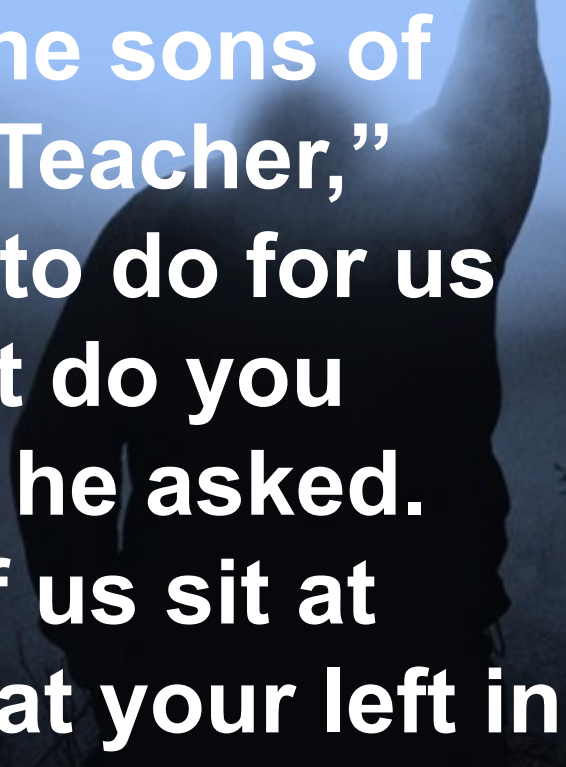
**None of these same Apostles  
expected the trial and  
crucifixion of Jesus when they  
gathered for that last Passover  
meal in a upper room in  
Jerusalem**

**Their expectations were  
of power and glory**



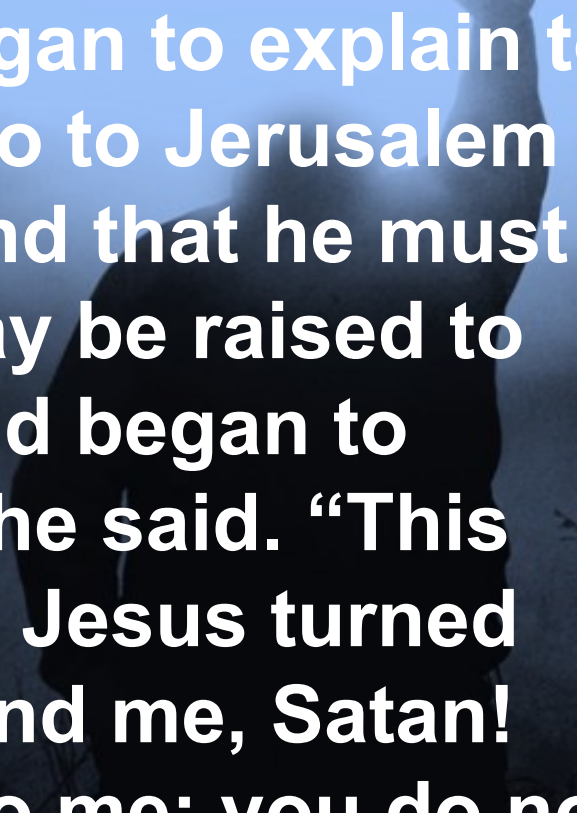
## Mark 10:35-38a


Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.” “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked. They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.” “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said.

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a gesture of praise or prayer, set against a blue background. The person is positioned on the right side of the frame, with their right arm raised higher than their left. The background is a gradient of blue, darker at the bottom and lighter at the top.

## Matthew 16:21-23

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things... and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”



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- **What are your expectations of the future?**
  - **Are they God-born, God-led, God-trusting expectations?**
  - **How does your life reflect those expectations?**
  - **Is what you expect in faith reflected in your actions and attitudes?**





**EXPECTATIONS**

... Give It **UP!**