

# Expecting Excellence

8:00 p.m. In-Person and on Zoom

Meeting ID: 251 455 814 Passcode: 522082

Warm up: Tell us one thing you expected before you came to Columbia. Was your expectation fulfilled or were things different than you expected? (Keep answers short)

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**Phrases in the story:** [sth = something; sb = somebody]

be high-spirited = be excited; be very active or energetic

expect the best from/of sb = you expect sb to work as hard as possible to do sth well (sb is the doer of good things)

expect the best for sb = you want the best things to happen to sb in a particular situation (sb is the receiver of good things)

believe in sb or sth = trust sb or sth; have confidence in sb or sth

build sb up = verbally encourage sb; praise sb

sb/sth has come a long way = has made a lot of progress

a gifted student = a student with an exceptionally high intelligence or talent

a special-needs student = a student who has a mental or physical problem that limits his/her ability to learn in school

a (storage) locker = a small storage compartment for a student's books & supplies

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Maggie was assigned to an inner-city classroom in the middle of the school year. The school principal told her that the former teacher had left suddenly, and that this was a class of "special" students. When Maggie walked into the classroom, she saw noisy students with their feet on their desks. She opened the attendance book and saw a number from 140 to 160 next to each name on the list. She thought, "No wonder they are so high-spirited. These children have especially high IQs."

At first, the students rarely turned in any homework, and what they turned in was done poorly. She spoke to them about their inward excellence, their natural talents, and that she expected the best from them. Maggie told these students how she believed in them, and she found ways to build them up. She continually reminded them of their responsibility to use all of the extra intelligence that God had given them.

Things began to change. The students sat up tall, and they worked diligently. One day the principal looked in the classroom and saw all the students quietly writing essays. Later, he called Maggie into his office. He asked her, "What have you done with those kids? They have really come a long way! Their work is better than all of the regular students."

"Well, what do you expect? They're gifted students, aren't they?"

“Gifted? They are the special-needs students. They have behavior problems and mental problems.”

“Then why are their IQs so high on the attendance sheet?”

“Those numbers aren’t their IQs. Those are their locker numbers!”

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**Related Phrases and Idioms:**

believe sb = believe what sb said is true

sth is over sb’s head = sth is too difficult for sb to understand

tear sb down = verbally discourage sb; verbally abuse sb

give it your best shot = try your best to do something

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**Questions:** *(Try to use a term from this lesson in your answers)*

1. In your own words, say what the teacher expected, and why.
  2. What do you think would have happened if the teacher expected the students to be “special-needs students” instead of “students with high IQs”?
  3. What can we learn from this story? What can we learn about expectations?
  4. What are 2-3 specific ways people can build somebody up?
  5. What are 2-3 specific ways people can tear somebody down?
  6. What are 1-2 short-term effects and 1-2 long-term effects of building somebody up?
  7. Tell us about one person who especially believed in you, or whom you believed in. How did this “belief” help you or this other person?
  8. Describe some possible negative results if you expect too much of somebody, instead of expecting the best of him/her.
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**Exercise:** *Each student should pick one expression or vocabulary term from today’s lesson, and create a sentence with it.*

**If you have more time,** read and discuss this proverb from the Bible: ~ “Not getting what you want [or expect] can break your heart, but a wish that comes true is a life-giving tree.” (Prov 13:12 CEV)

=====middle level version on next page=====

These lessons were created or adapted by the staff of International Friendship Ministries, P.O. Box 12504, Columbia SC 29211; ifmusa.org; info@ifmusa.org. IFM is grateful to Kathy Williams for most of the original work. Some lessons were adapted from EFLsuccess.com (with permission). IFM makes these lessons available to our participants, but this does not imply our consent for others to publish these lessons online or in print without permission.

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## Sep 16, 2022 ~ Expecting Excellence (Lesson cez54)

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