

Expectations Leading to Dashed Hopes

The first weekend of the NCAA tournament dashed the hopes of some die-hard basketball fans. There is a reason why they call it “March Madness.” Upset games affect not only the mood of followers of favored teams but also millions of people who filled out tournament brackets. After the first *day* of the tournament, less than 1% of the brackets nationwide accurately predicted all the outcomes correctly. In tournament play, the term is “survive and advance.” Some didn’t.

There were major expectations during the time Jesus walked the earth, also. His whirlwind 3-year public ministry convinced many people that He could do anything. Jesus’ miracles healed the sick, fed the masses, and raised people from the dead. The Bible tells us that people cheered King Jesus during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as they expected He would overthrow the oppressive Roman rule. Those hopes would be dashed when Jesus went to the cross. He was a different kind of King than was expected.

For the people who gathered at the foot of the cross in those final hours, it felt like the weight of the world rested on his outstretched arms. It did, but in a much different way than expected. The deep sorrow that many sports fans felt this weekend was nothing in comparison to believers (and non-believers) who thought the game was over when Jesus died at Calvary. Three days later, Jesus snatched victory from what appeared to be humiliating defeat. His victory, the resurrection, was a victory over sin and death, and it cleared a path to Heaven for each of us.



Our expectation for basketball’s March Madness is victory for higher ranked teams. For many, it is transformed into “March Suddness” when things don’t happen as expected. It did happen as Jesus expected. His resurrection is the assurance of victory for all believers. Whatever disappointments and dashed hopes followers of Jesus experienced at the foot of the cross were transformed into Hope fulfilled in the world to come. *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, (John 11:25).*

Look forward to the heavenly version of “One Shining Moment.” Don’t lament over earthly disappointments because the best is yet to come. Only one team will cut down the nets, but Jesus’ victory over sin and death means that all believers will be victorious in their shining moment. Hopes are fulfilled.

The Bible Says: *The hope of the righteous brings joy, but the expectation of the wicked will perish (Proverbs 10:28).*

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord. Life never goes as we imagine that it should. The events on the court can go against our expectations, but we know that Jesus has already won the battle that really counts – victory over sin and death. Let us put our Hope in Him. Amen.