

“Dealing With Spiritual Disappointments”

Matthew 11:1-6

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Introduction: Disappointment is sometimes defined as the failure to meet an expectation. We have all experienced some type of disappointment in our lives. Like a broken arm, our spirit can be wounded because of trials/troubles and it can wind up affecting us physically and spiritually (**Proverbs 17:22**). As Christians, we must not let our spiritual disappointments alter our God-given purpose in life. In our lesson, we are going to see how John the Baptist wasn't able to deal with his spiritual disappointment thus causing him to behave like a non-Christian or carnal Christian.

Verses 1-3

The Mistake

These verses show us the big mistake John the Baptist makes. Jesus had sent His disciples out in the field so they could learn how to serve (**Matthew 23:11**). The way they were to learn was through **practical** experience. While Jesus' disciples were away, Jesus was teaching and preaching in the cities. John the Baptist was in prison at this time, but he heard about the many works Jesus was doing. John sent two of his disciples to question Jesus. He said, “Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?” In other words, “Jesus, are you fake or real?” John the Baptist was the one who introduced Christ as the One who would bring fierce judgment and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire (**Matthew 3:11-12**). John proclaimed the coming of Christ and actually **baptized** Jesus, but now John is disappointed because *he* is in prison and Jesus is still carrying out His ministry (**Luke 2:49**). John wondered whether he had misunderstood Jesus' agenda. He is going through a trial and it seems like Jesus is not paying Him any attention. He begins to doubt and question Jesus because Jesus was not meeting his personal expectation. He is **isolated**, in a bad situation and he is spiritually wounded. Everything he thought he knew about the Lord has now become confusing. He is having a pity party! We should never let the situations we find ourselves in cause us to make the mistake of questioning the Lord. Can we think of a time when we have questioned God? The Lord is bigger than our problems (**Matthew 28:11**). Although John once had passion, he is now questioning his position and place in life (**Romans 12:3**) (**Galatians 6:3**). We should never **equate** a position with God's purpose because, if we do, we will experience spiritual disappointment and make the mistake of questioning the Lord if we don't get the position.

Verses 4-5

The Message

These verses show us the message Jesus gives to John's disciples. He sent John's disciples back as **eyewitnesses** of many miracles. He performed these miracles in their presence just so they could report back to John that they had personally seen proof that He was indeed the **Messiah** (**Isaiah 29:18-19**). Jesus gave sight to the blind, He made the lame to walk, and He cleansed the lepers (**Matthew 8:1-3**). He preached the gospel to the poor and those who had been neglected and possessed little were now receiving the good news of salvation from the Lord Himself. Notice Jesus did not address John directly, but instead He just let His works speak for Him. We should practice the same **attitude** when others question us (**Galatians 2:20**). The Lord had to show John the reality of the situation. He showed John that Kingdom building was not about him (and his personal expectations), but about the Lord. This message should hit home with all of us when we are out witnessing and working for the Lord. Our main focus should be on what the Lord wants and not our self-serving works and **selfish** desires (**2 Timothy 3:1-5**). It will and has always been about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Verse 6

The Mystery

This verse shows us the hidden mystery. Jesus tells us we are blessed if we are not **offended** by Him. In other words, do not be offended because you do not understand everything about me and everything that I do (**Isaiah 55:8**). The Lord just wants us to trust in Him completely because He knows what He is doing. If we want to be blessed, we have to **surrender** it all to Him. It is difficult to serve the Lord with a wounded and disappointed spirit (**Proverbs 18:14**). Many people are unable to understand Jesus so they question Him just as John did and they fail to make a total commitment despite their questions. Obedience brings us the opportunity to be blessed by Him. Once we completely trust Him, we can always find "yes" (to His will) in the midst of our mess. Whatever spiritual disappointments we are experiencing, we have to ask the Holy Spirit to guide our **actions** so they don't hinder our service and reverence to the Lord (**John 14:6**). The good news is that Jesus has already said that He would send the comforter to help us and He (Holy Spirit) will be there for us when we are personally overwhelmed or disappointed. When our hearts are heavy (and sincere), just cry out to Him (**Psalms 61:1-2**). The Lord will **help** us deal with our spiritual disappointments.