

Disappointment Outline

1. Intro
 - a. Over the past month...Traveling through acts as a church.
 - b. As we've been making this journey, there's been a story unfolding before our eyes...we have the apostles waiting for the promise that Jesus said He would give them, the Holy Spirit.
 - c. So they're waiting and waiting and praying and waiting and waiting. And finally it comes. And when it **does it's powerful**.
 - i. They begin speaking in other tongues, prophesying, and preaching the gospel and **thousands** are added to the church that day. But believe it or not, it doesn't stop there.
 - ii. They keep going! No matter how many times they are beaten no matter how many times they're put in prison, no matter any consequence, **they keep going**.
 2. What I want to do this morning is take a step back and talk about the moments leading up to this powerful experience. Because what we've been covering the past several weeks is really the second act in a two act play.
 3. And this second act is where we witness all the miracles and all the faith and the book of acts is really the pinnacle of what Christian faith looks like. What I want to do this morning is talk about the moments leading up to Christ's ascension.
 4. Because it was in these moments that the disciples faced something I think all Christians will face at some point in their life. In fact, if you are a human living on this planet you will face it. What I want to teach about this morning is the **reality of disappointment**.
 5. Now I realize preaching about disappointment is pretty risky with it being my first time up here. I mean that could be the first word that pops into your head once I'm done.
 - a. And I know what you're thinking, Atlanta Sports disappointment.
 - b. Being from Tennessee, I have experienced disappointment too.
- SLIDE 1**
- c. This **is not the type of disappointment I am talking about**. This disappointment does not come from sports, it doesn't come from Redbox being out of the movie you wanted to watch. **It's deeper than that**. This type of disappointment happens when a trusted friend betrays your trust, it happens when parents get divorced, if there's a strained relationship with your father or mother...**It comes from the death of a loved one**. And this is the same type of disappointment the apostles faced as well.
 6. And this contrast is what I love about Acts and scripture in general: we can study what it looks like to live a life completely consumed by Christ and His gospel like we've been doing the last several weeks. And then we are able to take a step back and realize they were **human just like us**, and they went through difficult moments just like us. Before the Spirit of God allowed us to look on these disciples to show us what it looks like to live a life fully devoted to Jesus, He let us look on the disciples in their most vulnerable moments of disappointment. So

together, let's look there this morning. But before we do let's pray and invite God into our hearts and mind this morning.

SLIDE 2

7. Look at the passage.

a. *Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.*

And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

And He said to them, "What things?"

So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

8. Jesus asks them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" In other words, why are you sad? Why are you disappointed? This brings me to my first point.

a. **Disappointment comes when an expectation that we carry is not met.**

This type of disappointment doesn't just happen. I don't wake up in the morning and say, "You know what, I think today is a disappointment type of day." It happens when expectations aren't met.

b. So what was the expectation, or expectations that these two disciples carried? We can understand and find out what they were in the conversation they had with Jesus starting in verse 19. *"And He said to them, What things? The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. "We were hoping that it was He who was going to*

i. This expectation as does most expectations, stemmed from the culture around them. The culture they lived in at the time was extremely religious and political.

- ii. If you were a Jew living in this time of history, there was a hope, an expectation that Israel would be restored as a kingdom as it once existed under king David. You could not escape this idea if you lived here in this time of history. So in this particular context, the Jewish people wanted Rome to be overthrown.
- c. There were prophecies about it...there were Psalms about it. These two disciples probably went to Jerusalem with Zechariah 9:12 on their minds: "Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope; This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you." These disciples probably arrived to Jerusalem a year or so ago in order to witness Rome being overthrown and have Israel return to its former glory. They wanted to be able to tell their children and grandchildren they witnessed all these miraculous events.
 - i. There are even other stories in the gospel that demonstrate this expectation. Matthew 20:20-21 says this. Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

"What is it you want?" he asked.

She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."
 - ii. My favorite instance of them being obsessed with this notion is in Acts. We just read about it a little while ago. "Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"
 - iii. ...Before you go...can you just let us know *when* it's going to be restored. Jesus of course responded by saying it wasn't for them to know and there were more important things to focus on at the time.
- d. But this is what they were living in. It was literally everywhere. And Jesus was unlike anyone these disciples had ever seen! They called Him a prophet among men! He cast out demons, he brought sight to the blind, He raised the dead, He was definitely the one to do it, He was wonderful. So when Jesus was crucified, yeah it was disappointing. Because crucifixion is what happened to the others who attempted to overthrow Rome. And according to Jewish law, cursed is a man who hangs on a tree. And besides...it was the third day...Of course we have the luxury of knowing how the story turns out. To these two disciples, there was no hope left, their expectations were shattered. They decided to leave Jerusalem. There was devastation and disappointment.

9. So these were their expectations, but what are ours?

- a. Very similar to a first century Jew, our expectations in life are often determined by our culture around us. But not very similar to a first century Jew is the type of culture we live in. Where theirs was a largely religious culture with the expectation of the Davidic Kingdom being restored, I think as a whole the culture in which we live in is generally that of comfort and success.

- b. Instead of us asking the Lord when He will redeem the kingdom back to Israel, we ask him when we are going to be able to save enough money so that I can retire early? Or when And instead of mom's asking Jesus for their sons to sit on Jesus' right hand and left hand in his kingdom, they ask him that their wife would be beautiful, funny, perfect height, love Jesus and love Georgia Football. And these are not bad things to expect, I mean if Stephanie and I had a baby boy we would be doing the same thing except that they love Tennessee Football.
- c. Like the first century disciples, our expectations of what life should look like and be like is all around us and usually starts at an early age. It even starts in elementary school! We play those games during recess to determine who we're gonna marry and how many kids we'll end up having.
- d. In high school we start to daydream about the type of house and family we want. **By the time we get to college**, it's time to pursue the career you want and the type of husband or wife you want.
- e. And **these are not bad expectations**, they are just expectations that we have because of the culture we live in. We expect for our parents to stay married our whole lives, we expect to be healthy our whole lives, we expect to find an incredible spouse, we expect to have enough resources to provide for our kids that we expect to have.
- f. My sister and brother in law were talking to me one night about the expectation to have kids. They were letting me know about some struggles they were having in conceiving; and at one point in the conversation, my sister turned to me and said, "I didn't realize the importance culture places on the ability to have kids until our doctor asked us if we had ever thought about adoption."
- g. When these things don't happen, when these expectations are not met there is devastation, there is disappointment. And while we have the luxury of knowing the ending of these two disciples' story, the difficulty for us right now is that we don't always know the end of ours. But the good news is this, if we place our trust in Christ, we are never left in disappointment.

SLIDE 3

10. I love the way one Christian author puts it, **"The dance of disappointment is always the first act of a larger plot in the Christian story."**

- a. Jesus knew the larger plot of the story, He knew the ending, He knew there was still hope. Let's keep reading to see how Jesus brought the disciples new hope and how he can bring us from disappointment to hope. Starting in verse 25 it says, *Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is*

toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

11. What happened here? How were their eyes opened and why were their hearts burning? Yes we can say well Jesus read the scriptures to them and he had communion with them, but what was Jesus doing? He was giving them hope by helping them remember that there was a bigger story being told in their moment of disappointment. And notice that **although Jesus did not fulfill the disciple’s cultural expectations Jesus fulfilled God’s promises.**
12. He came alongside the disciples to help them remember the promises of God. And this is what He does with us, He doesn’t say, “well you need to memorize scripture” or “you need to take communion at least four times a day...” No...Jesus comes along side us and He himself helps us remember God’s promises. And while He may not fulfill our cultural expectations, He will always come through on God’s promises.

SLIDE 4

13. Let’s take a few moments to discover some of the Promises of God?
 - a. He is constant. That He will never leave you. (Hebrews 13:5)
 - b. He is salvation. That, if you confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)
 - c. He is Prince of Peace. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” He promises us peace...He does...in the midst of our deepest and most raw disappointment He gives us peace. John 14:27.
14. How do we remember?
 - a. And here at Calvary Chapel Stone Mountain we have so many resources to help you remember the promises of God. But a couple of them come to mind immediately:
 - i. **Communion** – Over the past month we’ve been taking communion. The bread helps us remember that Jesus gave His body for us and the juice helps us remember He shed His blood for us.
 - ii. **Scripture in General** – Every week Pastor Sandy goes chapter by chapter through a book of the Bible. This helps us remember the Words of God.
15. But to be honest, there are times in our life when our devastation and disappointment is so deep, we feel like we need Jesus Himself to come down to earth to hold us. And this is where we as the church come in. Let’s look at the last part of this story to see how we as the church can help others. In verse 33 it says, *So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord is risen*

indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

- a. The disciples went to the other eleven and told them that Christ had risen! As the body of Christ we are called to help those who are in the midst of their disappointment remember the goodness and promises of God. And you may think, I can’t help people remember God’s promises, I don’t know scripture, I’m not a pastor, I’m not called to do something like that. But God in His infinite wisdom has made it so simple, but so beautiful. And it doesn’t have to be elaborate either!
 - i. We can help someone remember God’s love by taking them out to coffee to get to know them
 - ii. We can help someone remember God’s provision by taking them meals or cutting their grass
 - iii. And we can help someone remember God’s grace by forgiving them
- b. When my sister told me that they were struggling having kids, I couldn’t come up with the right words to say. And I really wanted to. But honestly I didn’t need to. I think we cried for a while and then we prayed together. I held my sister’s hand the whole time.
- c. Just being there for someone helps them remember that God’s promises.
- d. And let’s be honest with our selves, there are sometimes that we remind others, but most of the time we need the reminding.

16. In keeping with that thought, I want to close by calling our attention back to the initial meeting between the two disciples and Jesus. This is in verse 18, *Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”*

- a. There are times when we have expectations that aren’t met and we’re disappointed, there are times when expectations aren’t met and we’re devastated. The two disciples asked the Stranger, were you not there when Jesus was beaten, were you not there when He was being crucified, were you not there when they put him to death, were you not there when our hopes were gone? Sometimes we feel like Jesus is a stranger to us in the midst of our disappointment and we ask Him, are you the only one that doesn’t know what’s going on? Were you not there when my child got sick, were you not there when my parents got divorced, where were you when my loved one died? And just like He did with the two disciples, Jesus responds by walking with us in the midst of our disappointment and He then He reminds us that in fact He was there the whole time. And while we may have been disappointed by something that happened or didn’t happen to us, He won’t leave us in that disappointment. And we may not know our entire story from beginning to end, but we know who does, and in knowing that, we remember God’s hope. Let’s pray.

