

Northwest Community Church | June 14, 2020

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WHEN LIFE HITS HARD Series

Disappointment

Me

Story of my Sociological Theory class.

Not too long ago I was enrolled in a sociology course called Sociological theory. It was not my first choice from the class list, but I thought of myself as pretty knowledgeable about sociological things and thought I could still nab an easy A.

Sure enough, my expectations seemed to be confirmed upon arriving at the first class. As the professor began to read the syllabus, she explained the most of our grades will be made up of papers. These papers would have us express our own opinion based on the ideas held by past sociologists — like Karl Marx, or W.E. Du Bois

“Cake” I thought to myself. I rarely disappointed my professors with papers like this, so it will be a snap! You see, I thought of myself as a smooth talker — or a smooth “typer”. I thought that I wrote great papers. What was even better is that the paper was asking for my opinion. You know what that means? Less research, thank goodness! Easy home run... until I got my first grade back....

(40/100) Let us just say that my grade did not meet my expectations, but my disappointment didn't stop there...

Not only did I get a low grade, but the average grade for the class was an 87/100... and my paper was not really contributing to that average.

NOT ONLY did I get a low grade, which was disappointing enough, my papers had handwritten critiques on them... and they were not cute either.

The vocabulary she used was like “Messy” “Long-winded” and “out of focus”. Worst of all, she expressed that I “missed the point entirely”.

I was discouraged, embarrassed, and above all Disappointed.

WE

- Have you ever been disappointed? (NOT TRAGEDY or minor disgruntlement)
 - You may be like me, and were disappointed when the Spurs lost the 2013 Championship to the Miami Heat (we could have had 6, y'all! Still grinds my gears...)
 - Or my younger folks — maybe that person you like did not ask you out and you were sure that they were going to...
 - Or maybe you managed the courage to ask someone out, and for a while things seemed great, but in the end, things did NOT work out... and you were pretty disappointed.
 - Let's change gears -- maybe you were expecting a job or a promotion that did not pan out, and your boss says something like “in the end, you weren't the right fit” or something to that effect
 - Maybe you felt as if God promised you financial peace, or job security, or a happy marriage, and in the end when it did not turn out the way you thought God promised... you were left, well, disappointed.
- Here is the thing: Disappointment is an unfortunate part of life. It can NOT be avoided entirely (Unfortunately). The question we will answer today is NOT how to avoid disappointment, but we will answer WHY we are disappointed and WHAT should we do about it?
- Join me, as we dive into Bible. Let us find out if it has anything to say about disappointment.

GOD

Mark 10: 35-44

Set stage: Jesus is heading to Jerusalem, the Holy City. He has His 12 disciples with him, who are His closest friends. There are also thousands of followers trailing behind Him.

He just got done telling the disciples that He was going into Jerusalem to be handed over and killed... heavy stuff, right? Let us see how His apostles respond to a heavy statement like that...

Verses:

- 35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him
 - Also called “Sons of Thunder”
 - Two of His devoted disciples. These guys always do their best to follow what Jesus says.
- and said, “Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask you.”
 - “Teacher” or “Rabbi”, not quite “Lord” here.
 - In Matthew, it is said that their mother was with them and urged them to ask (Matthew 20:20-28)
 - “Hey, Jesus. We want you to do us a favor. And we have been GREAT followers, haven’t we? So, we would LOVE if you would just DO what we ask, ok?”
- 36 “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked them.
 - Jesus is so patient – surely, he knows what they will ask. Or at least He has an idea.
- 37 They answered him, “Allow us to sit at your right and at your left in your glory.”
 - Jewish kingdoms typically sat the highest-ranking officials on the left and right of the king. There was no higher rank in a Jewish kingdom than this.
 - It sounds self-serving for James and John to ask this of Jesus, but this request is not completely outlandish. Jesus has been mentioning a “Kingdom” throughout His ministry, and has even told the Apostles (including James and John) that they would have a part in it...
 - However, they are asking for more than a seat; they are asking to be the best of the 12 Apostles -- to have the MOST authority, even over the other 10. There is only ONE right seat and ONE left seat in a kingdom.
- 38 Jesus said to them, “You don’t know what you’re asking. Are you able to drink the cup I drink or to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”
 - You see, they expected Jesus to walk into Jerusalem, kick Rome out, and then establish a shiny new PHYSICAL kingdom that they could get a ruling seat in.
 - They were expecting Jesus to rip the buttons of his shirt and reveal a red, gold, and blue jumpsuit with a big “M” (for Messiah) on the chest like Superman and fight off Rome and reclaim the nation that was taken from their fathers by Cesar.
 - Those of us who grew up reading the Bible in some way know that this is not the type of Messiah that Jesus came to be 2000 years ago. And that in just a few days he would be handed over and KILLED... a thought that was FAR out of the minds of James and John...
 - ... Despite Jesus saying so about 5 minutes before their request (remember that for later).
 - They were EXPECTING something that Jesus never outright promised: political power on a left or right ranking seat.
- 39 “We are able,” they told him.
 - “Yes yes, sure sure, we can do that, yeah. For sure Jesus.”
 - Honestly, I want to believe that they really thought that they could do this.
- Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink, and you will be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.”
 - Jesus is referring to how the life of James and John would end (more on that later). But pay attention to what Jesus says next here...
- 40 But to sit at my right or left is not mine to give; instead, it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”
 - **What a disappointment**
 - Imagine being James and John and hearing that Jesus would not grant this request.
 - They probably felt like they worked hard and honestly, they followed instructions the best they could, they tried to be good listeners in their profession... and still, the answer was no...
 - But It gets a little worse than that. Look what happens next.
- 41 When the ten disciples heard this, they began to be indignant with James and John.
 - NOW, their friends are mad at them about it!
 - And they are not mad because James and John asked behind their back, no. They were upset because they had wished they had asked FIRST.
 - “Wait, I am the greatest of the 12, and I deserve the seat next to Jesus!”
 - I imagine Jesus is looking at them, thinking to Himself “Why are y’all fighting? I JUST told you – there is no

thrones in our near future... only a cross. What were y'all expecting."

YOU

Let us shift gears for a second.

Let me ask you, when disappointment struck you, WERE YOUR EXPECTATIONS LINED UP WITH WHAT WAS ACTUALLY GOING ON?

Confirmation Bias: The idea that something LOOKS like what you were expecting, and therefore it must be true — when in reality, that might not be the case.

Answer: the source of disappointment is often our own mishandling expectations.

You have done one of two things.

1. You put your expectations in the wrong person/thing.
2. You put your expectations in the right person/thing, but you misunderstood what was expected.

I believe that in this situation, both James and John fall into the latter.

(the rest of GOD)

Let us look at how God handles the Disciple's disappointment due to their mismanagement of expectations.

- 42 Jesus called them over and said to them, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them."
 - "Uh, yeah Jesus. They get all the cool stuff from ruling! We get to tell people what to do! That is why we want to be numero dos y tres in your kingdom. That all sounds great!"
- 43 **But it is not so among you.** (!!!!)
- On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all.
 - Jesus did not come to change the political climate; He came to die as a sacrifice so that we could be made clean in front of our heavenly father.
 - What Jesus was about to do was infinitely better than the throne they wanted.
 - Some of the things that Jesus was about to do would put value on the human life, reach nations with hope, turn

lives from downward spirals, restore marriages, and above all connect us with our heavenly father in eternity.

- Better than the throne they were asking for...

We

James and John were on the ground floor of Jesus's huge movement... once they finally understood what He was doing. You see, Jesus had to help James and John understand, and it took His death to finally drive it home, but once they got it, they were part of a movement that changed the world.

SUPP (tool for understanding our disappointment and managing our expectations)

- **See your expectation — look it dead in the eye. "Hi, I'm Landry. And IM disappointed"**
- **Understand that your disappointment came from mishandled expectations.**
- **Pray and align your expectations better with Jesus's expectation**
 - **Do that by reading your bible and listening to the Word of God**
- **then Proceed with better expectations.**

Imagine if we all REDIRECTED our expectations and aligned our values with what Jesus expected of us. It will not keep you from being disappointed, because unfortunately that's part of life. But aligning your expectations with what Jesus wants to form you, which requires REALLY listening on our parts, then we could be part of the movement that Jesus started 2000 years ago.

When we align our expectations with Jesus, what disappoints us changes for the better.