

Read: Matthew 11:2-11

Or Should I Look Somewhere Else?

Matthew 11: 2-5

While John was in prison, he heard about the things Christ was doing. He sent two of his disciples to ask him, "Are you the Coming One or should we wait for someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go, report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor."

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The three readings this week talk about a few different emotions: surprise, patience, and now—disappointment. In the Gospel reading from Matthew 11, we hear that John the Baptist is disappointed: "While John was in prison, he heard about the things Christ was doing. He sent two of his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the Coming One or should we wait for someone else?'" Wow. Talk about *disappointment!* John had preached that Jesus was the Messiah; John had pointed to Jesus and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John said that this Jesus, the promised Messiah, would destroy his enemies with fire and judge the world with justice!

Now John was in prison for preaching what God's Word said. John was in jail because he had clearly taught what God's Word said. And it certainly seems that John was disappointed in Jesus. If Jesus was the powerful Messiah that John had preached about . . . where was the justice? Why was John in jail? Why did John suffer for simply doing what God had commanded him to do?

Can you imagine how disappointed John felt? You may have felt let down by someone. Maybe there was a time when you were disappointed in what someone did or said. But... John is disappointed with God!

Jesus gently directs John—and us—back to his clear Word. Our happiness with God doesn't hinge on what he does for us, or how he blesses us; our joy in Jesus is completely because Jesus has *done* everything that he *promised*. That's why Jesus points John (and us) back to Isaiah 35. Jesus says that he is doing, and will do, exactly what the Messiah said he would do—so there's no reason to be disappointed in Jesus: "Go, report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor."

Whew! Jesus is the One!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Why was John in jail? (Reread that portion of the devotion as needed.)
- How do you think John felt?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What was the message John sent to Jesus?
- What answer do you think John was expecting?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- What message does Jesus give to John through the messengers? (This phrasing is a direct fulfillment of Isaiah's words about the Messiah.) Why does Jesus send this message for John?
- Name two bad ways and two good ways that Christians can handle disappointment.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, I confess my disappointment. My heart wants things to happen on my schedule and in my way; yet just like John, you direct me back to what you promised to do. You have brought your gospel to me, and your certain Word has promised me forgiveness! Grant that I am never disappointed in this truth. Amen.