

THE BIG IDEA: We deal with disappointment by remembering His appointment

The Take-Off

Today we're starting our December series and you're going to love it!

It's called "The Unexpected Christmas Playlist" and each week we'll talk about a popular Christmas song and how those songs can point us to the gospel.

This morning, you just heard Phil and Jennifer singing "White Christmas" (you probably found yourself singing along) Sure, it's the most popular Christmas song of all time, but here in NC, it's also a reminder that dreaming of a white Christmas is probably going to leave us disappointed.

The last one we had was in 2010 (around 3-4 inches), but there have only been 4 snowfalls of accumulation in the almost 130+ years since they started keeping records.

That's once every 34 years or so, which means a lot of Christmas disappointment.

Shoot, I've started dreaming of a COLD Christmas, because around here it's just as likely to be 70 and sunny on Christmas.

So, this morning, let's talk about disappointment and what we can do about it.

We'll break this one into 2 parts: things that cause disappointment and ways we can deal with it.

My prayer is that all of us would leave this morning with hope

1. What causes disappointment

- a. I asked this question Friday on Facebook, and 80+ comments later, here are some of the responses: broken trust, trying to control everything, sin, hypocrisy and lies, life, comparing ourselves with others, selfishness, pride, lack of communication, Facebook, hidden agendas, not trusting God, when the ice cream machine is "down" at McDonalds
- b. By far, though, the most popular answer was expectations, either unmet, unspoken or unrealistic
- c. Disappointment is what we feel when there is a gap between what we expect and what we experience
- d. I expect snow this Christmas, and if this isn't year 34, then chances are my experience isn't going to match my expectation, and that means I'm going to feel disappointment.
- e. That's normal, and the only way to never be disappointed is to never expect anything
- f. That may sound mature, but that will turn you into a bitter, hard person. It just isn't realistic to live without having expectations.
- g. You came to church with them. You'll go to lunch with them. You'll go home with them.
- h. Having them isn't bad. It's normal. That's why having a plan for dealing with the disappointment that will come is so critical.
- i. But first, let's take all those Facebook answers and quickly organize them into 4 areas where we all experience disappointment: with God, with others, with circumstances, and with ourselves.
- j. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on these because we all know they're right, but let me at least help you see that disappointment with God is a real emotion and is even found in the Bible.
- k. Case study? The last chapter of Jonah.
- l. This story doesn't end like you'd think: an entire city repents, but the preacher is angry with God
- m. Why? He had an expectation of God - that He would destroy them.
- n. Was it realistic? No - even Jonah knew that God was merciful.
- o. He expected judgement but experienced revival and that led to disappointment.
- p. It's true of others, of ourselves, of circumstances. Gaps between expectations and experiences get filled. We fill them with disappointment.
- q. There is a better way...

2. How to deal with disappointment

- a. Like my Facebook post revealed, most of us have a pretty good idea of where disappointment comes from
- b. What we don't know is how to deal with it. Here are 4 strategies to help us all **DEAL** with disappointment:
- c. **D** - Do what you know
- d. In the first chapter of Luke, we find a Jewish nation who had experienced 400 years of silence from God
- e. We also see Zechariah and Elizabeth childless - God and life causing disappointment
- f. But we also see **Luke 1:6** - they observed all the Lord's commands blamelessly

- g. When we're disappointed, it's easy to focus on what we don't have or can't do, but do what you know
- h. E - Encourage your soul
- i. In [Psalm 42](#), we find disappointment, and yet we find the writer encouraging his soul
- j. He can't find God, he's like a wounded deer, and he's being mocked by others
- k. How did he encourage his soul?
- l. Verses 4, 6/ he remembers what used to encourage him
- m. Verses 5, 11 / he worships
- n. A - Allow others in
- o. [Proverbs 12:25](#) / anxiety discourages but notice what helps - a kind word!
- p. From who? From others who are in our lives when we're facing discouragement
- q. L - Look for the purpose
- r. Let's look back in Psalms at [Psalm 130](#)
- s. David is discouraged, disappointed, overwhelmed by his sin
- t. How does he respond? Verses 5-8 - he remembers that there is a redemptive purpose
- u. What does that look like in our world today? Watch...
- v. [\[VIDEO / Nick Vujicic\]](#)

The Landing

The answer to the real hurt of disappointment is the real hope of Jesus

[Romans 5:5](#) tells us that hope does not disappoint, and then verses 6-11 explain why: because Jesus did what He came to do - His appointment started in a manger and ended on a cross

We deal with disappointment by remembering His appointment

Sure, we may not have a White Christmas this year (or even in the next 30), but Christmas brings us something far better: real hope from a real Savior, and while the things that cause us disappointment may not be resolved on our timetable, we can Do what we know, Encourage our souls, Allow others in and Look for and Live with Purpose and that allows us to DEAL with disappointment.

Let's pray.