

Overcoming Disappointment

Q4/Session 11

Introduction

Disappointment is something we may not want to discuss, but it is something we will all face in life and in our evangelistic efforts. Even those closest to God in Scripture faced trials, delays, and rejection. What do we do when we obey, pray, and hope, but things don't go as expected?

In this session, we'll explore how to respond to disappointment, learning from Jesus and His followers, anchoring our faith in God alone, and pressing on with confidence even when results are not what we expected.

Diving In

After Jesus ascended into heaven, His followers obeyed His command. They went to the upper room to pray and wait for the promised Holy Spirit. And just as He said, the Spirit came like a mighty rushing wind and with tongues of fire. They were filled with supernatural power and boldness, and when they stepped out, thousands repented and came to Jesus.

But have you ever considered what came next?

Yes, more miracles and more people coming to Jesus, but there was also rejection. There were beatings, imprisonment, riots, and resistance. The same power that brought salvation also stirred up opposition.

Jesus never promised that the Gospel would always be received with joy. In fact, He warned us that just as He was rejected, we would be too. And even when we follow Him with complete obedience, led by the Spirit, walking in love, some will still say no.

That can be disappointing.

We don't control the outcome. We can pray, prepare, and obey, but results are in God's hands, not ours.

Understanding this doesn't erase the sting of rejection. It still hurts to be misunderstood, to pour out your heart and be met with resistance or silence. But knowing that even Jesus experienced this reminds us that disappointment is not failure but part of the journey.

John 15:18–20 (NASB) *If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world... the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you as well.*

1 Peter 4:12–14 (NASB) *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you as though something strange were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the*



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sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon you.

Galatians 6:9 (NASB) *Let's not become discouraged in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not become weary.*

Overcoming

If disappointment is an expected part of evangelism, then let's not shy away from it; let's face it head-on. Because the truth is, evangelism isn't the only area where we experience disappointment in our walk with God.

We may pray for healing, provision, or a breakthrough and not receive the "yes" we were believing for.

We may feel let down by people we trust, such as friends, mentors, and even church leaders.

Disappointment can come from unmet expectations, unanswered prayers, or painful relationships. And when it does, it can feel isolating, confusing, and discouraging.

But here's the hope: Jesus understands disappointment. He experienced rejection, betrayal, and sorrow. You are not alone in it. And you're not weak for feeling it.

So, what do we do?

First, we acknowledge the pain. Disappointment doesn't disappear just because we ignore it or try to "faith it away."

We see this in David's life. Again and again in the Psalms, David pours out his heart to God, his grief, his fear, his frustration. He doesn't pretend everything is fine. He cries out honestly. But he never stops there. He turns his eyes back to the Lord.

Psalms 34:18 (NASB) *The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

Psalms 62:8 (NASB) *Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your hearts before Him; God is a refuge for us.*

God meets us in the middle of our disappointment, not to shame us for feeling it, but to walk with us through it. Healing begins when we bring our pain into His presence.

Philippians 4:6–7 (NASB) *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*



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1 Peter 5:7 (NASB) *...having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you.*

Once we do that, we must let go and trust that God knows the situation better than we do. We can trust in Him instead of our own understanding.

Proverbs 3:5–6 (NASB) *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*

Don't give up! The enemy will always try to make us feel like a failure or like God has failed us. We must recognize that it is a lie and be all the more determined to continue in faith and obedience.

Hebrews 10:35–36 (NASB) *Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.*

Psalms 27:13–14 (NASB) *I certainly believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord.*

Object of Faith

When we make anything other than God Himself the object of our faith, we set ourselves up for disappointment.

If our faith is placed in our abilities, in a specific outcome, or even in our expectations of how we think God should act, then when things don't turn out the way we hoped, we can feel let down, blaming ourselves, others, or even God.

But when our faith is rooted in who God is, not just in what we want Him to do, everything changes. We begin to trust in His power, His wisdom, His love, and His timing.

Even when outcomes are unclear or prayers seem unanswered, we can remain steady because our hope isn't in a result, it's in a Person.

God sees the whole picture. He loves us, and He loves the people we minister to more than we could ever love them. He may not move the way we expected, but when our faith is in Him alone, we won't be shaken.

Psalms 62:5–8 (NLT) *Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken. My victory and honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. O my people, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge.*



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Jeremiah 17:7–8 (NIV) *But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.*

Determined

Isaiah 50:7 (NASB) *For the Lord God helps me, therefore, I am not disgraced; therefore, I have set my face like flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed.*

This is a prophetic passage about the Messiah, Jesus, expressing His unwavering determination to obey God, even in the face of suffering, rejection, and opposition. "Setting His face like flint" means having a resolute focus, an unshakable purpose, and bold endurance, knowing that God would uphold Him.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NASB) *Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be firm, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

Paul gave this encouragement to the Corinthian believers because they needed it, just like we do. Disappointment can whisper, "What's the point?" It can make us feel like our efforts aren't making a difference, that our prayers, our service, our obedience don't matter.

But Paul speaks directly into that mindset: Don't quit. Stay grounded. Keep going. What you're doing for the Lord is never wasted, even if you can't see the results you wanted.

Philippians 3:13–14 (NASB) *...forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Disappointment and discouragement may try to weigh us down, but we can choose to leave them behind. Every believer has to walk through moments where continuing feels hard, but those who persevere discover that it's worth it.

Wrap-Up / Challenge

Disappointment is real, but it doesn't have to derail your faith. God never promised the journey would be easy or that outcomes would always match our expectations, but He did promise to be with us, to strengthen us, and to use every act of obedience for His glory.

So, when you face resistance, rejection, or unanswered prayers, don't give up. Set your face like flint. Keep pressing on. Your labor in the Lord is not in vain. And your hope, anchored in who God is, will not disappoint.

