

Leadership Tip!

One of the most important ingredients to being a successful life group is to focus on the people and not the content. Strive to create an environment that emphasizes authentic relationships in your group.

LET'S TALK – DISAPPOINTMENT WITH GOD**STARTER QUESTIONS:**

Have you ever been disappointed with God? Why? (Ask folks to share a story.)

How does being a part of a Life group help you cope with life's difficulties?

MAIN IDEA:

In the sermon series entitled "Let's Talk", Pastor Hank has openly discussed topics relevant to Coastal and to churches nationwide. This week's topic dealt with disappointment with God. The congregation was asked to raise their hands if they had ever been disappointed with God. When looking around the room, it became pretty obvious that we are not alone when it comes to ever having experienced disappointment with God. In fact, in Phillip Yancey's book, *"Disappointment with God"*, Yancey was quoted as saying, "For *many* people there is a large gap between what they expect from their Christian faith and what they actually experience."

Webster's defines *disappointment* as the feeling of sadness or displeasure caused by the nonfulfillment of one's hopes or expectations.

Does experiencing disappointment with God depend on our obedience to God? NO

As we look at the last days of John the Baptist, we discover that even John the Baptist experienced a season of disappointment with God. This happened all the while John was steadfast in doing what God called him to do.

"So John called for two of his disciples, and he sent them to the Lord to ask him, "Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?" Luke 7:18-19 (NLT)

While John was struggling with his faith, John's followers may have concluded that John had done something wrong or perhaps Jesus disliked John.

But we see in v.28, that wasn't the case.

"I tell you, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John." Luke 7:28 (NLT)

Do you allow life's circumstances to determine your intimacy with the Lord?

As followers of Christ we need to remember to never let life's circumstances define who God is to us. In fact **Hebrews 10:23** says, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

An article entitled "Standing on the Promises" written in Time magazine in December of 1956, stated Everek Storms of Kitchener, Ont. A member of Canada's United Missionary Church, spent a year and a half reading through the entire bible 27 times and discovered there were 7,487 promises from God to man. How awesome is that!

"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God." 2 Corinthians 1:20 (NIV)

"Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed." Joshua 23:14 (NIV)

Jesus always remained focused on the **mission**, even during John's periods of doubt.

"At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind." Luke 7:21(NLT)

In fact Jesus' response to John's disciples earlier question as to if He was the Messiah was quite direct.

"Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor." And he added, "God blesses those who do not fall away because of me." Luke 7:22-23 (NLT)

Will you follow Jesus' example, of staying on mission by sharing your testimony to help people that are "far from God"?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

What steps will you take this week to rejoice in God's promises and take some time to encourage others in your sphere of influence to do the same?

As Christians, dealing with disappointment is inevitable, but it doesn't mean God isn't accomplishing His divine purposes through us. We must always trust in the Lord with all our heart and realize that He is always in control.

"Life is unpredictable, but God is constant!"

"LORD, sustain me as you promised, that I may live! Do not let my hope be crushed." Psalm 119:116(NLT)

How can our group pray for you?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Job 19:25, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Philippians 4:4

LET'S TALK...

"About Disappointment with God"

November 6, 2016

"For many people there is a large gap between what they expect from their Christian faith and what they actually experience. From a steady diet of books, sermons, and personal testimonies, all promising triumph and success, they learn to expect dramatic evidence of God working in their lives. If they do not see such evidence, they feel disappointment, betrayal and often guilt."

-Philip Yancey, Disappointment With God

So John called for two of his disciples, and he sent them to the Lord to ask him, "Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?"

Luke 7:18-19 (NLT)

It's easy to get the idea that if God is silent, God must be absent.

"I tell you, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John." Luke 7:28 (NLT)

Don't let your current circumstances define who God is to you.

"We tend to think, 'Life should be fair because God is fair.' But God is not life. And if I confuse God with the physical reality of life- by expecting constant good health for example- then I set myself up for crashing disappointment." - Philip Yancey, Disappointment with God

"Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor." And he added, "God blesses those who do not fall away because of me."

Luke 7:22-23 (NLT)

Your ability to survive disappointment with God directly coincides with your proximity to other believers.

Our mission is to take what we've seen and heard being with Jesus to those imprisoned by circumstances and not experiencing the Lord.

□ Job: *"I know that my Redeemer lives."*

Job 19:25 (NIV)

□ Jeremiah: *"Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness."*

Lamentations 3:21-23 (NLT)