

WEEK 2:

# THE SKEPTICISM OF DISAPPOINTMENT

## PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:

Luke 1:5-25, 1:57-64

## RELATED SCRIPTURE:

Romans 8:18-26; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; Genesis 50:15-21

If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.

- C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

At some point, for all eternity, there will be no more unmerited suffering: this present darkness, 'the age of evil,' will eventually be remembered as a brief flicker at the beginning of human history. Every evil done by the wicked to the innocent will have been avenged, and every tear will have been wiped away.

- Peter van Inwagen

## PERSONAL STUDY:

**Read Luke 1:5-8.** Imagine what Elizabeth and Zechariah have experienced throughout their life. Have you personally known people who have longed for children or some other good thing and haven't received it over a long time?

Throughout your life, what have you really wanted God to give to you, but had to wait for a long time or have not yet received?

If you have not yet received these things, how have you responded? Logically, how have you processed this in your mind? Emotionally, what have you felt in your heart? Practically, what have you done in response?

Have you ever received one of these things only to find it not as satisfying as you hoped it would be? Why is the reality of the gifts we receive often lower than our expectations of those gifts?

**Read Luke 1:8-20.** Have you ever believed God was specifically and directly calling you to something? If so, how did you respond? If not, how do you think you would respond if this happened?

In verse 20, God disciplines Zechariah through his angel Gabriel for his lack of faith. (To study more on God's discipline, reference Hebrews 12, especially verses 5-11.) What is God's purpose in discipline? Why is it good for us and how is it different from punishment or retribution?

## SERMON NOTES:



## LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION:

**Read Luke 1:5-7.** What have been the biggest disappointments in your life? What is the longest season of disappointment you've walked through? What changes or insights have you noticed over time as the disappointment continues?



Are there any unmet desires or disappointments in your life currently? Which hopes and dreams for your life haven't yet come true? What do you think would change if they did?

Three common responses to disappointment:

1. Blame the thing we want (get mad and bitter at the thing. Resent and hate it. Move onto another version of it or move on to a new thing entirely).
2. Blame ourselves (depression, victimization and guilt complex).
3. Blame God.



Which of these responses have you seen throughout your life? How have you seen disappointment in your life or others lead to skepticism and doubt?

**Read Luke 1:11-20 and Hebrews 12:5-11.** Why does God discipline us? How do you tend to respond to God's discipline in your life?

**Read Philippians 4:10-13 and John 6:26-35.** How can our unmet desires actually point us toward Jesus instead of creating doubt and distance between us and Him?

