



This is our final message in the “Rolling Stones” series. Our topic this week is disappointment. What is the right way to handle our disappointments, and how can we use them to be an example to others as to what God can do in peoples’ lives.

- **What kind of situations tend to spark disappointment in you the most, and why do you think those particular situations tend to affect you so much?**
 - ◆ Personal failures
 - ◆ Relationships with others
 - ◆ Situations not turning out the way you expected
 - ◆ Other: _____

- **What would you say is the biggest disappointment you have experienced in your life?**
 - ◆ What was the situation?
 - ◆ How did it affect you at the time?
 - ◆ Do you think it still has an affect on you now? How?

- **On Sunday, Eric took us through *2 Corinthians 1:3-11* as three reasons why God allows us to face disappointments in our lives. How have you personally experienced each of these truths as a reason for disappointment?**
 - ◆ So we can comfort others (or receive comfort from others who have experienced disappointment) (*Verse 4*)
 - ◆ To mold us to become more like Christ (*Verses 5-6*)
 - ◆ To teach us to trust in Jesus alone (*Verses 8-10*)

- **The result of understanding these truths is to shift our response to disappointment from asking “Why did this happen?” and “Where are you, God?” to “What now?” and “How are you going to use this?” *Psalms 31, 102, and 109* are all examples of how seeking God can change our perspective on distress and disappointment. How has dealing with disappointment helped you to understand God more fully?**

- **Referencing the 12 stones in *Joshua 4*, Eric gave each of us a small stone to help us remember the mighty power of God when we face disappointment in our lives. As you consider this reminder, what memories of the mighty power of God do you have?**



**Growth Groups
Leader's Travel Guide
Week of April 29 - May 5, 2007**

Hey folks! This is our last week in our *Rolling Stones* series. This week, we are learning how to deal with Disappointment. But before we get into the study, let me remind you of a few things:

1. The end of the school year is approaching fast, especially for those of you with college folks in your group. I highly suggest getting beyond your normal Growth Group context and “do some life together” somewhere before people start disappearing for the summer.
2. We will continue to have Growth Groups through the summer, but they will not be every week. I will be compiling a summer Growth Group schedule soon for you to distribute to your group members.
3. Since Growth Groups will not be meeting every week this summer, I strongly encourage you to schedule some events during the summer months . . . Perhaps there is someone in your Growth Group you can empower with the responsibility to organize some stuff:
 - Perhaps you should do some informal social things like a picnic at Chewacla, enjoy the July 4 fireworks together, take a road-trip, or something similar.
 - Find some community events going on and find some ways you as a Growth Group can help the events be a little better. If you need some resources from Journey, let us know! (You may want to go to <http://auburnalabama.org> or <http://oanow.com> for more ideas)

I may sound like an annoying beating drum on this, but I am convinced that our Growth Group gatherings will be greatly enhanced when Growth Group members start “doing life together” outside of the group. I am also utterly convinced that our entire church will receive a major boost when some of your growth group members are empowered and encouraged to step up, take their own responsibility for the future of Journey Church, and find some creative ways to connect with disconnected people.

Please remind your folks that Eric, Zach, and I are all trying to keep up with our Blogs online. Other churches are using this to help communicate with their people about the vision of the church. We are committed to using this as an effective tool at Journey, but we need folks to start reading the blogs every now and then in order to make it effective. All three blogs are available from the journeytogether.net home page.

I am abundantly grateful for your willingness to step up and lead a Growth Group. Journey Church could not survive without a viable small groups ministry, and you make it happen week after week. Sometimes it is hard not to be disappointed that things aren't happening more quickly. (What a horrible and obvious lead-in to our study . . .) Thank you for continuing to hang in there and helping me stay encouraged by letting me know that lives are changing in our Growth Groups. Please continue to keep me informed and please give me feedback to help move forward.

God bless, and my prayers are with you!
Andrew



This is our final message in the “Rolling Stones” series. Our topic this week is disappointment. What is the right way to handle our disappointments, and how can we use them to be an example to others as to what God can do in peoples’ lives.

Before you get started on the questions, be sure you allow some time for general social interaction as a group. Bring the group together and ask how the week is going, etc. If you jump right into the study questions, it may take longer to get decent responses. This will also help focus the group and avoid distractions as you proceed.

- **What kind of situations tend to spark disappointment in you the most, and why do you think those particular situations tend to affect you so much?**
 - ◆ Personal failures
 - ◆ Relationships with others
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This question is again a great way for you to discover some things about the personalities of your group members. Different people will be affected by different things. There are no right or wrong answers. These questions are meant to help people get to know each other better, and to help people begin to consider their own struggles.

- **What would you say is the biggest disappointment you have experienced in your life?**
 - ◆ What was the situation?
 - ◆ How did it affect you at the time?
 - ◆ Do you think it still has an affect on you now? How?

Hopefully the previous question already got your folks thinking about disappointments in their life so you can get a pretty good response here. Most likely, if someone has something pop into their mind pretty quickly, the answer to the “now” question needs to be “yes” to some degree. This is the point of this study: all our disappointments mold us and shape us for the future. But is the result negative or positive? Our goal is to shift the affects to positive influence as passionate Christ-followers.

- **On Sunday, Eric took us through *2 Corinthians 1:3-11* as three reasons why God allows us to face disappointments in our lives. How have you personally experienced each of these truths as a reason for disappointment?**
 - ◆ So we can comfort others (or receive comfort from others who have experienced disappointment) (*Verse 4*)
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This question set is meant to instill the vision of empowerment among your Growth Group members. If all the examples you hear are about other people helping your folks, point out to them that the people God used to help them were ordinary folks, and that He wants to use their “ordinariness” to help others.

If the stories you hear are of how God used your folks to help others, reinforce the reality and ask them how these experiences can be carried over to accomplish the vision of Journey Church.

- **The result of understanding these truths is to shift our response to disappointment from asking “Why did this happen?” and “Where are you, God?” to “What now?” and “How are you going to use this?” *Psalms 31, 102, and 109* are all examples of how seeking God can change our perspective on distress and disappointment. How has dealing with disappointment helped you to understand God more fully?**

I know this is a bit of a revisit to the previous question, but the added perspective of focusing on God can help your group members to be less selfish and opens the door for God to transform them into Passionate Christ-followers. This is an opportunity for you to learn more about how your group views and approaches God. You may want to use it as an opportunity to expand their view of God as you evaluate the disappointments they already shared against the view of God they express here.

All three of these Psalms are pretty long, so I wouldn't read through all of them. I suggest reading them all ahead of time and familiarize yourself with them. If you feel like one of them will help your group in particular, read through it and discuss it. Otherwise, highlight them in your discussion and encourage your group to “pray through” them when they face discouragement.

** This may be a chance for you to teach your group a way to bring Scriptures to their current context. “Praying Through” Scripture is really quite easy, and helps you to meditate on it, and also helps to focus and motivate our prayers . . . All you do is you read a portion of the passage (I suggest 1-2 verses, or a particular thought or phrase) and pray it back to God in your own words, and in your own context, and then move on to the next portion of the passage. For example:

Psalm 109:1-3

O God, whom I praise, do not remain silent, for wicked and deceitful men have opened their mouths against me; they have spoken against me with lying tongues. With words of hatred they surround me; they attack me without cause.

God, I do praise you. I do understand that you are a great God and worthy of my worship and my praise. But right now, I need to hear from you. Speak to me somehow God . . . either through Your Word, or through some other person, or even deep within my soul. I just need to hear from you. I feel attacked. I feel like people are talking bad things about me. I have no idea if any of the things they are saying are even true. I don't understand why they are treating me this way. I don't think I've done anything to them to deserve this. Speak to me, Lord. I need some encouragement from you . . . If I have done anything wrong, reveal it to me so I can repent and make it right . . .

- **Referencing the 12 stones in *Joshua 4*, Eric gave each of us a small stone to help us remember the mighty power of God when we face disappointment in our lives. As you consider this reminder, what memories of the mighty power of God do you have?**

This final question is intended to be an encouragement to your group and to lift their spirits and attitudes before they depart. Try to help your group be positive here and to refocus their perspective from their discouragements to the greatness and faithfulness of God.