

The Disappointed

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[0 : 0 0] Welcome everyone. If you don't know me, my name is Chris and I'm one of the pastors here. And it's just exciting to see that this kind of season of Easter is coming up and we've got so many things going on.

And check out in your bulletin, we'll talk about, there's some really exciting stuff happening even this Friday and next Sunday. We're going to be celebrating baptism together at the beach.

One of the great ironies of my life is actually my name is Chris Thornton. And my surname begins with a T.

And so I often get emails and text messages from people saying, dear Christ. And now I don't know what they're expecting.

But it's a simple typo. It's a typo, but I think it kind of represents something which I think happens in many of our lives. Because for me, it's like when I get elevated, Christ gets demoted and minimized.

[1 : 0 6] We've kind of brought him down to my level. And we're looking at a series in sinners who meet Jesus, sinners that Jesus met, looking at people who, like us in a host of ways, had kind of not seen the greatness of Christ.

And what he does when Christ meets them, he changes their life. Because when you fix your eyes on anything other than Christ, you get wrapped up with things like shame we saw last week from the Samaritan woman.

With distraction like we saw with Martha. And with religion like we saw right back at the beginning of the series. And some of us, we're here for so many different reasons this morning.

Some of us are here just because, well, just in case there's a God. Just in case he's like, Jesus is like a life insurance policy for me.

Some of us are here because as long as I kind of, I meet the policy requirements, then hopefully I'll get a heavenly payout. Some of us are here because we want to chase after Christ.

[2 : 1 5] Some of us are here in many different areas of our lives. And the thing is, today Jesus wants to speak to us. Wherever you're at. Wherever you're at.

And if Jesus isn't elevated in your life this morning, something else is going to be. And the question is, in the grand scheme of things, if we as a church elevate anything other than Christ, if we as individuals elevate anything other than him, then in the grand scheme of things, we're going to be elevating something which is, which is Graham mentioned.

When we die is really not going to look that important. So, I mentioned a couple of weeks ago about our phones. So, here is, if you know that you are distracted by your phone, here is the opportunity for you to turn it off now.

Now, if you want to, if you want to really say, I want to have an elevated view of Christ, and I know my phone distracts me. Now, some of you came to me and said, hey, but I use my phone for notes.

That's okay. You know, it's not legalism. Okay? You don't have to feel guilty. But, if you know that actually that notification is going to come through and it's going to distract you, turn off your phone, pick up your bulletin.

[3 : 28] There's a space for you to write notes in there. Use it. Because, I don't know if, like me, I have been through so many different sermons, and then by lunchtime I've forgotten them.

Right? Anyone else like me? And one thing of taking notes is, just think about it. Week after week, we hear the preaching of God's word, and it goes in one ear and out the other. So, God wants to speak to you, so I encourage you, if you don't have a pen, there's some pens at the side, but take this opportunity.

Take notes, and then at the end of the day, look back and say, God, what are you trying to say to me about Jesus in my life? So, there's an encouragement. Let me just pray for us before we start.

Father, I'm just so aware that, even as Graham mentioned in communion, we can just so easily demote you to just a kind of casual view of you.

I pray that we come humbly to tremble at your word this morning. I pray that your word would have power. Lord, remove anything that's just from me.

[4 : 36] I pray that you would speak to us. Open our ears to hear you. Help us to have a hunger for you. Because if we get you, we get everything.

In Jesus' name, amen. So, today, we're looking at the topic of disappointment. Okay?

We're talking about the topic of the disappointed. And I think it's a topic that affects all of us in some ways. My mom has had eight hip operations.

The first two hip, actually, the first three. She had two hip operations, which basically had to repair what happened in the first operation because the surgeon completely messed it up and left her in agony afterwards.

And at that point, you think, well, why God? I'm trying to follow you, but why me? She's also had her oldest son, my brother, died.

[5 : 36] Why? Why? When there were so many hopes and expectations, why me? You know, I've experienced illness where I've looked at all my friends who were getting on and moving on, getting great jobs and getting married and seemed to be getting on in their careers and I felt like I was left behind.

And no matter how much I prayed, it felt like I was getting nowhere. And you sometimes think, what are you doing, God? What are you doing? Anyone been there? What are you doing? And so we're looking at disappointment today.

And disappointment is a form of suffering. And it's there when we struggle to believe because we think God didn't show up when he should have shown up. When life doesn't work the way we thought it ought to work and we find disappointment.

And so we're going to look at the reality of disappointment. We're going to look at a response to disappointment. And we're going to look at the root through disappointment. Okay? Reality, response, root, through. Okay?

So follow along. We'll have the passage in front of you in the bulletin. So the reality of disappointment. We come back to the home of Mary and Martha. We've been there, all right? A couple of weeks ago.

[6 : 48] We've kind of got an idea of what she's like. Remember distracted Martha? Okay? Mary sitting at Jesus' feet hanging on his word. But life's kind of carried on like life does. And something's happened that will happen to each one of us if we live long enough.

Disappointment and even tragedy comes into their world. Suddenly, their world is completely turned upside down because their dear brother Lazarus has now been struck down with an illness which has left him gasping for breath.

And he's wheezing his way from health toward death. There's no ICU. There's no emergency services. And Mary and Martha send a message to Jesus who at this point is probably about 150 miles away.

Somewhere like up in Guangzhou somewhere. And the message says, he whom you love is ill. And Jesus replies.

He gets this message. He would have got it on his phone if he'd been there at this time. And Jesus replies, this illness isn't going to end in death. It's for God's glory. Which is strange.

[8 : 03] And I can imagine, though, if you're looking back with Mary and Martha and their nursing Lazarus. And I don't know if you've ever seen anyone who dies over a very short space of time.

But maybe he starts vomiting and being shivering. And you begin to see the life being sucked out of this dear brother in front of them. And then they see the messenger come back.

And they rush to the door. And there's still no Jesus. Still no Jesus. And Lazarus is coughing up blood. And they're looking out of the window.

When's Jesus coming? And still no Jesus. And Lazarus dies. One day. Two days. Three days. Four days.

And in the first century, people thought that maybe for three days the spirit of the person would hang around for a little bit of time. Maybe there was a chance of being brought back to life. But after four days, it's gone.

[9 : 00] And Jesus is still a no-show. And eventually, kind of looking back, Jesus, after two days of getting the message, he gets going. It takes two days to walk there.

Lazarus is dead. Martha comes out to greet him. And she's in such grief. The only thing she can say is, Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died.

I was counting on you, Jesus. You let me down. Where were you? And you can see that sense of disappointment in Jesus at this time.

Actually, I've just remembered, I meant to tell the young youth, the younger youth, you're meant to go to your classes. So if you are in younger youth, head out to your classes because I think Alfie is probably waiting for you.

You can delete that from the recording. Okay. But let's come back because here's the sense of disappointment that Martha feels.

[10 : 02] You know, C.S. Lewis, the writer of the Chronicles of Nadia, he said on the death of his wife after cancer, he said, I can't understand why God is there when things are going well.

But go to him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain. And what do you find? A door slammed in your face, a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. And after that, silence.

You may as well turn away. The longer you wait, the more emphatic the silence will become. There are no lights in the windows. It might be an empty house.

Was it ever inhabited? It seemed so once. What can this mean? Why is God so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent in time of trouble?

Now, Lewis came through that time to a place of faith. But I don't know if you've ever experienced that. You know that sense in your past.

[10 : 58] I don't know where you've been. Some of us, it may be neglect, abuse, the unfaithfulness of a spouse. Your kid's not coming to faith as you wanted. You're still single and you wanted to be married.

And everyone around you is getting married. Things you've prayed for and God hasn't answered. Friends have left and things are not the same as they used to be.

Whatever it is, disappointment affects us all in different ways. And it's not actually something that is a rare species.

Whatever your belief, whether you're Buddhist, whether you're atheist, whether you're agnostic, whether you're Christian, everyone at some point in life faces disappointment. Right? And the thing is, we all need to know how do we handle it.

If it's going to come to all of us in some ways, we need to know how to handle it. Because it always raises some very legitimate questions. Is God good? Is he powerful?

[12 : 02] Can he do anything about it? Many people who have turned away from faith have done so because of this question. And yet, many of the objections against Christianity assume something.

They assume we deserve good things. Right? Mary and Martha, especially, they were Jesus' friends. He loved them. They deserve him to help them, don't they?

But the Bible, as we think about this, wrestles just very honestly with this question. It says that disappointment and suffering is the result of living in a broken world.

God has made a good world. But humans, we've chosen to rebel against God's authority. And our coup against God as the king has put the whole world out of sync.

You know this. If an arrogant or an incompetent employee seeks to overthrow the good CEO of a company, tries to make himself boss, sets himself up, he can destroy the whole company and everybody else's lives in it.

[13 : 07] And that's what happens when we reject God as the CEO of the world and try and set ourselves up as alternative rivals to him.

It breaks things down. Things don't work as they should. And our world is more interconnected than we think it is. Sin has more profound consequences on our lives than we can imagine.

And yet God, for some reason, seems to allow it to happen to give us space to repent and turn to him. And just by way of proviso, I'm not saying every disappointment that comes into your life is a direct result of individual sin.

Some is, but many isn't. You know, you can't say he got cancer because he was a bad father. That's not the way it works. Sin is more, it's generally, we breathe the air of a broken world.

And that's why it affects all of us. Everyone knows that on some level, behind the beauty and the amazing things in this world, there is something that is deeply wrong with this world.

[14 : 13] Don't we? But here's the thing. This passage says there's a reality to disappointment, but there's also another reality that's going on here.

You see, ultimately, God is also working this in this passage for his glory and for our good because he loves us. Did you notice? This is really strange. Verse 3. Jesus says, okay, this is for the glory of God.

And then it says, and Jesus loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus. So he went straight away to go and help them out. It doesn't say that. It says, so he loved them, so he stayed two days longer.

I mean, isn't that weird? He loved them, so he waited. That is just strange. That doesn't fit into my category of love. Right?

You see, I think God loves me when he gives me what I want and when I want it. But Jesus doesn't do that. He waits for two reasons.

[15 : 18] For his glory and for their good because he loves them. Because he wants to show us his glory, himself, in his goodness.

And there are some ways that he can give himself only to us through disappointment and suffering. You know, for many people, actually, disappointment and suffering leads them deeper into seeing God's goodness.

You know, when you lose a job and suddenly you realize, hey, I was relying on my job to provide everything. And then you see that Christ is the one who provides. And your faith grows deeper in him.

And many of us will see aspects of God's wisdom and goodness through the disappointment. It's for his glory. But it's also for our good.

You see, now this is difficult. Because I don't think Mary or Martha, as they were going things, would have thought that Jesus' absence was for their good. I don't think they would have got it at all. You know, and we can have these same things.

[16 : 22] It's like, how can the Holocaust, how can what's happening in Syria, how can terrorist attacks be for our good? And whatever is happening, it's very difficult. It sounds harsh, but hold on.

We've got to remember this. We assume that we deserve only good things, right? I assume that I deserve good things. We say, why, God, do you allow evil to happen in the first place?

But the bigger question the Bible asks is, why, if we are really rebellious, would he continue to let us live with so many good things? Why not just wipe us out?

And just as disappointment and ultimately death indiscriminately come to all people, so God also indiscriminately brings the sun to shine on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Can you agree the most vile murderer can enjoy a good steak, right? Someone who is the most vile person can still take Wagyu beef and really enjoy it, right?

[17 : 28] God doesn't suddenly say, because you're evil, I'm going to blast your taste buds so you go and enjoy it, right? He doesn't do that. Can you, the worst boss that you have who is vindictive and hateful, he can still enjoy a holiday in the Maldives, right?

You see, people like you and me who are unselfish and unkind can still have great food, flats, friends, kids, spouses, jobs, whatever you name it.

So many good things. And God, for some reason, allows us to live in a broken world of our own making, but continues to show us common grace. He continues to show us common grace.

And if we want to say it's not fair, then instead of asking why me, sometimes we maybe should ask why not me? Why not me?

This is really, I find this really challenging. When I, Dr. Hannah, who came here like two or three years ago, is a seminary professor, he said something which really challenged me. He said, when my 19-year-old daughter was seriously ill and looking likely to die, he sat down with her and said to her with tears in his eyes, I cannot say God is unfair if he takes you away from me, but instead say what grace that he has allowed me 19 years to enjoy you, my beautiful daughter.

[18 : 51] And I didn't deserve those 19 years. That's challenging. But God, in a broken world, is continually wanting to show us his grace and his goodness.

And for the Christian, in this story for Mary and Martha, we know that God is ultimately working out a redemptive purpose. Every disappointment that you have gone through or even going through now will have redemption stamped all over it.

You know, Romans 8, 28. We know this passage if you've been in church a while. It says, God works all things for the good of those who love him. And the next verse tells you the reason.

To conform you into the image of his son. You know, like the pain of a workout in the gym changes your body into the person you want to be sometimes. Hasn't done it for me yet, but.

So God, though, in some way uses every disappointment if we trust in him to change us into the people that in our good moments we really want to be.

[20 : 03] That's the reality of disappointment in a broken world. But God works through it with his common grace for his glory and for our good to change us to be more like him.

So it's reality. What about our response? There are three responses to disappointment. Okay. When you face disappointment, you can turn away from your faith.

Turn away from God. You can isolate your faith from really going deep in your life. Or you can deepen your faith. Okay. Three responses that you can have. If Mary and Martha had turned away from Jesus, do you know what happened?

And they would have just been left there in the same position. Very few resources for dealing with the disappointment and the suffering because that's simply the way the world is.

You know, if there is no God, if God's really not there, then we're alone in the world. And there's no hope beyond this world. And you've got to make your own meaning for yourself.

[21 : 16] You've got to basically try and lean on yourself. And maybe if you lean on others, well, they may actually give way at some point as well and disappoint you.

So if disappointment is a natural part of life and you don't have God in there, you're always going to have to try and protect yourself from future disappointments. Try and avoid suffering at any cost.

So you can turn away from faith. But many of us, I think, if we are Christians, that's not necessarily the response we make. We actually isolate our faith from penetrating deep into our lives.

Let me kind of look through this a little bit. I want you to look at Martha's response. Poor Martha. You know, we've given Martha a bit of a rough time, you know. Criticized her a couple of weeks ago.

And now I'm going to kind of say something not great about her. But I think she was great. Jesus loved her. And she's so well-meaning. And she's got such a heart for Jesus.

[22 : 17] But Jesus is wanting to show us something. Because you see what happens is, Martha runs out to meet Jesus. Okay. Tells him, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

That sounds like faith, doesn't it? That sounds like, okay, she's got faith. Jesus said to him, says to her, your brother's going to rise again. And she says, yeah, I know that. The resurrection, I believe in the resurrection.

It's going to happen at the end time. And Jesus says, yeah, I'm the resurrection. And then she says, oh, yeah, you're the son of God. You're the Christ and everything. She knew all the right answers. You know, she'd done her Bible study.

She'd been to BSF. She'd done all the things that she should have done. You know, she had the right doctrine. But you know what? When the rubber hit the road, her faith hadn't actually, in that moment, penetrated from here in her head down to here in her heart.

There was this gap where she'd isolated her faith from the reality of her life. Because she didn't truly know who Jesus was in this situation.

[23 : 21] How do I know this? Turn to verse 39. This is fascinating. Verse 39. Jesus comes up to the tomb and says, take away the stone. And Martha says, but he's been there four days.

And there's a bad odor. Now, the King James version of the Bible, I love this. It says, and by this time he stinketh. Which is what my wife tells me in the summer.

You see, Jesus says, sorry, Martha says, I believe in the resurrection. But she's actually thinking, stinky.

Jesus says, I am the resurrection. And he's going, let's go and get some resurrection going here. You see, with Martha, she's placed her faith in this little box which says, I believe the right things.

I believe in this thing called resurrection. I believe that you're kind of powerful. But she hasn't seen who Jesus truly is in her circumstances now. And she's leaning her weight, not on his power, but on just her own thoughts about it.

[24 : 30] Because she hasn't seen that the Son of God truly is capable of resurrecting even the greatest loss in your life. The greatest disappointment in your heart. The greatest pain or regret that you have.

I mean, she says she believes in Jesus. But she's really isolated what she says she believed from what is really lived out in her life.

And to be fair, Martha couldn't see the end of the story. Martha couldn't see what was going to happen. But she hadn't seen who Jesus truly was.

And I'd be cynical a little bit if I was her. Jesus, you didn't turn up last time. How can I trust you? Right? But she hadn't seen that actually when Jesus done miracle after miracle after miracle.

And she had seen it before, but she didn't think for her it was going to be true in her life. You know, you may have heard about the story of Blondin. He was that 19th century tightrope walker who tightrope walked over the Niagara Falls.

[25 : 34] Have you heard about him? You may have heard the story. You see, what he does, he sets out a rope across the Niagara Falls, like a few hundred feet above it. And he walks across forward and back.

And a whole crowd comes to see him. And they're amazed at what he does. And then he says, okay, I'm going to up the stakes. So he blindfolds himself, walks across again, and walks back.

And everyone's amazed, goes on stilts. This is true. He goes on stilts on a tightrope across the Niagara Falls, comes back. He then goes and cooks an egg on the tightrope in the middle of it.

Everyone's amazed. They're wowed. It's incredible. And then he takes a wheelbarrow, and he starts wheeling a wheelbarrow. And he fills the wheelbarrow with a whole load of sacks, takes it back, takes it back again.

And everyone's clapping and saying, wow, it's amazing. And the royal family had turned up. And so Blondin goes up, and he sees the Duke of Newcastle there. And he says to him, do you believe that I can take a man in this wheelbarrow across this tightrope?

[26 : 36] And the Duke of Newcastle says, yes, you can. And then Blondin says, okay, get in. And do you know what he said? No.

And Blondin turns to the rest of the crowd, and he says, okay, who's willing to get in? Nobody. Nobody. And then one little old lady stepped out from the crowd, came up to Blondin, got into the wheelbarrow.

And Blondin walked her across the Niagara Falls, walked her back. Everyone was stunned. Do you know who the woman was?

It was his mother. Because his mother knew that she could put her trust in Blondin, her son. Because she knew him.

She knew what he was like. And I think many of us, and including myself in this, I resonate with Martha.

[27 : 41] Because I can say the right things. I can believe the right things. But when the rubber hits the road with the real disappointments in my life, you know, I say, Jesus is the son of God.

Tick. Jesus, I believe you love me. Tick. Jesus, you're powerful. Tick. Jesus, you answer prayer. Tick. But if an alien was to come down and was to look at my prayer life or your prayer life, would there be evidence that you truly believed in a God who answers prayer?

Like, do you actually pray for the things which actually annoy you and get to you? When people in church annoy you or things are not going the way that you'd like them to be, where's your worst resort?

Is it on your knees or is it complaining to everyone else? Because I say I believe in you, but actually my life says, I'm going to rely and lean on myself.

I don't want to trust in Jesus in this moment because I'm not sure if he's going to come through. Is there evidence that you believe that God has your romantic relationships in his hands and he loves you?

[28 : 55] Because you know what? Sometimes God will take away the things in our lives which we think ought to be and he brings us into disappointments to shake us out of a theoretical faith so that we actually learn to really put our full weight on him and realize that he is reliable and we can trust him.

Many of us have had disappointments in the past and we deep down, if we're honest, wonder, can I really trust God?

I wonder if he really is good. If he really has power to change anything. If praying is really worth it. But the thing is, you can stay bound by the past which will trap you in the present because if you don't turn away from faith and just trust in yourself, then you're going to be in a place where you're actually kind of trying to sit in the middle.

And you know, you can neither enjoy sinning or enjoy God. And that's not a great place to feel because you're going to fall through the cracks. Other of us are so looking into the future to fix the disappointments of the past and we're missing the present.

You know, we're always on the verge of getting what we want. Have you seen this? You know, when I just get that new job, when I just get this little problem with my kids sorted out, when I just get that salary increase, when I just get that next thing, then things will be okay.

[30 : 35] But it's always in the future and then there's always another thing and another thing and another thing. And it's always living out there. We're never living here today. You know, it's like climbing a mountain and you think you got to the top and then suddenly you see there's another ridge.

And then you get to the top and there's another ridge. Right? Right? I wonder whether Christ is isolated from really penetrating the things you really care about in your life.

Do you have theoretical faith? Sometimes Jesus will bring disappointment into your life like he brought it to Martha so that she could begin to see what she thought you believed and begin to actually realize when she leans on Christ.

He is so much better for. So much better than what she even imagined he could be. So you can lose your faith, but disappointment is impersonal and you're left to lean on yourself.

You can isolate your faith, but you're worse off because you're just going to go through the cracks and be dishonest basically with yourself. Or you can deepen your faith. The preacher Spurgeon used to say, Doubt is a foot poised to go forward or backward.

[31 : 48] You see, it's a decision moment. I can either go deeper or I can go backwards, but I can't stand still. And the journey that Jesus takes Mary and Martha on is a journey where he's going to take them forwards.

And that's what I want to look at in the last point. Our route through disappointment. Jesus responds to Martha's faith, isolated faith, with the statement, I am the resurrection and the life.

Jesus' response to Martha isn't a kind of explanation. He didn't say, hey, yeah, I'm sorry, Martha. I was a bit tied up with some teaching. He doesn't say that. He doesn't say, yes, Martha, there was a higher purpose in all of this, even though there was.

And by the way, if you're talking to someone who's going through disappointment, don't make the first thing you say to them, oh, I'm sure there's a deeper reason to this. Okay? You can get there, but don't make the first thing you say to them.

Okay? Because in the present, it's not a logical answer she needs. It's a person who cares. It's not a logical answer. It's a person she cares in that present moment.

[32 : 57] The logic comes. And the first thing Jesus does is point Martha to himself and says, I am your resurrection. I am the life.

I am your life. Will you trust me? I'm the one, if you rely on me, who brings life to your greatest disappointments. You see, Jesus is personal.

And so as you think about Jesus being personal, the question is, what kind of person is he? And you see in verses 32 to 44, that Jesus is not just personally involved.

He's emotionally involved because he's a friend. He's not distant. Have a look at this with me. Mary comes out to Jesus in her grief, exactly the same response as Martha.

If you'd been here, my brother would not have died. And all her friends are there mourning with her. Everyone's crying. I mean, it's like this huge, like, you can imagine the scene.

[33 : 55] It's just lots of wailing. And then it says this, verse 33, Jesus saw her weeping. When Jesus saw her weeping and the others weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

See, Jesus sees this scene. He sees their pain. And do you know what happens? It says he's deeply moved. Now, that word deeply moved is actually a poor translation.

The real word in Greek means he snorted with anger. That's what it means. It's the word of a war horse when it's about to go into a battle and it's angry and furious and it's about to go in.

Jesus is looking at the devastating consequences of a broken, sin-stained, death-filled world and he's furious. I don't know if you realize that.

This is not the world he created. This is not the way it's meant to be. If there's no God and disappointment is just the way it's meant to be, then anger, when stuff doesn't go your way, is pointless and irrational.

[35 : 02] You know, you can shake your fist at the rain when it spoils your barbecue, but it's pointless, right? Because that's the way things have. But we have a God who is not only powerful enough to do things about stuff, but he also is emotionally involved.

And we know, though we don't know all the reasons why he allows things, we know the reasons, what the reasons are not. We know it's not because he doesn't care. Because here Jesus is going into combat with death itself.

And you can hear the Rocky theme tune going on in the background, right? It's Jesus in the red corner. It's death in the blue corner. And let me spoil the result. Jesus wins.

Because he sees your disappointment and he's not distant and he's not impassive to it.

He's angry when he sees pain and hopelessness. But we know that a week later on the cross, he goes into combat for you and me.

[36 : 09] He goes 10 rounds with death. The greatest loss that we can imagine. And he rises victorious. See, Jesus is angry. But it's not just angry.

He's also, he weeps. The shortest verse in the Bible. If you want to memorize any verse in the Bible, this one's a good one. Okay? Jesus wept.

Now, this is really interesting. Because that word for weep is not the same word as the weeping that Mary and all the other Jews were doing. It's not the same word. They were weeping in despair.

Jesus wept with compassion. Jesus teared up is basically what it means. Now, if you're a logical left brain kind of person, this actually doesn't make any sense.

Because Jesus knows in 10 minutes time, he's going to raise Lazarus from the dead. So why would you, he knows the results, right? Why would you start crying?

[37 : 08] Because, you know, it's like watching the highlights of a football game when you already know the result. Though you might get into the game, it doesn't have the same emotional impact, right? Because you know the result. But Jesus, why does Jesus cry?

He cries because he feels their pain. He feels their pain. He weeps with them. He weeps with us. But he weeps not in despair.

He weeps in hope. One of the things about being in an international church is that the people we often grow very close to sometimes leave and move away, right?

There's some people who are going to move this summer. And, you know, one of the things I've just experienced, again, you have a great community group. Then afterwards, when people leave, it's just not quite the same.

Because you don't find exactly the same kind of people as you did before. And maybe they didn't click as they did before. And, you know, Jesus' first response in that sense of disappointment, it's not just to kind of say, oh, come on, there's a greater purpose in it.

[38 : 12] Well, maybe there is. In fact, there is. But his first response is to weep with you in that. To grieve those losses. If you're single and you want to be married, if you're married and wish you were single, Jesus' first response is to weep with you.

We can talk about some of those afterwards. But he feels the pain. That's the point. He feels the pain.

It is not impersonal. He is personal. So don't run away from the pain and those things that you experience.

Because if you run away, you may avoid what God is trying to do in your life. Don't kind of isolate it and just kind of put it out of your mind as if it's nothing. Because God actually wants to work with you through the disappointments and the pain.

Because leaning on Jesus on the full weight, not kind of just like on the edge. Maybe. Maybe. Leaning full weight onto him with whatever you're going through right now. God wants to do something redemptive through it, which is for his glory and your good.

[39 : 21] And he calls you to lean on him. Think about this. Jesus says, did I not tell you if you believe you will see the glory of God? Come out. Just imagine when Jesus shouts to Lazarus in the tomb, come out.

And the stinky one comes out. Doesn't that put all the pain of the past, the past four or five days, the past weeks, in new perspective? I can imagine Martha's life was never the same.

You lay in a hospital bed and you hear two people next to you moaning in pain. One ends in death, the other ends with the cry of a newborn baby. There is pain in both, but the hope of a new life transforms your perspective of what has gone before.

Though we may not fully understand it, you know, ultimately, Lazarus died. Again. Okay? He's not here today. Lazarus died again because death in this life is ultimate.

But a week or so after his first resurrection, it was Friday. And the disciples faced their greatest disappointment.

[40 : 33] The one they thought was going to save them, Jesus Christ, was left hanging alone on a cross. And he wasn't coming down. And they looked up and said, where's God? We thought that you would do something.

Their dreams were shattered. Jesus had left them alone. He was gone. It was Friday. But they didn't realize that Easter Sunday was coming. Jesus himself cried out in agony, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

It was Friday. But Sunday was coming. We live in a world, and this world, it's Friday. Often.

Sometimes we wish it was Friday, but that's not the same sense. You know, there are disappointments and sufferings, but the gospel message is Sunday's coming.

Sunday's coming. We're going to celebrate it next week. Sunday's coming. You see, Jesus may roll away the disappointments and sufferings in your lifetime with what you're going through right now.

[41 : 43] You know, you may look back when you've gone through whatever you've been through and are going through, and you say, I see why I went through that. I see how that has equipped me.

That loneliness, that hardship, that difficulty, that disappointment. I mean, because disappointment uniquely equips you to walk alongside others who also experience this broken world.

Do you know that? My mom, who's gone through all of those different things, I cannot tell you the countless people she's been able to help and serve because of what she's gone through. Because you know that when someone's experienced something, their testimony is so much more powerful.

Because you see, whatever you're going through, God is trying to equip you. So you see his glory, and you see his love for you, and he's good, and you lean on him.

Some of us may have to wait until the final Easter Sunday when he resurrects everyone in the new creation. But when waking up there will be like waking up from a bad dream, and you see everything that was true has become untrue.

[42 : 47] Everything then is like, wow, it's so much more precious. So here's the question. Right now in my life, what am I leaning on?

Am I leaning on the one who has the power of resurrection life with anything that's going on in your life? Resurrection life, so you will see him.

Are you going to lean on him, or are you always going to be chasing, running to the next thing, to the next thing, to the next thing, to try and escape from the realities of the world? The Christian message is don't run.

Allow God to work in you, because he loves you, he's working it for good, and he will get glory in your life. So let me just pray. Father, You said, Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life.

I confess that there are so many areas where I know that in my head, but in my life when the things that come, the disappointments that we face, Oh, I lose sight of that so easily.

[44 : 15] I pray for those here who really have things from their past where they've just been hurt. There are things which have been so difficult.

And they've stopped really leaning on you because they're not sure whether they can trust you or not. I pray you would show them that you are the one who brings resurrection out of their disappointment and their pain.

I pray for those of us who right now feel like, hey, life's going well. But we know that actually there are so many things that we're chasing after that we've actually stopped to see your power and your love in the present.

And we're leaning on so many other things. I pray don't let us be those who just isolate you from our lives. Let us come in repentance, Lord, where we just know that in the current situations, Lord, if we're facing stuff which is difficult, is challenging for us, Lord, I pray that we would see your light and your glory and your love and your goodness.

And we trust you. And we trust you. In Jesus' name. Amen.