

## Disillusionment Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is your favorite candy?
2. Do you like rainy days? Explain.

**Read the following passage:** Luke 7:18-30.

Given all that has preceded, John's question in Luke 7:19 (repeated in Luke 7:20) is somewhat surprising. John's mother, Elizabeth, and Jesus' mother, Mary, bonded over their distinctly supernatural pregnancies. John would have been familiar with the prophecies concerning his life and Jesus' life. John was present when the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus and likely heard the voice from heaven after Jesus' baptism and empowerment with the Spirit. Some of John's own disciples became part of Jesus' inner circle, and John would have heard about the things Jesus was saying and doing. So why was John now uncertain that Jesus was the Messiah? Given John's expectations concerning the Messiah and his imprisonment at the hands of Herod the tetrarch, it's quite possible that John was experiencing some level of disillusionment. Jesus' response to John's disciples and his subsequent words to the crowd show us how we can fight disillusionment in our own lives. We need to:

- Open our eyes to what God is doing rather than fixating on our pain and disappointment;
- Open our minds to a divine realignment of our own expectations;
- Open our ears to the encouraging voice of Jesus;
- Open our hearts to hope again.

***disillusionment*** (Merriam-Webster): the condition of being disenchanted; the condition of being dissatisfied or defeated in expectation or hope

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Consider the following statement: "We don't become disillusioned in life because we \*don't\* care, we become disillusioned because we do care." How is this statement relevant to John the Baptist's experiences? Has there been anything in your life that you at one time cared about deeply but eventually became disillusioned with? Explain.
2. Do you think just not caring, or lowering our expectations, is a good way to address our risk of disillusionment? Explain. How should we deal with the pain of disappointment?

3. How do you respond when people disappoint you? Do you think any negative or painful experiences have changed the way you relate to people in your life? Explain.
4. Are there any ways God has not met your expectations? If so, how have you processed this?
5. One of the ways we can climb out of the pit of disillusionment is to freshly open our eyes to the things that God is doing. What are some things that are happening in your life that you are encouraged about, or have hope for the future concerning?
6. God often turns difficult or painful circumstances into opportunities to grow us, to manifest his glory in our lives, or to serve other people. Have you experienced this in your own life? Explain.
7. During seasons of disillusionment, our minds can be filled with condemning voices. Do you ever deal with strongly self-critical thoughts? Explain. How can we practically open our ears to the voice of Jesus?
8. What are two or three areas in your life in which you think God is freshly calling you to be hopeful?

## **Pray**