

GROUPS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Get Into The Word



Week of Sunday December 7, 2025

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**Living out our God-given calling as
we follow Jesus and make
disciples every day.**

Introduction

How should we respond when God doesn't seem to answer our prayers? In Matthew 11 where John the Baptist, facing dire circumstances in prison, questions Jesus about His messianic role, we are reminded that even true believers can struggle with doubt. Despite John's situation, Jesus assures him that God's work continues, even if it's not as expected. As we explore this passage, consider how we maintain faith and trust in God's plan, especially when our prayers remain unanswered and life's trials intensify.

Disciple Measure

Humble Guide: Who are you helping take one step closer to Jesus right now? How are you doing that?

Discussion Questions

How Do You Respond When God Doesn't Answer Your Prayers?

HIGHLIGHT

Have someone read aloud...

Matthew 11:1-6

Discussion Questions

Discuss the following questions...

Opening Question: Share about a time when something didn't go according to your plan and turned out differently than expected. How did you feel in the moment versus looking back?

1. What does Jesus' response to John tell us about the nature of faith and the importance of trusting God's plan even amidst suffering or uncertainty?
2. In what ways does Jesus' response to John the Baptist challenge common assumptions about how God responds to the prayers and expectations of the faithful?

Have someone read aloud Isaiah 35:5-6, and Isaiah 61:1.

3. How does John the Baptist's question to Jesus reflect the expectations of the Messiah in the first-century Jewish context?
4. How does Joni Tada's statement, "Sometimes God permits what He hates to accomplish that which He loves," give perspective where prayers seem unanswered or where believers face trials?

Application Questions

Notes:

APPLY

Have someone read aloud [Hebrews 6:19](#).

Discuss the following questions...

- 1. How does the comparison of Jesus as an anchor provide comfort and assurance in the face of life's challenges and uncertainties?
- 2. What are some practical ways we can maintain our faith and trust in God when it seems our prayers are not being answered?
- 3. How can you align your expectations for God's intervention in your life with His broader plan when it doesn't align with your plans?

RESPOND

How does having a community around you to help during difficulties and when prayer are not answered how we want or are unanswered? How can you support those around you who may be struggling through difficult things this Christmas season?

Prayer:

Close by asking God to help us trust Him in disappointment, unanswered prayers, and knowing He has a plan.

Grid of dots for notes.

Questions for Families

Here are some questions you can discuss with the whole family.

Matthew 11:1-6

What do you think we learn about God when John the Baptist asks Jesus if He is really the Messiah?

For younger children, you can explain that God has a special plan for everyone, and sometimes it's not easy to see what it is right away. For older kids, discuss how Jesus shows us that God's plans might not always match what we expect, but they are always for a good reason.

How do you think John the Baptist felt when he was asking Jesus questions from prison?

For younger children, focus on the idea that everyone, even important people like John, can have questions or feel unsure. For older children, encourage thinking about how it's normal to feel doubt or confusion sometimes and how important it is to talk to God about those feelings.

If we have questions for God or are feeling confused, what should we do?

For younger children, suggest praying and talking to God. For older children, discuss specific ways we can seek God's guidance, like through prayer, reading the Bible, or talking to others who know Him well.

NT 260

WEEK: 50

- Matthew 14
- Matthew 15
- Matthew 16
- Matthew 17
- Matthew 18

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 7:24-25

Resources

Additional Resources

The BEMA Discipleship Podcast - An Explosive Kingdom



Join Marty Solomon as he dives into the expectations John and the Jewish culture had for the [Messiah](#).
(44 min)

Resources to Watch

Bible Project Guide - The Book of Matthew



See a collection of videos and articles to guide you through the book of [Matthew](#).
(20 min)

Life Group Resources

We have a variety of resources and are continually adding new ones. Some of our resources include group launch guides, on-demand training modules, and curriculum resources. To request a resource, reach out to us at groups@longhollow.com.

D-Group Resources

If you or someone you know would like to start a D-group, we have everything you need, including reading plans, journals, and a launch guide to walk you through the first four meetings.



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Commentary

Notes:

What’s Going On?

In this passage, John the Baptist is in prison and he sends his disciples to ask Jesus a crucial question, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” At first glance, this might seem confusing because John was the one who baptized Jesus and proclaimed Him as the Messiah. Why would John suddenly have doubts? This isn’t really about John losing faith; it’s more about a mismatch in expectations.

The term “the one who is to come” was a common way to refer to the Messiah in Jewish circles during that time. People thought of the Messiah as a grand leader who would save them from their troubles, much like a king. John, sitting in a prison cell, likely expected Jesus to bring about dramatic changes and maybe even rescue him from captivity. Jesus’ reply doesn’t include promises of immediate rescue. Instead, He talks about the miracles He’s performed, giving sight to the blind and making the lame walk. These are acts of love and healing, not rebellion or conquest. Through this exchange, we see that Jesus was redefining what it meant to be the Messiah, focusing on spiritual salvation rather than political liberation.

Biblical Timeline



Notes:

A Bit of Background

John the Baptist was a pivotal figure in Israel. He was a prophet and a precursor to Jesus, tasked with announcing the coming of the Messiah. John's message was about repentance and preparing people for the new era that Jesus would bring. In terms of family, John and Jesus are believed to be relatives, adding a layer of personal connection to this passage. During the time this story takes place, Israel was under Roman rule, and Herod Antipas was a tetrarch ruling parts of the region. Herod imprisoned John because he was outspoken against Herod's marriage to Herodias, which was considered unlawful.

At this time, many Jewish people were hoping for a Messiah to deliver them from Roman rule. They were expecting a political and military leader. Imagine living under foreign rule with limited freedoms. People wanted a savior who would change that. John, being in a prison cell, probably felt the weight of this need for drastic change even more acutely. Yet, Jesus' message about healing and performing miracles was meant to signify a different kind of deliverance, a deeper, spiritual one. In this way, Jesus showed that His mission wasn't about overthrowing governments but about transforming hearts and lives.

Jesus's public ministry
approx. 27-30 A.D.

Today's highlighted
passage and other
related passages

Birth of
Christ

Crucifixion
and Resurrection

Book of
Revelation

Sermon Notes

Matthew 11:1-6 CSB

When Jesus had finished giving instructions to his twelve disciples, he moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns. Now when John heard in prison what the Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples and asked him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” Jesus replied to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news, and blessed is the one who isn’t offended by me.”

(Get digital notes on your mobile device at notes.longhollow.com)

Living out our God-given calling as we follow Jesus and make disciples every day.

Spirit-Led Follower

A disciple who walks with Jesus daily, anchoring their lives to God's Word and obediently following the Holy Spirit where He leads.

Intentional Friend

A disciple who is always looking for ways to care for others and meet their needs. This is a practical way to be present in the lives of those around us.

Humble Guide

A disciple who is a humble guide takes every opportunity to help people take their next step closer to Jesus. This is someone who is constantly looking for opportunities to have Gospel conversations and speak truth into someone's life.

Force For Good

When a disciple lives out their God-given calling, they naturally become a force for good where they live, work, and play. This type of person is looking for opportunities to meet needs, heal brokenness, and bring tangible hope to the people in their life and in their community.



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