



"When Faith Meets Reality:
Coping with Unfulfilled Expectations"

Matt 11:1-19 / Luke 7:18-23

Four Voices, One Story
A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS



Expectation Frustration

**Our disappointment
is usually not
because God failed,
but because His
answer came
wrapped in a way we
didn't expect...
Himself.**



**Saint John the Baptist in Prison with Salome Looking On –
Francisco de Goya, 1789**

*“If Jesus is the One...
why am I still here?”*

*“Where’s the fire? The
judgment? The
kingdom?”*

“Did I get it wrong?”



Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, 1591–1666)

"Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

(Matt 11:2-5 / Luk 7:21)

The proof He offers isn't about political power or military victory; it's about the transformation of real people's lives.

The Message from John

**"...blessed is he who is not offended because of
Me."**

(Matt 11:6)

"You'll be blessed if you don't trip over Me because I'm not the kind of Messiah you expected. Don't let unmet expectations turn into unbelief."

The Answer from Jesus

The real blessing comes when we trust His character over our expectations; when we anchor our trust in who He is, not in what we think He should do.

(Isa 55:8-9; Mat 6:10; 2Co 12:9)

When God Doesn't Meet Our Expectations

“...a reed shaken by the wind?”

(Mat 11:7)

**It's the image of a person swayed by public opinion,
tossed around by fear, or blown off course by
circumstance.**

Questioning the Multitudes

“...a man clothed in soft garments?”

(Mat 11:8)

**“It’s better to be faithful in the wilderness than
favored in the palace.”**

Questioning the Multitudes

“...a prophet...and more than a prophet”

(Mat 11:9-10)

“Not a prophet, but, The Prophet”

Questioning the Multitudes

“...he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he...”

(Mat 11:11)

We live in the reality John was only able to announce.

Questioning the Multitudes

“...now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.”

(Mat 11:12)

“Since John started preaching, God’s kingdom has been advancing, and people aren’t approaching it casually. It’s meeting fierce resistance from enemies, and it’s being seized with urgency by those who recognize its worth.”

The Kingdom Breaking Into the World

“...he is Elijah who is to come”

(Mat 11:14-15)

**John fulfills the Elijah prophecy both symbolically
and spiritually.**

The Kingdom Breaking Into the World

“..what shall I liken this generation..”

(Mat 11:16-19)

No matter what's offered, you reject it. You're not interested in engaging; you're just critics.

“You complained when John was too serious, and now you're complaining that I'm too joyful.”

Jesus Calls out the Crowd

“Bring Your Feelings Under Truth”

Let what God says define reality for you more than what your emotions are screaming in the moment.

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Be Honest About What You Feel

[Psa 51:6](#) Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know
wisdom.

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Be Honest About What You Feel

Confess What is True About Him

Reflections

God *is* our refuge and strength, A very present help in
trouble. (Ps 46:1)

And we know that all things work together for good to
those who love God, to those who are the called
according to *His* purpose. (Rom 8:28)

For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU
NOR FORSAKE YOU." (Heb 13:5)

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Be Honest About What You Feel

Confess What is True About Him

Choose Truth Over Feelings

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

"All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal." (Ps 119:160)

The eternal nature of God's truth is a solid foundation over fluctuating emotions.

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Be Honest About What You Feel

Confess What is True About Him

Choose Truth Over Feelings

Keep Coming Back When the Feelings Resurface

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Faith is Forged by Returning to the Mercy Seat and Throne of Grace often.

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Be Honest About What You Feel

Confess What is True About Him
(Heb 13:5, Ps 46:1, Rom 8:28)

Choose Truth Over Feelings

Keep Coming Back

Anchor Your Heart in Worship & the Word

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God! (Ps 42:5,6)

It may not erase the storm, but it will remind you who's in the boat with you.

Reflections

How it looks in practice:

Be Honest About What You Feel

Confess What is True About Him

Choose Truth Over Feelings

Keep Coming Back

Anchor Your Heart in Worship & the Word

Reflections

Psalm 56:3 *“Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You*

Psalm 71:14 *“As for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more*

Micah 7:7 *“But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me*



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