

Journal Guide - John the Disappointed Baptist

Text: Luke 7:24-35

Disappointment with God can quietly pull us off course. Even John the Baptist—the one who boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah—experienced confusion and disappointment when life did not unfold the way he expected.

This journal guide is designed to help you honestly process disappointment, examine your heart, and return your focus to Christ and the gospel.

Opening Reflection

Take a few quiet moments before journaling.

Ask yourself:

- Where in my life do I feel disappointed right now?
- Have I ever felt disappointed with Jesus?
- What expectations did I have that may not have been met?

Write a brief prayer asking God for honesty, humility, and clarity.

Read Luke 7:24-35 slowly and prayerfully.

Check Your Motive (vv. 24–25)

Reflection

Jesus asks the crowd what they expected from John:

- a weak man?
- a man pursuing comfort and luxury?

John's life was not about comfort, status, or personal gain.

Journal Prompts

- What have I been expecting from Jesus lately?
- Have I treated Christ as a means to get something else?
- What do I tend to want most from God: comfort, success, relief, control, approval, security?
- If those things are removed, does my devotion weaken?

Personal Reflection

If Christ is only a means to an end, disappointment is inevitable. Christ Himself is the end.

Write honestly:

- What competes with Jesus for first place in my heart?

Prayer Prompt

Ask God to expose selfish motives and deepen your love for Christ Himself—not just His blessings.

Check Your Message (vv. 26–28)

Reflection

John's greatness came from pointing people to Jesus.

His message was clear:

- repentance,
- preparation,
- and the coming Savior.

Cross References

- Luke 3:4-6
- Mark 1:7-8
- John 1:29

Journal Prompts

- Is the gospel still central in my life?
- What message am I communicating with my words and actions?

- Have I become more focused on myself than on Christ?
- What truths about Jesus do I need to remind myself of today?

Reflection Thought

We know the complete gospel:

- the cross,
- the resurrection,
- and the victory of Christ.

We have seen what John could only anticipate.

Prayer Prompt

Thank Jesus for the fullness of the gospel and ask Him to keep your heart anchored in truth.

Check Your Mission (vv. 29–35)

Reflection

Jesus describes people who rejected both John’s hard preaching and His own joyful ministry.

The issue was not style—it was the condition of the heart.

Disappointment can slowly turn us inward:

- distracted,
- passive,
- self-focused,
- and unmotivated to reach others.

Journal Prompts

- Have I become spiritually passive?
- Am I intentionally living on mission, or mostly focused on myself?
- Who in my life needs the gospel right now?
- What fears or disappointments keep me from engaging others?

Cross Reference

- John 3:30 — “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Reflection Thought

John may have temporarily forgotten his mission while sitting in prison, discouraged.

We can do the same.

Prayer Prompt

Ask God to renew your passion for people and restore joy in serving His mission.

Verse 35 Reflection

“Wisdom is justified by all her children.”

Journal Prompt

- What kind of fruit is currently growing in my life?
 - What do my attitudes, choices, and priorities reveal?
 - What would wise, gospel-centered living look like in this season?
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Final Reflection

Write down:

- one motive you need to surrender,
- one gospel truth you need to remember,
- and one intentional step you will take this week.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

When disappointment clouds my vision, help me see You clearly again.

Expose selfish motives, renew my heart with the gospel, and restore my mission.

Teach me to trust You even when life unfolds differently than I expected.

Help me decrease so that You may increase.

Amen.