



Running on Empty – Week 1 – Disappointment  
Spiritual Formation Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take a next spiritual step, contact us at [info@wschurch.org](mailto:info@wschurch.org).

**Scripture:**

“John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, ‘Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?’ Jesus told them, ‘Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen – the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.’ And he added, ‘God blesses those who do not fall away because of me.’”

Matthew 11:2-6

**Reflection Questions:**

- What's the status of your spiritual tank today? Take a moment to mark where you are on the scale (from empty to full). What's one word you'd use to describe where you are today?
- Eddie shared in the message about the potential for our expectations to shape us (and how they can often lead to our disappointments). What are some things that you expect from God?
- Have someone read the Bible passage with the conversation between Jesus and John the Baptist in Matthew 11:2-6. Read it several times, slowly. After a moment of reflection, share what you notice. Do you identify with anyone in the story?
- Does Jesus' answer to John's question surprise you? How do Jesus' words strike you? (If you want to read more of what he said, read a few more verses in Matthew 11 for more context.)
- Eddie made a distinction between living with expectations and living with a sense of expectancy. “Expectations will make you miserable. Expectancy will fill your tank and increase your faith.” Do you agree? How have you experienced this?
- Look over the practices in the section below. Is there one of them that you can pause and do right now? Or can you plan to use some time to reflect this week and then share what you notice with a spiritual friend?
- Take a few moments to use the prayer prompts below.

**Prayer:**

- Pray in 2 sections:
  - First, thank God as specifically for as many things that you can. Notice the blessings that He's given you.
  - Next, look ahead to the coming week and ask God to give you a sense of expectancy – being read to notice him at work around you.

## Practices:

- **Inventory** - Eddie challenged us to honestly assess whether our faith is built on expectancy or expectations. Take 2-3 minutes to be still. Think back on the most recent season of your life. What are some of the key moments (high & low)?

Were you able to recognize God is at work, even when he worked outside the framework that you expected?

When you look back, do you see some expectations that you had that acted as blinders to recognizing the glory of God? If you can name them, talk to God about them.

- **Ask God to open your eyes to what he is doing in you and in the world.** It can be easy to miss God at work around us. Ask God's Spirit to guide you as you reflect back on the past week. Are there any moments that you want to thank God for? Were there any unexpected moments where you sensed God at work? Ask God to show you some moments you may have missed.

- **Reflect on these words from God:**

"Never! Can a mother forget her nursing child?

Can she feel no love for the child she has borne?

But even if that were possible,

I would not forget you!

<sup>16</sup> See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands.

-Isaiah 49:15-16