

## Unmet Hopes

### Scripture Reading — Matthew 11:1-6

*“Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?”*

*Matthew 11:3 —*

Several years ago two people in our congregation created an ambitious outreach/renewal program. But despite lots of arm-twisting, budget squeezing, and calendar organizing, it became clear that we could not sustain the kind of effort the program required. We sadly (but with some relief) closed the program down.

After a while the two program leaders moved on to other nearby churches. I think the pain of seeing their church fail to live up to their high hopes was simply too much for them.

Everyone who loves the church understands that kind of pain. It comes when high hopes for the church collide with limitations. It's similar to the kind of disappointment that John the Baptist experienced. His hopes for Jewish renewal and resurgence withered as the Messiah, Jesus, turned out to be less than he had envisioned. The hated Romans still ruled Jewish territory (and had recently arrested John), and the corrupt religious leadership in Jerusalem still ruled Jewish hearts.

In effect, Jesus pointed out to John that prophecies of renewal were being fulfilled (in him), and he hinted that there was much more to come.

This is the hope we have for the church today too. In ways that may not look like much to us, prophecies of renewal are being fulfilled, and there is much more to come.

### Prayer

*Father, we want to see the church of Christ soar. It pains us that instead it often crawls slowly. Teach us to be patient and gracious with others—just as you are with us. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Christianity](#), [The Church](#), [God](#), [God's Kingdom](#)

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