

the Venues

Go Deep

A Venues Christmas at the Movies National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 12.17.17

What gift comes to your mind when you think back to your Christmases?

“Christmas Vacation” is about the gap between the way we want things to go and the way they actually go.
Can you name all of Clark's disappointments?

Jesus was a disappointment - an unmet expectation - in his day.
Read Matthew 11:2-3

Who was asking this question? Why is it kind of weird that John the Baptist would be asking this (Luke 1:76)?

People had basically 4 different expectations of what the Messiah would be and do.

1. The Moralists. Their motto was “Take back Israel for God.” Their view: “There's too much sin in our country. If there were more righteous people like us and fewer sinners in the land, God would deliver us.”
2. The Zealots. Their motto: “The only good Roman is a dead Roman.” Zealots were looking for a military Messiah to wipe out the Roman oppressors.
3. The Compromisers. Their motto: “Let's go along to get along.” These were the Sadducees and Herodians. They were willing to “get in bed” with Herod.
4. The Separatists: Their motto: “The culture is so bad, let's separate ourselves from it.”

What evidence do you see that those groups are still around today? Do you see yourself in any of these groups?

Why would these groups continue if Jesus never identified with these groups?

Most folks wanted a butt-kicking, sword wielding Messiah who would declare war on the idol-worshipping Gentiles and the sinners among the Jews.

Compare Luke 3:17; Matthew 3:10 with Matthew 11:28-29; Luke 15; Luke 26:52; Matthew 5:44.

In what ways does Jesus not fit with the people's expectation?

What do we do with all of this?

1. Be careful how we read the Bible.
Read and compare these passages: Isaiah 66:16 and Zechariah 9:9-10.
When Jesus described himself and his mission in Luke 4:16-18, he used a passage from Isaiah 61.
Why did he pick that one instead of one that was more war-like?

Here's a principle for Bible interpretation: Interpret the Bible through the lens of Jesus. *What do you think?*

2. Watch out for scandals. Read Matthew 11:6
What is there about Jesus that would make people “fall away” or “get tripped up?”
3. It's ok to question. Read Matthew 11:10-15. *How free were you to ask spiritual/religious questions in your church or home?*
4. Look at the results. Read Matthew 11:16-19 and Matthew 7:15-17. *What fruit is Jesus talking about? What kind of Messiah would best accomplish what Jesus wants to see happen? How have we misunderstood the Messiah, his mission and his methods?*