



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### *Christmas Eve Service Times*

**Mark your calendars:**

Christmas Eve will be at 5pm, 7pm, 9pm & 11pm  
With nursery-preschool childcare at 5 & 7pm only

### *Christmas For Kids!*

**Help us bless Delta High School!**

This year, in lieu of Christmas for Kids program, where we take kids shopping, we want to bless our new neighbors: Delta High School, by providing a Christmas gift on their last day of school. This gift will include a movie ticket pass, some candy, and an Element bookmark.

Monetary Donations are needed; please see the Welcome Center or give online at:  
[www.ourelement.org/cfk](http://www.ourelement.org/cfk)

### *E1 Help Needed!*

**Two ways to help!**

- 1) Demo Team tearing out some walls we added
  - 2) Rummage Sale on December 9th
- Email [connect@ourelement.org](mailto:connect@ourelement.org) for more information for both.

# *Jingle all the Way*

## *Week 2 - Disappointed Families*

### *Today's Verses:*

Romans 8:28  
Luke 1:5-7

Luke 1:18-20  
Romans 5:3-5  
Proverbs 24:10

Proverbs 17:3  
Romans 5:3-8

## Week 2 - Disappointed Families

Tis the season...for all things merry and bright and family and drama...or is it? This Christmas here at Element, we are focusing on what God says about family. After all, because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God has adopted us into His perfect family and *that* is cause for rejoicing (and maybe even a few jingle bells!). Last week we talked about stressed out families and how God chooses to redeem our families because of who *HE* says we are: His precious children.

**What in your life has been the most disappointing?**

**What hopes did you have that were never realized?**

Brokenness exists in creation, in our hearts, and in our families; as Christians, we will not see perfect healing until we see Jesus face to face. Until we actually get to our "happily ever after" with Jesus, how do we deal with stress, disappointment, safety risks, and embarrassing situations? The answers to these questions are not fairy tales but real, year-round, Christmas miracles.

**How do you deal with your disappointment?**

**What behaviors do you run to for comfort?**

Sunday we talked about three points concerning disappointment that are worth noting here:

1. Trouble and disappointment have a way of revealing (making evident) our character. Disappointment by itself doesn't produce growth, but if we can learn to trust God in the midst of it, if we live with confidence and joy in who He is and not get focused on ourselves, then God can use disappointment to bring growth.
2. Disappointment reveals the truth about the human condition. Self-sufficiency, at least how we define it, is a great illusion because we are not in control of anything.

3. If deliverance is all we desire from God, then when trouble disappears, our desire for God will disappear. Too often, we only seek relationship with God fervently when our life is falling apart, we need to cultivate our relationship with Him in both good times *and* bad.

**Read Romans 5:3-8. How do you respond to disappointments, interruption, or not getting what you want?**

**How do you respond to health problems, criticism, or being told "no?"**

God's words to Paul in Romans 5 (and to us here in 2017) remind us that we rejoice in our sufferings knowing suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. Why does hope not disappoint? It's not because our strength is so great, it's not because things will turn out the way we want them to in this life, and it's not because we have conquered through our supremely powerful and self-sufficient reason. Hope does not disappoint for one reason alone, because of Jesus. As an act of complete grace Jesus chose to give His life for us; He chose to suffer and die on a cross for us. That's the good news of the grace of God, that's why hope doesn't disappoint.

**Have you ever experienced a family situation that caused deep disappointment in yourself or others? What was your response?**

**God has given us a new identity as his daughters and sons. How does this reality change your perspective about your family disappointments?**

For Zachariah and Elisabeth, we see that God used their disappointment to show His glory and power, which all pointed to God's final plan of redemption that was now at hand in Jesus. We are called to trust God and have hope in the midst of our disappointments because our God has rescued us.

**Where do you see God building endurance, character, and hope in your life, your family, and your Gospel community?**