

When Disappointment Is a Symptom

It was empty. I immediately asked, “Is today a holiday?” But no. We just didn’t get any mail, so the box was a black hole of disappointment. “Not even a sales flier?”

Shoulder sag.

There it was again—the idolatry of heart that I had been learning about for a few years. I was starting to recognize the groping to find satisfaction in anything and everything except in the heart of God.

Prone to wander, Lord.

I feel it.

So says the old hymn.

So from the time it took me to turn away from the mailbox, walk across the street and get to my front door, I went to church in my heart.

Lord! I groaned. Lord, my soul needs You. I need so much more than mail to satisfy these deep, empty places in me.

My heart went to a verse I had just read, during my time with the Lord the morning before. I had planned to read further in the passage, but I came upon this phrase that tasted like the soft center of a Lindt milk chocolate truffle.

“The Father has life in himself” (John 5:26).

This is what I am always looking for, without even being aware of it much of the time. I want life—the abundant kind that Jesus talks about.

Timothy Keller says that idols always disappoint us, and I'm hypervigilant for this symptom now. Disappointment is a symptom. The feeling sends up a red flag that I was hoping to find satisfaction in the wrong place.

Empty mailbox. Empty. Empty. Empty.

But there is life in the Father—always full and never disappointing. Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays the life He delivers.

So let us turn away from meaningless, lifeless idols and seek satisfaction only in the Lord.