

## Luke's Gospel: Son of Man, Seeker of Men.

"Jesus Are You the One?"

Dealing with Doubt & Disappointment

# DEALING WITH DOUBT

**Today's Big Question:** What do you do when your doubt is *louder* than your faith?

**Luke 7:18-28 (NKJV); John the Baptist Sends Messengers to Jesus**

<sup>18</sup> Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. <sup>19</sup> And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

<sup>20</sup> When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' " <sup>21</sup> And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

<sup>22</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.* <sup>23</sup> And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me."

<sup>24</sup> When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>25</sup> But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. <sup>26</sup> But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup> This is *he* of whom it is written:

'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,  
Who will prepare Your way before You.'

<sup>28</sup> For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

**What do you do when your doubt is louder than your faith?**

1. Don't be afraid to come to Jesus with your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 18-19).

- **The background:** John was cast into prison by Herod after a fruitful ministry preceding Jesus.
- A honest question from a man dealing with doubt and discouragement: "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

2. Don't isolate yourself from \_\_\_\_\_ when you are experiencing the dark night of the soul (v. 19-20).

- The number one rule when you are dealing with the twin challenges of doubts and discouragements: Don't do this alone!
- John the Baptist was the man of faith who allowed his disciples to see his struggles. He was authentic and real.
- The man whose ministry was to prepare the way for the Messiah was now not sure...

**Scripture Insight:** [7:19](#) *should we expect someone else?* John had announced the coming of the Messiah, but now he himself had been languishing in prison for months, and the work of Jesus had not brought the results John apparently expected. His disappointment was natural. He wanted reassurance.<sup>1</sup>

#### Reasons Why You Need Community:

- 1) You were made for community (Genesis 1-2).
- 2) You can't reach your full potential apart from the people that God has placed in your life.
- 3) You can do more together in community than you could do alone.
- 4) Jesus had community and He was perfect. What makes you think you can go apart from community?
- 5) You can't fulfill the "one-another's" of the Bible alone.
- 6) Your spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities are meant for the community and not for you alone!
- 7) Community is not optional for the disciples of Jesus.

3. Allow God to show Himself to you both in \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 21-22).

<sup>1</sup> Quote from NIV Study Bible.

- Notice what Jesus did next: Instead of immediately answering John's doubts, Jesus carries on with His ministry while John's disciples watch:
  - i. He cured many of their infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits.
  - ii. He gave sight to many blind people.
- Now Jesus responds to their initial question: Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard-
  - i. **Seen:** The blind now see, the lame now walk, the deaf now hear, the dead are now alive.
  - ii. **Hear:** The poor now have Good News!

**Scripture Insight:** 7:22 Jesus depicts his current mission of restoring the disabled and preaching to the poor as foretastes of the promised coming era of restoration. He does so by borrowing language from [Isa 35:5 - 6](#); [61:1](#) (he cites [Isa 61:1 - 2](#) also in [Lk 4:18 - 19](#)).<sup>2</sup>

4. Don't allow \_\_\_\_\_ to derail your passionate \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus (v. 23).

- One life principle we can learn from the honest doubts of a faithful man: Don't doubt in the dark what God has revealed to you in the light.

*Practical Tips for when you are in a season of doubt or depression:*

- It's best not to make any major decisions when you are in the fog.
- It's best not to make sense of your life when you are lacking perspective.
- It's best not to move until God moves in your situation!

- God blesses you when you can persevere in faith when all the evidence is to the contrary.

5. Never forget this one truth: Jesus still \_\_\_\_\_ in you even when you don't believe in \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 24-28).

- I am blown away what Jesus does next:

<sup>2</sup> Quote from NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible.

**Scripture Insight:** 7:24 reed. The emblem on the coins of Herod Antipas, who imprisoned John, was a reed. John's hearers would be familiar with reeds, since they grew as tall as 16 feet (5 meters) high around the Jordan, where John had baptized. *swayed by the wind*. Reeds were used figuratively for what was weak and undependable in time of trouble ([1Ki 14:15](#); [2Ki 18:21](#)).<sup>3</sup>

- When we see ourselves as weak, God sees us as strong.
- Jesus never forgot John's life and love: John cleared the way for Jesus' ministry and now Jesus was clearing the way for John—

**Sermon in a Sentence:** Jesus turns your doubts and disappointments into direction as you lay them at His feet.

**Action Steps:**

- ***If you are struggling with doubt***, get away today and talk to Jesus about your greatest struggles and issues. Lay them at His feet and watch what will happen as you learn to lean on Jesus once again.
- ***If you are dealing with discouragement***, get reconnected to community again. Join a Life Group this week. Meet up with a trusted and Godly friend for coffee.
- ***If you are helping someone with his/her doubts & discouragements***, show love by listening first before you try to give advice. Win the right to be heard. Love that person. Serve that person. Share a meal with that person. Watch God—over time—help your friend!

**Make a decision this week?** Please let us know on your Connection Card.

**Preview for next Sunday:** "Whose Child Are You?" from Luke 7:29-35.

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<sup>3</sup> Quote from NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible.