

Luke 7 pt 3 vs. 18-35

Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. ¹⁹ 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?"

²⁰ 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?'" ²¹ And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²² 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. ²³ And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me."

²⁴ 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? ²⁵ 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. ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is *he* of whom it is written:

'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' ²⁸ 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."

²⁹ And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

³¹ And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep.'

³³ For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵ But wisdom is justified by all her children."

1. Luke 7 began with the Centurion - **Warrior & the Word**
2. Then we looked at the **gospel** with the widow of Nain
3. To set up our backdrop to John's story, there are 2 important figures that we need to identify in our journey through God's Word
 - a. Who Jesus is
 - b. Who we are
4. There is no more important question than the one about who Jesus is
5. In light of discovering who Jesus is, I begin to understand who I am
6. I appreciate the fact that God's Word doesn't shy away from the reality of the struggle that we can sometimes go through in this discovery
7. This passage opens with John's disciples report the things that Jesus is doing
 - a. John is the forerunner of Jesus – **Malachi 3:1**
 - b. He's a fearless man who spoke to truth to all (including Herod)
 - c. John is a bold prophet, he's a in your face spokesman
8. Now John is in chains & has doubts about and probably offended with Jesus

I. Confusion

II. Confirmation

III. Condemnation

I. Confusion

1. Confusion about how or why God does things.
2. This is an area we all deal with and are not comfortable speaking of

3. Many believers feel like they need to have their game face on all the time
4. I appreciate the genuineness of our faith that allows us to deal with our doubt
5. It is common for [believers] to have their days of doubt
6. We have plenty of examples in scripture
 - a. Moses was ready to quit ... (Num. 11:10–15)
 - b. Elijah was depressed and wanted to die (1 Kings 19)
 - c. Jeremiah hated the day he was born (Jer. 20:7–9, 14–18),
 - d. Paul knew the meaning of despair (2 Cor.1:8–9) (**Wiersbe**)
7. It's normal to go through periods of doubt in your journey
 - a. There is a difference between doubt and unbelief
 1. Doubt is a matter of the mind: we [don't] understand what God is doing or why He is doing it
 2. Unbelief is a matter of the will: we refuse to believe God's Word and obey what He tells us to do
 - i. Doubt is normally a sign that a person is thinking
8. Based on what we know about John, he is probably struggling with doubt due to being in prison
 - a. This is not what he envisioned
 - b. His ministry was blessed and people turned to God
 - c. He knew God was ready to do something and preparing for the Messiah

- d. He knew Jesus is “the Lamb of God” (John 1:29), and that God has a plan
 - e. Now in chains, he’s confused about that plan and his place in it
9. John probably looked to all of the previous examples of how God delivered His people and said the Messiah may be like **Joshua, Gideon, or David...**
- a. I envisioned things to be very different
 - b. This wasn’t what I signed up for...
 - 1. Why are others free and I’m imprisoned?
10. We may wonder, Am I in the right place? Did God really call me? Does God really love me?...
11. Most often, my situation and what I envisioned are not equal
- a. This naturally produces doubt
12. *German writer: Goethe*; Give me the benefit of your convictions, if you have any; but keep your doubts to yourself, for I have enough of my own.
13. **What should we do with our doubts?**
- a. This passage teaches us a couple of things.
 - 1. Realize that doubt is normal and it’s a part of our walk of faith
 - 2. Bring your doubts to Jesus as John did
 - i. G. Campbell Morgan had already enjoyed some success as a preacher by the time he was 19 years old. But then he was attacked by doubts about the Bible. The writings of various scientists and agnostics disturbed him ... As he read their books and listened to debates, Morgan became more and more perplexed [so] He cancelled all preaching engagements, put all the books in a cupboard ... and went to the bookstore and bought a new Bible. He said to himself, "I

am no longer sure that this is ...the Word of God. But of this I am sure. If it be the Word of God, and if I come to it with an unprejudiced and open mind, it will bring assurance to my soul of itself." The result? "That Bible found me!"

14. **Let's be honest about our doubts**

- a. Let's bring them to the Lord, He will direct us
 1. Usually in the Word of God

II. Confirmation

1. Jesus did not give [the 2 disciples] a lecture on theology or prophecy
 - a. Instead, He ... healed many people of many different afflictions
 - b. ... these were His credentials as the promised Messiah
2. Jesus cured many of sicknesses, and evil spirits and giving sight to the blind
3. He's unfazed by the doubt of John
 - a. **Go and tell John what you've seen and heard**
 - b. **The blind see, the lame walk...**
 - c. He didn't say, cheer up John, get it together, what's wrong with you?
 - d. He didn't say go remind John of the day he baptized me
 - e. Or go remind him of all of the people who repented and turned to God
4. **Go tell John what you hear and see.**
 - a. What He highlighted is directly linked to His works from God's Word

1. **Isaiah 35: 4-6** Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you."
5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing.

 2. **Isaiah 61 / Luke 4** "The Spirit of the LORD *is* upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to *the* poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to *the* captives And recovery of sight to *the* blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."
- b. By giving John God's Word, Jesus was saying:
1. Fear not John. God knows what He was doing
 2. God has a plan in motion and is always in control
 3. Don't lose hope, trust in the Hands of the omnipotent God
 4. Trust God by trusting in His Word
 5. Don't trust in your emotions or experiences
 6. **2nd Peter 1:16** ... we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"— ¹⁸ and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.¹⁹ So we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts
5. Blessed is he who is not offended because of me
 6. When things go crazy, don't be offended, **trust God's Word**

7. **Isaiah 55:8-9** "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD.
"For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts

8. Instead of scolding John, Jesus speaks the kindest words about him
 - a. He's not just being polite
 - b. This is what God really thinks of John in his darkest hour

9. What we think of ourselves, or what others think of us, is not as important as what God thinks
 - a. Jesus commended John publically for his ministry
 - b. At the same time, He exposed ... those who rejected John's ministry
 - c. John... was not a reed blowing in the wind swaying with public opinion
 - d. Nor was he the friend of the wealthy and popular

10. He was the greatest of the O.T prophets
 - a. Greater than Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel...?

11. Why is John considered great?
 - a. He was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth; Luke 1:15
 - b. He was a faithful spokesman of God
 - c. He funneled people to Jesus Christ; John 3:30
 - d. He was the final Old Testament prophet; Luke 16:16
 - e. He was the forerunner of Jesus Christ (**Heitzig**)

12. **Vs. 28** But he who is least in the kingdom of God is great than he

13. How is the least person in the kingdom of God greater than John?

- a. How are we greater than John?
 - b. Greater in position, not in character or ministry
 - c. John was part of the O.T era
 - 1. We are N.T believers
 - d. John was a herald of the king
 - 1. We are a friend of the king
 - e. John was a friend of the bridegroom
 - 1. We are the bride of the Bridegroom
14. Those who heard Jesus, even the tax collectors glorified God – He’s speaking truth, it’s undeniable
- a. The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God
15. John was preaching what Jesus preached: confession and repentance
- a. The problem with those who rejected Jesus:
 - 1. Self-righteousness
 - 2. Satisfied with their condition
 - b. They rejected the righteousness from God desiring to have their own
 - c. They were happy with their position and had no desire to change

III. Condemnation

- 1. Jesus compared that generation to people who were childish, not childlike
 - a. Nothing pleased them.

2. John [spoke] a stern message of judgment, & they said, "He has a demon!"
3. Jesus ... preached a gracious message of salvation, and they said, "He's a glutton, a winebibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners!"
4. They wanted neither the funeral nor the wedding, because nothing pleased them
5. **But wisdom is justified by all her children**
 - a. The Pharisees can argue religion all day long, but their lives were not changed because they don't really want the truth
 - b. The followers of Christ are being transformed and their lives reflect it
 1. Those who were addicted are seeing chains fall off
 2. Those who were bound to sin and now free to worship the true and living God