

Understanding Jesus: The One Has Come

Sometimes God doesn't seem to be doing what we think He should and our confidence in Him gets shaken. Our lives are not what we wanted. The world around us is a mess. If God is who He says He is, shouldn't things be different? Shouldn't things be better? At times we live with tension between what we think God ought to do and the reality of what we actually experience in this world. And this can cause confusion and doubt. The good news is that our doubts do not surprise God. In our passage today we see how Jesus engaged people who are struggling with doubt. Like John, may we bring our doubts to Jesus and allow Him to speak into them.

Opening Discussion: What, if any, area of your life right now are you struggling to understand what God is doing?

Read Luke 7:18-35

1. Who is John the Baptist? What do we know about him? What was his role?
2. The questions that John sends his disciples to ask (v. 18) suggest that at some level John is struggling with doubts about Jesus. Why do you think John is doubting if Jesus is The One?
3. How does Jesus answer John's question (v. 21-23)?
4. As one who deeply knew the Scriptures (i.e., the Old Testament), how would John have understood Jesus' answer in light of passages like Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1?

Sam said:

So, from the gloom of his cell, through the help of his messengers, John asks Jesus: *"Did I get it all right, or did I get it all wrong? Can I really trust you? Can I really put my hope in you? Are you the one who is to come, or should I start all over and look for someone else?"*

5. Have you ever wanted to ask a question like John's? Explain.

6. Jesus essentially addressed John's doubts by telling him to look at the evidence of His work up to that time (v. 22). In what ways does looking at how Jesus has worked in the past in your life help with current doubts?

7. Having addressed the questions from John's disciples, Jesus speaks to the multitudes about John. What does Jesus mean when he says that the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John (v. 28)?

Sam said:

Jesus makes it clear in v. 28 [that on] this earth there was no one greater than John. But the time to follow John had come to an end. It was now time for everyone to take the next step and enter into the Kingdom of God. **It was time to follow Jesus.** It is terribly popular these days to dabble in a variety of competing things that all claim to be true. We mix a little Christianity with a dash of self-help and self-improvement, toss in some wisdom from social media influencers, modern philosophers, skeptics, deconstructionists, men and women from other religions who all say nice that sound good and right...and what we get in the end is a jumbled and directionless and powerless mess. I believe we can and should listen to, learn from, and have great conversations with people from all walks of life and differing spiritual backgrounds. But I also believe that when all is said and done, if Jesus truly is the One who has come to save us and bring us into the eternal presence of God...then **we must commit ourselves wholly to following him.** There can be no other.

8. Are there any mixed loyalties in your life or would you say you are wholly devoted to following Jesus? Explain.

9. As you think about being wholly devoted to Jesus, what is one way you can follow Him more closely, either taking up a new practice or letting go of something that stands between you and a closer relationship with Him?

Practicing the Rhythms of Rooted this Week

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Daily Devotion: Search out and reflect upon promises from God that address any current doubts in your life.



Prayer: Spend time bringing any doubts you have about God's work in your life directly to Him. Be honest. He knows! Invite His reassurance.