

Luke 7:18-28 ESV

# Did You Expect Ease or Truth?

Sunday, December 13 at 8:00 &amp; 10:45

Third Sunday of Advent – 2015

During Advent: Wednesday Services at 11 &amp; 7; Meals at 12 &amp; 6

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Jesus Christ: Last week we focused on John the Baptizer and his ministry of ♦preaching God’s Law, ♦calling for sorrow, ♦looking for change – *for the fruits of repentance*, and ♦inviting such people to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins.

Today, as we pickup with John, he is now in prison and the people are focusing on Jesus. John was *so important* **and** his life was *so hard*, **but** he never gave up on Jesus! Let us learn from him and be the same!

1. **John’s Double Check:** <sup>18</sup> **The disciples of John reported all these things to him** [*What things? Earlier in Luke chapter 7 it records Jesus ♦healing a man who was near death and ♦raising to life another man who had died*]. **And John,** <sup>19</sup> **calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”** <sup>20</sup> **And when the men had come to him** [*that is, to Jesus*], **they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’”** //
  - a. The OT tells about the Coming One: The first to hear the promise was Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:15); it was also spoken to Abraham (Gen. 12:3), Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and many others! So people of faith ♦believed in the Messiah **and** ♦were looking for the advent of the Messiah!

- b. John seemed uncertain about Jesus: Doesn't that seem unusual – *since John* ♦ had a special calling, ♦ identified Jesus as the Lamb of God, and ♦ saw the Holy Spirit descend and remain on Him? **But keep in mind**: By this time John was in prison (Matt. 11:2), so even though he had pointed others to Jesus, he was probably not aware of Jesus' many miracles.
2. **Jesus' Solid Proof**: <sup>21</sup> In that hour he [Jesus] healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. <sup>22</sup> And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>23</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended [made to stumble] by me." //
- a. What an answer: To John's question, "Are you the one..." Jesus could have *simply* said, "Yes," but instead *He did something much more powerful and certain!* **He did not SAY His answer, but He DID His answer with a multitude of exceedingly great miracles!**
- b. Let us not be offended but be blessed: Jesus was ♦ free and ♦ in the middle of an amazing ministry, *while John was in prison and silenced*. John could have reasoned: "**I lived** a difficult life in the wilderness, **I prepared** the way for Jesus, **I called** many to repent, **I baptized** many, and **I pointed** many to Jesus, so now I should be ♦ working with Him **or** ♦ enjoying my retirement,

**but**, instead, *I'm in this lousy prison!*" John could have reasoned in such ways, *but he did not*; instead, he only wanted to be sure that Jesus was the Coming One. In a similar way, let us trust in Jesus – *no matter what comes our way!*

3. **The Truth About John:** <sup>24</sup> **When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John:**
  - a. **"What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? // What does that mean?** *"There was a well-known parable during first-century Judaism known as **The Reed and the Oak Tree**.... a giant oak tree and a thin reed were both planted by the river. Whenever a storm came, the deep roots of the oak kept it firmly established... There was nothing... compromising about the oak. The reed, on the other hand, would bend to the right or left, even with a slight breeze."*<sup>1</sup> So John was **no** reed, **no** compromiser; instead, *he boldly told God's truth!*
  - b. <sup>25</sup> **What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. // John was the opposite;** he *"was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey"* (Mark 1:6 ESV). John had a *very hard life*, but he *served God and told His truth!*
  - c. <sup>26</sup> **What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.** <sup>27</sup> **This**

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald Wayne Mosely, Yeshua (Baltimore: Lederer Books, 1996), 24-25.

is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’ // As there is only ONE Savior—**Jesus**, so John is the *one* who is spoken of in the OT who would prepare the way for the first coming of the Messiah, *the Promised Savior!* So think about it; John was so important and yet *his life on earth was so hard*. Christians are blessed now, *but our best blessings will be in eternity – after we die in Christ!*

- d. <sup>28</sup> **I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”** // What does that mean? Since John led the way for Jesus—*he was the greatest, next to Jesus, in the OT*; yet John died before Jesus completed His mission. **So** those who know Jesus *after He completed His work*, and are thus members of the kingdom of God, are even greater than John. That is us! We are members of God’s kingdom, *thus the body of Christ*; Jesus is our head, so He controls us – *and we are willing participants!*

**Conclusion:** Let us pray for those who *do not yet* know Jesus as Savior: Father in heaven, for all who are spiritually lost, ➔ *have mercy upon them*, ➔ *find them*, and ➔ *save them*; also, for us, *keep us* ➔ *in Your Word*, ➔ *ever-trusting in Jesus*, and ➔ *boldly living for Him in our daily lives!*

And all God’s people said: **Amen!**