



Life Guide applying God's Word to life

Jesus' Advent Antidote to Doubt December 15, 2019

(Matthew 11:2-11)

² When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" ⁴ Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." ⁷ As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. ⁹ Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written: 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹ I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

1. What are some positive things and some negative things on your mind as we get deeper into the holiday season?
2. Some interpreters argue that John's question is asked for the benefit of his disciples and not John himself. In that case what would be the point of John's question? What would be the goal of Jesus' answer?

3. It seems far more likely that John himself is doubting. What are some reasons modern Christians can relate to John's doubting?
4. Share an example of when Jesus took care of you in a way that was different from what you expected. How did that affect you?
5. We are *already* experiencing Jesus' kingdom. This statement is true. We are *not yet* experiencing Jesus' kingdom. This statement is also true. How did John experience Jesus' kingdom? How did he *not yet* experience God's kingdom?
6. How do you experience God's kingdom? How do you *not yet* experience God's kingdom?
7. Imagine you are an ancient Israelite, overwhelmed by guilt. Based on what they knew, how might an Old Testament prophet comfort you?
8. Imagine you are a disciple of John the Baptist, overwhelmed by guilt. Based on what he knew, how might John comfort you?
9. No imagination: You are a disciple of Jesus. Based on what you know, how might you find comfort when you are overwhelmed by guilt?
10. In what way is the least in Jesus' kingdom greater than John the Baptist?
11. When you have negative thoughts or doubts, how might this account help you?