

In Spiritual Doubt

When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" Matthew 11:2-3

Our most soul-shaking hours are the hours of spiritual doubt. When the Christian heart trembles and asks, "Does Christ really care? Is he really God's Son, really the world's Redeemer, my Savior and Lord?" earth threatens to lose every gleam of hope and eternity threatens to black out in cold despair. What shall you and I do in such times of hellish, questioning doubt?

John the Baptist, the peerless herald of Jesus, gives us the most effective answer. When John lay bound in Herod's prison-fortress and Jesus did not personally come to see him, it seems that this dark question arose within him. Was Jesus the Christ that should come, the one he thought he was - or should he bid God's people look for another? John recognized in that question a danger that might shatter his faith and wreck his soul.

There was only one way to conquer and that was to seek an answer from the Lord about whom doubt was rising. John therefore sent two of his disciples straight to Jesus, asking: Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else (Luke 7:19)?

Jesus replied as only the merciful Savior could. He did not answer John's question directly, but sent back to John clear and undeniable evidence that he was indeed *the one who was to come*. When Jesus spoke in answer John the Baptist regained his confidence. His doubts were forever gone.

When doubts arise in you to threaten your soul's salvation, follow John straight to Jesus himself. Go into his Word and there let him answer for himself. See him there as the God-sent Redeemer of mankind, healing the blind, the deaf and the crippled; cleansing the lepers; raising the dead; and above all preaching the gospel to hopeless, trembling sinners. Then your doubts too will be silenced. As did John, you too will see Jesus as the Christ of God, the Redeemer of the world, your own Savior and Lord. You too will understand fully then what he meant when he said: *Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me*. (Matthew 11:6). Amen.

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