

Welcome!



shoreline

vineyard

get smaller

church

***Faith* factor**

Great **Faith**

Matthew 11:1-19

“Dullness, not doubt is the strongest enemy of faith, just as indifference not hate is the strongest enemy of love.”

(Peter Kreeft, Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Heaven)

Matthew 11:1-5

When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.² Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”⁴ And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see:⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.

Matthew 11:6-10

⁶ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is he of whom it is written, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’

Matthew 11:11-15

¹¹ Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,^[d] and the violent take it by force.

¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear,^[e] let him hear.

The scene: John the Baptist baptizes Jesus, then he's imprisoned, then Jesus calls the disciples, then Jesus sends out the disciples... and now John's disciples ask an earth-shaking question.

Are you the One?

Hard **CIRCUMSTANCES.**

John the Baptist is experiencing **CONFUSION.**

Or, perhaps John needed a **CONFIRMATION.**

Great Faith

Is your faith perhaps in a similar place as John's faith?

Takeaway

Everyone's faith gets challenged.

Great Faith

Jesus' answer to John the Baptist's disciples:

Consider what you See and Hear.

Hearing is the Proclamation of Truth.

Seeing is the Demonstration of Power.

Luke 4:18-21

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

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The picture of the Kingdom of Heaven:

What? The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk: **CHANGED LIVES.**

How? By a demonstration of **POWER.**

Who? The blind, lame, deaf...the hurting, the wounded and broken.

When? In the **FULLNESS OF TIME:** Isaiah 35, 42, 61

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What part of the prophecy does Jesus leave out?

The prisoners are set free: Do you think John knew what Jesus was saying, through what He didn't say? Why do you think Jesus left this out?

I see you, John. I see you...

Takeaway

Do you look for **the Lord's signposts & affirmations**, for the gentle & quiet voice of Jesus?

Great Faith

Takeaway

The Kingdom of Heaven is about what you **hear and see**.

John testified to Jesus, and now He testifies of John:

Strong and Courageous, not a reed shaken by the wind, or one who responds to the whims and capricious opinions of the crowd.

Self-denying and Consecrated, not dressed in soft cloths in kings' houses

God-Pleasing, not people-pleasing "playing to the flute or singing the dirge."

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None of this does Jesus share with John's disciples...

Jesus testifies of John:

A prophet... and more than a prophet:

Ministry as the Herald of the Messiah. For that, he was the greatest of prophets and the greatest of men. John is the last of the prophets and the one bridging the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

"Elijah who is to come."

Here we must pause...

Kingdom of Heaven:

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. v.12

Great Faith

Here we must pause...

Kingdom of Heaven:

We each have our own kingdom: where our choice determines what happens. This is the crux of faith. It flows from the decision-center of our heart and mind.

“Never-ceasing spiritual beings” with a unique calling to count for good in God’s great universe. We who’ve experienced forgiveness and new life and entered into God’s rule become, like Jesus, bearers of that rule.

Here we must pause...

That is, the rule of God, now present in the person of Jesus himself, submits to approaches that were previously not possible. Personal need and confidence in Jesus permits any person to blunder right into God's realm. And once in, they have an astonishing new status: "Those least in the Kingdom of the Heavens are greater than John."

-- Willard, Dallas.

Here we must pause...

We are God's Covenant People

Everything in the Scriptures can be interpreted and understood through the lenses of God as the Covenant-keeping God.

Relationships.

Here we must pause...

We are God's Covenant People

A redeemed history for yesterday

A new reality today

Promises for an unimaginable future tomorrow

Great Faith

How can this be?

Yet, the one who is least in the kingdom
is greater than John the Baptist (v. 11)

The Least in the Kingdom is great than John the Baptist.

The Power of the Cross.

Our Proximity to Jesus.

Great Faith

Where is your faith challenge?

Personal Faith Walk?

Great **Faith**