

# Doubting Jesus

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     How are we doing? Good. Good. Better. Better. Better to middleton? Better to middleton. Better to play in Midland, Texas? Yep. Better than we deserve?

Yes. And y'all know, y'all, I'm picking up y'all because my son said y'all earlier, so I figured we're doing Texas again today. Y'all know where that song comes from that we just sang, Greatest I Faithful?

Morning by morning, new mercies I see. It's 101 years old. Okay, it's older than that. Jeremiah wrote those words.

And if you read the words of the hymn, you'd be shocked to see the context in which they are written. In Lamentations chapter 3, chapter 20, verses of complaint and bitterness and gall, he says, but I call this to mind.

Therefore I have hope. So, when we sing this cheery song, I always think of Jeremiah. I wonder, oh, what if he, you know, he wrote it different.

[ 1 : 2 4 ]     Anyway, just, it does relate to what we're doing today. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn not to Lamentations, but to Luke chapter 7.

Then, we're going to be looking at the text in the middle of chapter 7 of Luke. In the opening verses of chapter 7, Luke gives us two miracles that Jesus did.

One to the centurion's servant without even coming near him. Remember, the centurion said, I'm not worthy for you to come.

I'm not worthy to even come and meet you. So just say the word. Just speak the word. My servant will be here.

So we have this, and of course, that's one of the two people in the whole Bible that Jesus is amazed with because of that kind of faith. And then Jesus just kind of interrupted a funeral of a widow who was burying her only son, and Jesus raised him back from the dead and gave him to her.

[ 2 : 3 9 ]     So we have those two miracles that Luke describes in the beginning of this chapter. And now, following that, we're going to have this, I think, perhaps the most important question of the whole gospel that Luke presents to us, or records for us.

Okay, so with that in mind, hopefully that raises your anticipation. If you're able, please stand as I read from Luke chapter 7. I'm going to read from verse 16 through verse 35.

Luke 7, verse 16. They just raised this son from the dead and gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all.

And they glorified God, saying, A great prophet has arisen among us, and God has visited his people. And this report about him, Jesus, spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent him to the Lord, saying, Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?

- [ 4 : 08 ] And when the men had come to him, 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?
- In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits. And on many who were blind, he bestowed sight.
- Then he answered them, Go and tell John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive their sight.
- The lame walk. The lepers are cleansed. And the deaf hear. Even the dead are raised up. The poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by you.
- [ 5 : 18 ] When John's messengers had gone, 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? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Insert laughter here.
- Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in king's courts. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you.
- And more, more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face who will prepare your way before you.
- 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.
- [ 6 : 25 ] When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John.
- But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. To what then shall I compare the people of this generation?
- And what are they like? They're like children, sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, we played the flute for you, and you didn't dance.
- We sang a dirge, and you did not weep. For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, he has a demon?
- The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, look at him, a glutton, a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Yet wisdom is justified by all of her children.
- [ 7 : 43 ] So it reads, let us pray. Father, open our eyes that we may see what Jesus is saying here. Help us to think because he doesn't give us straight answers.
- He makes us think. He stirs us, arouses us to wonder what does he mean and how is he describing these things.
- And so, Father, give us clarity of thought. And I pray, Father, that you would especially cause each of us to ask this vital question.
- Is Jesus the one? The one. And for those who doubt, Father, may it stir them and draw them the words of Jesus.
- We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please, please, please. I titled this Doubting Jesus.
- [ 9 : 02 ] And I'm not big on it. I didn't used to be big on titles. I would be the most boring titler of all teachers because I would just take a phrase from the text that I felt summarized what the text was about.
- But it dawned on me in the last several years that God has given us a ministry beyond our church through, what do we call this?

Linking? Zinking? Zooming? No. Live streaming? Whatever. You know, that internet thing. Which is great.

do you realize that we have over a hundred people subscribed to this? Who are all these people? And so I realized that that if I'm careful, clever about the title, to be, in other words, to be mindful, circumspect about what the passage is with hopes that it might draw people to listen.

Because I've noticed with certain ways of titling a message, the views go way up. So, I think this is an extremely relevant title.

[ 10 : 30 ] I hope it's, I hope it does what I hope it does because I believe there are a lot of people on the bridge, a lot of people who doubt Jesus.

But there's a tinge there. it's a fact. Millions of people doubt that Jesus is the one.

Many say Jesus is good, he's a good teacher, he's a moral man, he taught he was a good teacher, he might have even been a prophet, prophet, but he's not the one.

So, the whole Jewish nation doesn't just doubt Jesus, they reject him, alright. They would call him a false prophet because of what he claimed.

Muslims believe Jesus was a true prophet, speaker for God, but not the one. Many of those Buddhists, Hindus, others would have no category for Jesus at all, they don't even think about it.

[ 11 : 47 ] Those few that would would say he's a good person. But more importantly we have folks in our own society who have heard of Jesus and maybe they've even read a little bit, maybe they come at Christmas and Easter and they hear a little bit about Jesus and say, yeah, he's a good guy.

I like him. But not for me. Whatever, he's optional. And then there's people that who would say, yeah, Jesus is good, but they are offended that Christians claim that he's the only one.

That he is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no one gets into heaven or before the Father but through him. That's offensive. That's drawing a line in our pluralistic, relativistic, you know, nothing's absolute except for the fact that nothing's absolute in this world.

The problem with, you know, Christians claiming that is they're simply just repeating what Jesus said. They're not claiming something of their own making. So doubt. So doubt.

All of this. Doubt. Jesus can be accepted on a number of levels and yet absolutely rejected. So doubt.

[ 13 : 17 ] So, and it's a legitimate question. I think doubt can be healthy when it is genuine. I think doubt can be extremely dangerous when it becomes your excuse for rejecting Jesus.

So you, do you, if you doubt, John the Baptist doubted. So that was genuine. If you're searching, John still asked.

But if you doubt, and if you're, if you're going to use that doubt, well, I don't know, you know, I don't know, and that just becomes your excuse. That's your fault, you know, there, I'm out. then that ain't going to fly when you stand before God.

That ain't going to fly. God's not going to go, oh, you got me there. Yeah, you got me. You doubt it. Okay. What can I do? Sorry, I don't think God would do that.

So, so, a genuine doubter would say, how can I know with certainty? By the way, that's why Luke has written this book, so we would know with certainty. So I think that's why he's raising this very question.

[ 14 : 27 ] how do we know with certainty? And today, I mean, back then, they could see him, they could watch him, you know, they could observe him. How can we know with certainty today?

And besides, you know, Jesus has not fixed all the evil in the world. He's not righted injustice. I did a lot of good things. He healed a lot of people. That's great. That was wonderful.

But what about me? What about our society? What about our problems? What about the evil in this world? There's extreme evil in this world.

And it's evading our culture more and more. Thank God for people like Don who try to hold the line. in this But it's encroaching, isn't it?

It's encroaching more and more. Blatant. So, do you doubt? I could be good or bad.

[ 15 : 28 ] so Jesus address those who doubt and struggle with who he is. And the answer that Jesus gives is what?

Watch and hear. Tell John what you saw and heard. weigh the evidence. Weigh the evidence.

Investigate. If you doubt, investigate. Look. So, Luke raises, records this final question.

How do we know who Jesus is? So, verse 18, he does it through John's disciples. Well, Luke's not raising this. He's recording the event.

So, the disciples of John have heard all these things about Jesus. And, of course, in the context they've just heard that the people concluded at name that he's a great prophet.

[ 16 : 37 ] Which, most would say, yeah, he's a great prophet. He's like Elijah. He's like Elisha. He's doing this. He's raising people from the dead. He's speaking words that are changing people.

So, he's a great prophet. But, John wanted more. John the Baptist wanted more. So, John sends his disciples, asks the question, are you the one who is to come?

In other words, are you the one that God has promised? Are you the one that's coming into the world that is the son of David who will conquer, who will crush with a rod of iron, who will make wrongs right, who will restore our land to us?

remember, they're in Israel, but it's not their land. It's the Romans. They haven't had that land back since they were cast out of into Babylon.

So, John's asking these questions. So, here's what's interesting. John the Baptist, he's a prophet, right? How would a prophet have doubts?

[ 18 : 02 ] Can prophets have doubts? I mean, John said early on, he said he's the one. In the Gospel of John, behold the Lamb of God, that's the one I was talking about, that's the guy right there.

And remember, before he baptized Jesus, the Father had told him, it's the one on whom the Spirit descends as a dove. That's the one. And so John said, he's the one.

And now John's been sitting in prison for about a year. And he's hearing this stuff, nice things about Jesus, a lot of nice things, a lot of nice things. And John's thinking, where's the fire?

I said, I baptized with water, but the one coming after me, the dude, the man, the Messiah, the legend, he will baptize with what?

Fire! Fire! And he will bring a winnowing fork, and he's going to, the axe is at the root, man, he's going to cut you down.

[ 19 : 11 ] Got a, you know, translation. He's going to separate the wheat from the chaff, and John's going to be sitting in prison going, what's going on?

So, remember, what was expected of the Messiah? John says, are you the one who's coming?

The one that we expect, the one that God has promised. So what did God promise? All the way back in Genesis 3, remember, he would be the son of the woman, and the son of the woman would crush the head of the offspring of the serpent.

Right? So he would be a conqueror. All through Genesis, we're reminded over and over and over again that through Abraham, the seed, the single solitary seed descendant of Abraham would be the one.

At the end of Genesis 49, we're told that from one of Abraham's children, specifically Judah, there would come a king.

[ 20 : 24 ] Because the scepter will never depart from Judah, a king. And then later we hear about David.

And David was told there will be a son, a seed from your body that will sit on your throne and will have a kingdom.

Now, I'll build up his house. Right? So they knew it would be the son of David. So what's the expectation? It would be like David. Be like David.

Kick the Philistines out. Kick the Romans out. He's going to conquer, conquer, conquer, and make peace on every side. You're going to establish justice, just like David did. So Jesus didn't do that.

So here comes the crucial question. So are you the one? Are you the one? Are you it? Are you what we're supposed to get?

[ 21 : 33 ] Are you the one that God has promised? so we all have expectations of Jesus though? You read the scriptures, the sermons, we're told, Jesus even tells us, come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, I'll give you what?

I'll give you rest for your soul. Right? If I come, I'll get it, right? Right? How about Jeremiah? How about 12 years of depression?

How does that work? Jesus can be extremely disappointing for weak humans. We get in the middle of our experience and our fiery trials and our hardships and our losses and all of these things and we wonder, is it even real?

You know? So, how do we know? So, let's look at Jesus' answers. This is Jesus, right?

So, when Jesus is asked the question, what does he do? He's just giving us, he's just giving you the bottom line answer. Yeah, I'm the one. That's not what he said.

[ 23 : 01 ] He starts doing stuff, then he says this stuff, and he got it going, okay. And then he says, blessed is the one who doesn't stumble over me. Great, thanks.

Did you answer the question? I know you answered the question, but come on. It's Jesus. He's going to force us to think.

He's going to force us to look and investigate and weigh. okay, so he's going to give two answers. One answer is to the direct question about him. He's basically going to say, weigh the evidence.

Look and listen. And then he's going to raise a different question, but it's related to about John the Baptist. Now he's going to broaden the question, because he's still answering the same question.

Are you the one? Well, what does scripture say specifically about Jesus? He answers that question. He's going to raise the secondary question about John, because John leads to Jesus.

[ 24 : 11 ] And that makes a huge difference, so he's going to open it up a little bit. So his answers are twofold. One is weigh the evidence about Jesus. Two is think deeply about God's unfolding plan.

Because he's going to say the people, the sinners, rejoice because they're baptized under John. The Pharisees rejected God's plan for themselves.

They rejected the plan. Did they understand the plan? So this is what Jesus did.

So we have to think a little bit today. Okay, so first answer. So are Jesus, are you the one? His answer, in my words, is honestly weigh the evidence of Jesus' life and words.

If you truly doubt, wonder, or disillusion with who Jesus is, do not let that be an excuse, but genuinely look at Jesus' life.

[ 25 : 20 ] read about Him, examine what the scriptures say about Him, what He does, what He says. So you know what you're really doubting if you're going to doubt.

Don't just doubt because I've heard something, or He's disappointed, you know, it's not what I am. And the reason for that is this is too big. If Jesus is really who He said He is, then everything about your life and destiny and future are in the balance on what you decide about Jesus.

He's not just some prophet. Okay, we won't do the C.S. Lewis logic there. He's either a lord or a liar or a lunatic, right? You don't get to choose which He's either who He says He is, or He's a total liar, and He's not just a prophet because He's false, or He's just like Lewis says, a roasted egg or something.

Poach dead. Poach dead. He's just the post dead. So, what does Jesus do? So, verse 21, 22, 23, here's how Jesus answers the question.

He shows them in verse 21, then He tells them in verse 22, and then He applies it in verse 23. So, evidence seen in verse 21, what does He do? In that very hour, right, in response to their question, in that hour, He just heals many people.

[ 26 : 52 ] Three categories of people, people who have diseases, people with plagues, literally stripes, afflictions, floggings, right, I mean, physical pain, and then the third category of evil spirits, He heals people of evil spirits.

And, on many who are blind, He bestowed sight. Interesting that the blind are put into a different category, because it's like healing of these three types, and then there's the blind.

It's like, well, why does He set that apart? Why didn't He just say, you know, diseases and afflictions and evil spirits and blind people? Yeah, He sets blind apart.

Why? Okay, well, let's hold that off. So, verse 22, then He does all that, then verse 22, then He answers them.

Okay, now He's going to answer. I wonder how long He's healing a bunch of people. They're going, is He going to answer? I don't think they're doing that because they're going, whoa, whoa, did you see that?

[ 27 : 54 ] And then, so then He says, verse 22, He answered them, go and tell John what you have seen. So, they just witnessed all these healing. and heard.

So, here's what they're going to hear. The blind. My text says the blind receive their sight. Actually, what Jesus said was the blind are receiving sight, the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing, and the dead are being raised up.

In other words, these things are constantly happening. these people are regularly experiencing these deliverances.

Five types of healings. Right? Blind, lame, lepers, deaf, and dead. That kind of covers it.

All the senses, doesn't it? Oh, he didn't say smell. I guess he didn't get it. And then, again, he sets one apart.

[ 29 : 15 ] So, you got all these physical healings. Blind, lame, lepers, deaf, and dead. And then he tags on, the poor have good news preached. What? Is that a healing too?

when the poor have the good news preached? Literally, the poor are gospelized. They're being gospelized. What is that?

Is he saying that all these first five that he lists, that are all physical healings, right? Restorations, blind, lame, lepers, deaf, and dead, all those are being transformed, recovered, healed, set free, are the poor, then, a category of people who are spiritually those physical issues.

In other words, the poor are people who are blind spiritually. And when the gospel is preached to them, they see. they're lame, they can't walk spiritually before God.

They don't have the ability to do what God calls them to do. They can't live holy lives, and then when the gospel is preached to them, all of a sudden, they're enabled to walk by the Spirit of God.

[ 30 : 44 ] They're cleansed of their spots. They're able to finally hear what they couldn't hear before. And like we read last week in Ephesians 2, you once were dead, God has made alive.

Right? Is that what he means by the poor? For instance, are they the people down in verse 29, you know, the people that when they hear about, when they hear they've been baptized in the baptism of John, they're the tax collectors and the sinners, and they're like, yeah.

So, Jesus shows, then he tells them, and then he applies in verse 23, kind of a negative blessing here, and blessed is the one who is not offended by me.

You know, all the other blessings we had were blessing, you know, blessed are the poor, blessed are the hungry, blessed are the meek, right, those kind of things. Here it's blessed are those who are not something. blessed are those who are not offended by me, not stumbling over me, not scandalized by me.

The actual Greek word is scandalizo. So, they're scandalized, they're offended, they're discouraged, disillusioned, blessed is one who's not stumbling over me.

[ 32 : 16 ] So, why would somebody stumble over Jesus? Well, we just saw, John the Baptist, that's the last words to John the Baptist.

Because in verse 24, next verse, the disciples of John are going to leave, go tell John what he said, and he's going to speak to the crowd. So, last words to John, John, John, John, don't stumble over me.

I know what you're hearing, I know what you expected, I know what you said, and you're the prophet, and you didn't speak anything falsely. But what you expected and what you got aren't the same.

Because maybe what you expected you put into your category, category, and your box, and it has to look like that. And when God comes, it's like he don't do boxes.

Right? He, as we see in Jesus, he does it a whole different, whole different way. Is he bringing fire?

[ 33 : 39 ] Yeah. Is he separating wheat and chaff? Yeah. Just not the way you thought it would look. Are you offended by Jesus?

Are you disillusioned by Jesus? Has Jesus disappointed you? And if you've walked this road long enough, and if you've got a little Jeremiah experience going on, yes, yes, you're going to be disappointed.

You're going to be disillusioned. That's the real stuff. John the Baptist, bless his heart, is disillusioned.

Jesus said in Nazareth, I've come to set captives free. John's sitting in prison going, when are you getting to me?

I'm kind of captive here, I'd like to be free. I'm not that kind of captive, John. Is Jesus what you expected?

[ 34 : 56 ] Or not what you expected? Not what you wanted? You want a different kind of savior? You want somebody that's going to fix evil? going to set your mind straight so you don't struggle with that addiction anymore?

You want him to just take that lust away? You want him to take something that you're struggling with away? So genuinely you could serve him better.

But for some reason he doesn't see it your way. I mean I wish he could understand what I'm saying because then he'd go look oh yeah you're right Bill.

That's what I like to think. Then my mind comes back. So when Jesus says to John's disciples in verse 22 you know go tell John what you see and he names all these things the blind and the lame and the deaf and the dead and the poor have the good news preached to them.

That last line the poor have the good news preached to them. That's from Isaiah 61 and Isaiah 61 is what Jesus recited read and then said was fulfilled.

[ 36 : 12 ] Remember when he went to the synagogue in his hometown he stood up to read and he took the scroll of Isaiah he found the place where it says the spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor there's the line that Jesus repeated to proclaim good news to the poor he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted to proclaim liberty to the captives the opening of the prison to those who are bound and again there in Isaiah 61 he's defining the poor who are these poor where they're the broken hearted they're the captives they're the ones who are bound they're the ones that Jesus in verse 21 was setting free ones with diseases the ones with afflictions and particularly those who had evil spirits every time

Jesus set free people from demons what was he doing he's releasing captives he's releasing captives he is storming the gates of Satan's kingdom see who did Jesus come to set free prisoners of Rome now Rome Rome's little Rome's Rome's low down little easy pickings now a much worse oppressor than Rome much more evil than Rome was evil Rome was oppressive for all the Pax Romana going on yeah they did okay we'll get into Rome no Satan was much worse binding a woman for 18 years taking children throwing them into the fire right that's evil

Jesus is setting those people free because that's what he came to do bring a different kingdom working on a higher level so Jesus refers to Isaiah 61 Isaiah is really important for us to understand who this Messiah is we have the earlier promises in Genesis and in 2 Samuel 7 talking about the son of David we have those important references to who the Messiah would be how God's deliverer would come but after God had to take his people out of their land after his wrath burned hot and there was no more grace that he could give them he had to punish them after that point he sent prophets with a different message

Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel clarified who this coming deliverer is and they had to clarify it because yes Israel would come back from that land to their land but it wouldn't be their land anymore it's their land it's not their land they don't get to own it I don't know if some future day is going to give it back to them I don't know but to this day he has not given them the temple mount where they can have a temple and worship God that that's huge okay so he sent these new messengers who began to preach about something new something different same Messiah but a little different so listen to Isaiah 42



Isaiah clarifies the kind of Messiah that is coming he would be a light to the Gentiles he would be a deliverer but what could we expect from them listen to Isaiah 42 1 behold my servant whom I uphold my chosen in whom my soul delights I put my spirit upon him remember I put my spirit upon him he's the one I anointed this is the one he will bring forth justice to the nations pause the Messiah is going to bring justice for who the nations who are the nations Gentiles wait a minute I thought the Messiah is bringing justice to Israel he's bringing justice to the Gentiles wait a minute Isaiah must have heard that wrong what a way to start

[ 41 : 48 ] Isaiah 42 5 thus says the God the Lord who created the heavens and stretched them out who spread out the earth and what comes from it who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it he says I am the Lord I have called you who I've called you in righteousness I will take you who I will take you by the hand and keep you I will give you who I will give you as a covenant for the people a light for the nation Gentiles to open the eyes that are blind to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon from the prison those who sit in darkness I am the Lord that is my name my glory I give to no other nor my praise to carved idols behold the former things have come to pass and new things I now declare wait a minute what the former things have come to pass and new things

I now declare new new did you say new different before they spring forth I tell you of them okay so with Isaiah remember I said we got to think today and trying to give us context in which to think what did Israel expect they expected what the Messiah was supposed to be what did the later prophets Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Malachi what did the later prophets tell them I declare something new okay I guess we missed that so God servant the one who has the spirit of God upon him he's going to bring light to the light he's going to be a light to open the eyes of Gentiles he will set free captives from the dark he will bring justice to

Gentiles not just the Jews Isaiah clarified who Messiah is he will declare new things all that to say if you doubt if you struggle if you are disillusioned with Jesus because you have read certain scriptures and you interpreted certain scriptures a certain way he has certainly promised things when Jesus said come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest he meant that right I'll give you rest for your soul does he mean!

absolutely he means that but I haven't felt that for a while so what do I do with that is that my excuse to say okay done with Jesus if you doubt because you're disappointed because you're disillusioned and we will be disillusioned do not use that as an excuse to let him go keep digging remember what Jesus said about the house on the foundation right the person who builds on the rock is the person who's done what first they dug remember Jesus said then he said and then they dug deeper so early in my

Christian life I dig and I find a foundation I find joy and I go through my Christian life for a while and it that ain't good enough because the problems got deeper so what do I do I need to dig deeper I need to dig deeper so that I get back on that bedrock again because what's the bedrock the words of Jesus and applying the words of Jesus that's the man or the builder that when the storm comes they are still standing so are you digging are you investigating are you weighing the evidence if you're discouraged with Jesus are you just sitting back and going see!

[ 46 : 12 ] I'm done or do! pick it up and look and read and listen and weigh and then begin to connect dots okay so that's one answer are you the one Jesus his first answer is honestly weigh the evidence of his life and works but Jesus isn't done typical isn't it Jesus isn't done that's not his only answer now he's going to ask a second question now he's going to ask a question verse 24 when John's messengers had gone Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John what did you go out in the wilderness to see a reed shaken by the wind what did you go out to see he asks it again he's going to ask this three times what did you go out to see a man dressed in soft clothing no verse 26 what did you go out to see a prophet yes prophet but more this man was more than a prophet he's in a different category of prophet in fact of those born women there's nobody greater than

John that's an incredible statement nobody nobody Abraham Joshua who else is great David for most of his life right Daniel Joseph who you got Jeremiah oh my goodness Elijah oh greater than all those oh yeah but remember Moses Moses did all this stuff he's greater than Moses Elijah nobody touched Elijah except Jezebel well she didn't touch him but she scared him I mean it's a pretty amazing statement nobody's nobody's nobody's greater than John okay what's great mean so so here's his second answer because then he's going to talk about verse 29 30 he's going to talk about those that accepted

God's plan by being baptized in the baptism of John and then verse 30 those who who rejected God's plan God's purpose by not having been baptized by him so when he he raises the second question about John who's John what'd you go see what kind of prophet is he well he's a great prophet okay and then he's going to talk about the kingdom of God then he's going to talk about the plan of God so follow what he's doing I think what he's saying in his second answer is this is deeply on God's unfolding plan and purpose in other words Jesus did not show up in a vacuum Jesus didn't just come out of nowhere there was a plan and it was unfolding from Genesis through Malachi it was unfolding plan and not only weigh the evidence about who

Jesus is but what has God been doing all along Revelation is progressive are you paying attention to it see I think we misunderstand a lot about scripture and about God because we haven't paid attention to the progressive unfolding nature of scripture how it all leads up to Jesus how does it all lead up to Jesus and how does it change why is it okay that even John the Baptist didn't get it and all sudden Jesus said no it's it think about this John I know you got I know you can do it you got time in prison so just be dudes and go back to your scripture you'll get it and that's what he's telling!

and that's what he's telling the crowd think see the plan what's the plan so three parts he's going to ask them to think he's going to ask them to reflect on God's purpose what was John all about verse 28 he's going to call them to recognize God's plan some recognized it some rejected it and then he's going to appeal to wisdom in the end he's going to apply it with wisdom so verse 24 to 26 three times he says what'd you go out to see in the wilderness what'd you see what'd you see what'd you see and then he gives them some options he got multiple choice here what'd you see did you see a rain shaking by the wind did you see a man in soft clothing or did you see a prophet which one do you think is it all the good no it's not all the good it's one answers only is correct did you go see a reed shaken by the wind did you go out in the wilderness because there's lots of weeds out in the wilderness things are blowing around it's it's not a place to go for did you go out to see

[ 51 : 35 ] Joe was he kind of wavering you know kind of didn't know what he was couldn't land anywhere didn't have any strong opinions just kind of wavers around kind of a shaky guy is that what you saw with John and I bet the crowd is going no no how about what was a guy in soft clothing when you went out there did you see a you know but didn't go for how he dressed he's not a guy about prosperity he's not a prosperity preacher he's not a guy that wears soft clothes and the alligator shoes and drives the limo and whatever the rolls royce whatever whatever Frederick Casey Price drives now no that's not what we saw what did you go see a prophet yes prophet and then he!

he's more than a prophet see John's different he's more than a prophet verse 27 in fact he's the only prophet that was prophesied about prophets usually are prophesying about somebody else this was actually a prophet that was prophesied of that this prophet would come and he'd be the one right he quoted from Malachi 3 behold I send my message before your face who will prepare your way he's going to prepare the way how did he do that by preaching a baptism of repentance by telling people the fire is coming the axe is at the root and you need turn or burn John was a bridge how was he more than a prophet because he was the final prophet of the old testament he's the bridge to the new in

Luke 16 16 later Jesus will say that the law and the prophets were until John the law and the prophets were until John John's the turning point since then since John then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached John's the turning point John's the bridge John's the transitional link so he's prophet yeah he's all that those prophets were but he's more he's more because he's the one that that that brought the Messiah prepared the way for the Messiah prepared the way for the big change John's important secondly verse 28 recognize he stirs us to reason by recognizing God's plan so verse 28 this is a little bit confusing this is one of those sayings of Jesus you know this kind of going what he said he says I tell you among those born of women none is greater than

John okay that I gotta think about that one none is greater than him yet yet one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he okay it's one of Jesus is okay I don't get it John's the greatest but the least is greater how does that work John's the greatest John's the greatest John's the greatest what's he comparing what's he contrasting well John's born of woman so so one who was born of a woman the one physically born of those group of people John's the greatest nobody greater than John yet who is he compared to yet the one who is least in what what the kingdom kingdom of what kingdom of David kingdom of

God spiritual kingdom born a woman born in the kingdom of God physical birth spiritual birth see the least in the kingdom of God is in a whole different dimension he's not saying the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John because they're more faithful than John not saying that he's not comparing their faithfulness not comparing oh oh the least in the kingdom oh they're more devoted than John the Baptist yeah right no they sacrifice more no no sacrifice more than John see what's the comparison it's not about devotion not about duty not about merit the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John because they belong to a different kingdom they belong they live on a higher level they've been born of the spirit not born of a woman oh they've been born of women they've been born again and they enter a new dimension they have all these blessings

[ 56 : 52 ] Jesus says that belong to those! in the modern lingo they heard that and they go righteous righteous righteous God's righteous that's righteous having been baptized with the baptism of John but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves not having been baptized by him who is it that's calling it right the people and the tax collectors who are what baptized in the baptism of John who was the baptism of

John John baptized with water what was he doing why did people go out to him why did they get baptized by him what was he calling them to do repent he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for what for forgiveness of sin Luke chapter 3 verse 3 John came preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins so all the people and the tax gatherers going I'm in and remember we read in Luke chapter 3 they came and they said John was like fire turn to burn and he's telling them to repent and to bear fruit and keeping with repentance and the tax collectors remember they came to John they said what do we do that!

tell me what to do John I'll do it! He tells them stop cheating be honest be honest in your tax tell them to stop being tactile this is just be honest that's a repentance that's fruit stop cheating and start being honest and so they hear Jesus say you know because they did that and the Pharisees did not get baptized by John why they heard John's message they heard John call for repentance Pharisees said no don't need to we're good I got no sense to be forgiven I or if they did think they needed it not doing it so then

Jesus in verse 31 32 tells a little parable did you get the parable what shall I compare them this generation what was the first generation like well Jesus says well what are they like what can I compare them to I know verse 32 they're like children that's interesting children playing in the marketplace okay common we see children playing what are children like children to play they make up games right and so he says one of the games they made up is we played the flute for you did not dance can you can picture children saying you know we we brought the ball out we wanted you to play ball but you're not playing ball taking my ball and going home that's what I'm doing we played the flute you didn't dance we played the dirge you didn't mourn what's he saying what is basically children are saying you're not playing by our rules we played the song we want you to dance to our song you're not dancing to our song you're not playing by our rules you're not playing the way we want you to play that's what the generation is like is that what today's like is that what today's like is that what they're saying to

God God we played the flute for you and you didn't dance we told you God what you should be and you're not being that and God sits in heaven and what laughs yeah I follow your rules that's that's how we created this whole thing and then Jesus explains in verse 43 how are they like the children well John the Baptist comes he's eating no bread and drinking no wine and you say he has a demon right because he's not playing by your rules the son of man came eating!

[ 61 : 59 ] and drinking and you say look at him a glutton and a drunkard a friend of tax collectors and sinners he didn't play by our rules well John's one way and Jesus is the other way Jesus is the partier and John's the funeral guy and they're just both too extreme they're too radical none of them is good enough you got to play by our rules this is our box and this is the box you need to play in so Jesus here's my box here's my parameter for which I will accept you you need to do this and this and this and then I'm on board with you that's what this generation is doing now they may not call him Jesus they may call him God they may call him something else this is what you need to do and then I'll bow down to you and do we do that as

Christians sometimes I did that for 12 years with depression you need to fix this God you need to fix this God you need to fix this God he didn't fix it in fact he showed me on the 12th year why why couldn't it be the fifth year he showed me the 12th year that that I was an idolater an idolater yeah you're an idolater because you want your healing more than you want me fill in the blank what do you want more than you want God you're playing the flute so Jesus appeals to wisdom he says these people reject

John the Baptist and they reject Jesus because he hadn't fit their box verse 35 yet yet wisdom is justified by her children what does that mean wisdom is justified who are the children of wisdom are the people that apply wisdom children of people who are the ones who listen to wisdom and do what's wise right and that will justify it wisdom is justified by her children who apply truth wisdom so how do you apply wisdom to all that Jesus has said how do you apply wisdom in times when we doubt Jesus when we are disillusioned with Jesus when we're disappointed with Jesus how do we apply wisdom then because I don't want to how do I apply wisdom then well let's go back to wisdom book proverbs chapter 3 verse 5 what's it say trust in the

Lord with all your heart oh don't point no not that part lean not on your own understanding I just want to trust God the way I want to trust God I don't want to do this no lean not on your so part of trusting should look throw the box away trust the Lord with all your heart lean not on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him in most of your ways all your ways acknowledge him and he will what he will make your path straight he will direct your path he will show you the way to go right blessed is the man on the road right and then he goes on then Proverbs goes on do not be wise in your own eyes oh there it is again don't be wise in your own eyes but fear the

Lord turn away from evil and it will be riches! Beyond measure it will be oh I forgot it will be healing to your body and refreshment to your bones oh that sounds really good healing and refreshment when when I'm not wise in my own eyes when I don't trust myself but I trust his word how do I fight doubt and wavering faith when I can't actually see Jesus when I can't touch him when he's not answering Peter says this blessed be the

[ 67:15 ] God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that's imperishable undefiled and unfading kept in heaven for you who by God's power are being guarded through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time in this you greatly rejoice!

Even though for a little while if necessary you've been distressed by various trials so that the tested genuineness of your faith which is more precious than gold that perishes Though tested by fire that the genuineness of your faith may be proved may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ and though you have not seen him so he's talking to us now though you haven't seen him you have not laid your eyes on him though you have not seen him you love him and though you still don't see him you believe in him you trust him and rejoice with joy that's inexpressible filled with glory obtaining the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls concerning this salvation the prophets the prophets the prophets who prophesied about the grace that is to be yours the prophets searched and inquired carefully they dug deep they inquired about the person and the time the spirit of christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of christ the sufferings of the messiah they saw the sufferings of the messiah and the subsequent glories it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you in the things which now have been announced to you through those who preach the gospel to you by the holy spirit sent from heaven things things that angels long to look at angels long to look at so amazing therefore peter says prepare your minds for action be sober in spirit set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of jesus christ set your hope completely not on the now not in the box set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you the future reward how do we battle doubt set your hope on the future reward not in the present the present will disappoint us john sitting in prison though you do not see him believer believer you can trust what he has said how do i believe what i do not see well faith is a gift of god right it's to those who are in the kingdom and so when i can't see i can trust what god has said i can trust his word are you weak in faith pray like that man lord i believe help my unbelief look honestly at the evidence of christ's words and works and reflect deeply on god's unfolding plan and purpose let's pray father we we thank you for what jesus has said though we have to dig but that's

good for us lord because then when we discover when we discover when you begin to open our eyes to see the deeper truth then then we have a stronger foundation on which to face the storms and so father move us to be stirred by jesus's words move us to trust what he has said you understand and you you get that we struggle you get that we get disillusioned and disappointed and we doubt that's why you keep calling us back to trust what you have said give us that faith we pray in christ's name amen