

## Matthew 11:1-15

### *Prophecy Fulfilled – Jesus is the Messiah*

#### Introduction

Throughout chapters 11-12 we are going to see how people are responding to Jesus. This week we see how Jesus deals with those that doubt.

#### Section 1: 11:1-6 – Jesus is the One

*When Jesus had finished giving instructions to his twelve disciples, he moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns. <sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison what the Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples <sup>3</sup> and asked him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”*

*<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news, <sup>6</sup> and blessed is the one who isn’t offended by me.” (CSB)*

Jesus was on a mission to teach and preach. Jesus moved from town to town with the message of the gospel. The gospel was the primary purpose of Jesus. He was all about the gospel and the message of the gospel spreading throughout the world. We see how important this is to Jesus by looking at His final words to the disciples in Matthew 28:18-20:

*<sup>18</sup> Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (CSB)*

Go...make disciples...baptize...teach. This simple formula should be the back bone of the church’s mission to the world. We are not here to entertain, to sit, to close ourselves off from the world...we are to go with the gospel.

John has experienced Jesus and believed that Jesus is the Son of God. But John here is trying to get clarification...is Jesus the One or is someone else coming? Jesus takes a moment and reaffirms John that He is the One by telling his disciples to report to John what you hear and see: blind receive sights, lame walk, leprosy cleansed, deaf hear, dead are raised and the poor hear the good news and one is blessed if not offended by Jesus.

What we are learning through the book of Matthew is that we desperately need the gospel. The gospel is at the center of everything Jesus was doing, is doing and will forever do. Why is the gospel at the center of everything? Because we could never, NEVER, live up to the standard of the law given by God. God is holy and we are commanded to be holy and this is a massive issue for us. We will never live up to the holiness of God. But the gospel gives us hope. The gospel is so amazing that not only do we find forgiveness in Christ, we also get Christ’s righteousness put onto our account. We desperately need the gospel because without the gospel we are hopeless.

Too many people live their lives trying to be good enough for God. It’s impossible. It’s a burden that would crush any of us. But glory to God that Jesus is the One. Jesus has come to set us free from the bondage and penalty of sin. Romans 6:22-23 and Romans 8:1-4 are some of the most glorious words ever spoken to the sinner:

*<sup>22</sup> But now, since you have been set free from sin and have become enslaved to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—and the outcome is eternal life! <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (CSB)*

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus,<sup>2</sup> because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.<sup>3</sup> For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering,<sup>4</sup> in order that the law's requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (CSB)*

We have been given the gift of eternal life and have been freed from condemnation in Christ. The One has come and has graciously brought us the gospel.

### **Application**

How does the gospel impact our lives? The gospel gives us redemption, freedom and eternal life.

- Redemption is possible for everyone. No one is so sinful or so damaged that they will become unredeemable. Christ is able to redeem anyone at any time. If someone rejects the gospel...keep sharing. If someone is living an evil life...keep sharing. No one is too far gone. Redemption is possible for you and anyone.
- Freedom is a huge buzz word these days. Do I have freedom to wear or not wear a mask? Do I have freedom to go outside to the store or not? Do I have the freedom to refuse a vaccine? We have a lot of questions about what is freedom. From a biblical/Christian world view, freedom is that we are now free to be slaves of Christ. We have been set free from the bondage and penalty of sin. How do we use this freedom? By picking up our cross, losing our lives and following Jesus. We now have the freedom to say, not my will but Lord, Your will be done.
- Eternal life will be experienced by all humans of all time. The question is, what type of eternity will you experience? The greatest experience we could have in eternity has nothing to do with streets of gold, pearly gates, mansions, health, wealth, happiness and the like...the greatest experience we could have in eternity has everything to do with a relationship. A relationship with your Heavenly Father. We will behold our God and be embraced as His children. That relationship is our greatest treasure, here on earth now and for all eternity.

John seemed to have a moment of doubt. Jesus' remedy? The gospel. The gospel is where we turn when we doubt.

### **Discussion Questions**

- ❖ What is the gospel?
- ❖ Jesus was on a mission to teach and preach the gospel. Do you fully understand that you have the same mission?
- ❖ Is the gospel at the center of all you do? Why or why not?
- ❖ Who have you shared the gospel with? Who are you teaching the commands of God? What holds you back from going, sharing and teaching?
- ❖ The gospel offers redemption and righteousness freely to you. How does this give you hope and joy?
- ❖ How are you using your freedom from sin to glorify God?

### **Section 2: 11:7-15 – John is the Elijah**

*<sup>7</sup>As these men were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind?"<sup>8</sup>What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? See, those who wear soft clothes are in royal palaces.<sup>9</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.<sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written:*

***See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.***

<sup>11</sup> “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one greater than John the Baptist has appeared, but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been suffering violence, and the violent have been seizing it by force. <sup>13</sup> For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. <sup>14</sup> And if you’re willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup> Let anyone who has ears listen. (CSB)

Jesus spends some time explaining John the Baptist to the people listening. There are three characteristics of John that Jesus mentions. (1) He is strong and steady, (2) he practiced self-denial and (3) he is a prophet.

- (1) John is strong and steady. Jesus raises the question; *did you go to see a reed swaying in the wind?* Jesus is asking a rhetorical question. Obviously, everyone believed that John was not a “reed in the wind” (signifying weakness with a wavering message) but a strong believer in God and never wavered on his message.
- (2) John practiced self-denial. John was extremely popular and he could have benefited greatly from this popularity. From food, clothes, positions in society and the like. But John refused all of this. John understood that life wasn’t about gaining the pleasures of this world but proclaiming the truths of the world to come.
- (3) John is a prophet. John is the final OT prophet that would proclaim the coming Messiah. John is more than just a prophet...he is the one spoken of by Isaiah. John is the promised one that would come and open the door for the Messiah. Not only was he the one that prepared the way of the Lord, he is also the promised prophet coming in the spirit of Elijah. Malachi 3:1 and Malachi 4:5:

*“See, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me. Then the Lord you seek will suddenly come to his temple, the Messenger of the covenant you delight in—see, he is coming,” says the Lord of Armies.*

<sup>5</sup> *Look, I am going to send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.*

The people of Israel were so consumed with living in this world and making the most of this world, that they missed it. It’s as if they had stopped looking for the Messiah. If we are not careful, we can find ourselves so consumed with the things of the world that we miss God. Jesus is calling the people to wake up and LISTEN. Are you listening? Are you reading the Word of God and meditating upon it so that you may know God and recognize His work in the world today? Stop wasting your time on the frivolous things of this world and start living for God’s glory. Open the Word of God and LISTEN. God is speaking to you right now. He has graciously given you His very Word. Listen to it...meditate upon it...and then live it out.

## **Application**

God desires for us to know Him. He isn’t hiding in some distant galaxy. Through Jesus we can “listen” and know God. God through Christ has given us the Bible. The Israelites were ignoring Scripture and missed God. The same thing will happen to you and me if we neglect the Word of God. Read it. Listen to it. Live it out.

When you are battling doubt, listen to God. Read and listen to the Bible. David Platt said, “God will be true to His Word always, so to fight doubt without a foundation in the Word is futile.”

## **Discussion Questions**

- ❖ Do you value the Word of God?
- ❖ Does your lifestyle show that you value the Word of God? How or how not?
- ❖ Listening is a key component to any relationship. How much time do you spend listening to God speak through the Scriptures?
- ❖ What is your plan moving forward to spend more time in the Word of God?