

The Other “Doubter”

Intro: I have always been fascinated with the Bible character named John the Baptist. He is that larger-than-life preacher who boldly introduced the world to Jesus. In a dark hour in his life, he struggled with understanding Jesus as the Messiah. Today, we look at his life and the time when, like Thomas, he, too, was a “doubter”.

1. John at the “Mountain Top” of Confidence – Matthew 3:1-17
 - A. We first see him preaching with total assurance in the truth of his message.
 - B. He was baptizing repentant people.
 - C. He was bold enough to challenge some for even being in his audience.
 - D. He cleared up any confusion over the idea of “Just As I Am”.
 - E. He even received a double dose of reinforcement.
 1. Jesus comes to him to be baptized.
 2. Amazingly, he also hears a voice from heaven.

2. John in the “Valley of Questioning”. Matthew 4 & 11
 - A. His light did not burn brightly for very long. Matthew 4:12
 - B. Taking a stand will always have consequences.
 - C. Even Jesus might have been accused of not caring about John. Matt. 4:12-17
 - D. The real reward is not found in this life. Romans 8
 - E. At least for a moment, John wondered about the meaning of his work. 11:2-3
Consider what might have been going through his mind.
 - F. At that moment, John gets the same confidence boost that we can get: Believe what I say! 11:4-5
 - G. The fact that John questioned himself, or that others were questioning him, did not change the truthfulness of his work. 11:7-14

3. Some Lessons We Can Consider
 - A. Be careful when you’re deciding how the message is to be preached.
 - B. John’s message was not about self-improvement. It was repentance and forgiveness.
 - C. Jesus was quite aware that John did not fulfill some people’s expectation. (Himself for that matter)
 - D. Do not be discouraged when you doubt, but realize that the only meaningful comfort will be received in the words found in scripture. Remember what word was sent back to John when he sat in prison.

Conclusion: God’s disciples and spokesmen are always “real people”. Sometimes they can seem a bit odd to our way of thinking. Such was John the Baptist. But we truly connect with this guy. We all hit bottom sometimes. This life in the flesh can be overwhelming at times, but it never has to take us down completely.

