

# (Australia) Offended in Christ

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson's sermon explores the theme of being offended in Christ through the lens of John the Baptist's doubts and the call to maintain faith amidst unanswered prayers.*

**Duration:** 40:59

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:1-6, Hebrews 6:12

**Topics:** "Offended"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that God has everything under control. The congregation is encouraged to rejoice and sing in the presence of the Lord. The preacher mentions a miraculous event where a young man rises from a casket and walks to his mother, which the disciples report back to John. However, John, who had previously identified Jesus as the Lamb of God, seems to be confused and sends his disciples to Jesus. The preacher highlights John's expectation of a Messiah who would overthrow the Roman armies and establish righteousness, but Jesus does not fit this expectation.

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## Transcript

Eleventh chapter of Matthew, my message, Offended in Christ. Offended in Christ. Someone might question, Dave, don't you have any positive preaching? Well, this is positive.

Matthew, eleventh chapter, let's start at verse one, first six verses. Matthew, eleventh chapter, came to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples. He parted thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

And when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said unto him, Art thou he that should come or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which you see and hear. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And finally Jesus said, And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Heavenly Father, we ask for the word of the Lord to come forth with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. And I pray, Lord, that you keep my mind focused on what you have put in my heart. And again, give us ears to hear.

We thank you for your presence in these meetings. Lord, you have marked these meetings with your marvelous glory and presence. And Lord, I believe many have been healed and many have been touched in spirit, mind, and body.

Now, do a good work in our hearts tonight we pray in Christ's name. Amen. John the Baptist in his chapter is now in prison.

His ministry has been cut off by King Herod. The crowds are gone. Remember that the Pharisees came to hear him, judges came to hear him, the Sadducees came to hear him, soldiers came to hear him, and even the king came to hear him.

And they were challenged by this man's message. The scripture said of him, Jesus said of him, There's no greater prophet than John. And the Lord identified him as him who was to come and prepare the way before him.

Now, John's public ministry lasted not much more than a year. We know he was a student of Isaiah. The Pharisees and scribes came to him in prison and said, Who are you really, John? Are you the Christ? Are you the Messiah? And he said, No.

I am who Isaiah said I am. I am a voice. I've come to make the way straight for him who is the Messiah.

I am not the Messiah. I am who John said. We know he was a student of Isaiah.

He was a man who believed in the word, thus saith the Lord, strictly according to the scripture. And while he's in prison, John is allowed to have visitation from his disciples. His disciples, a constant stream of disciples, probably bringing these reports of what Christ is doing.

The people that are being healed, the blind eyes opened, even the dead are raised. And these disciples of John, I'm sure, are exhilarated. We know, especially from Matthew 11, 7, it appears that some of his disciples were there at Nain when Jesus stopped a funeral procession.

And a mother's son was in that casket, and Jesus raised that boy from the dead, and the Bible said they marveled. I'm sure those disciples ran to John and said, this is so unbelievable, the fear that came. We saw a young man get right up out of the casket and walk to his mother and hug her.

And what an exhilarating thing it must have been for these disciples. And they would come back to John with these reports, miracles. The poor have the gospel preached to them, but John does not share their excitement.

And it must have been baffling to two of his disciples when John said, I want you to go to this Jesus. This is the one that John had said he must decrease, that this Jesus may increase. John had looked at him on one occasion and said, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

This is the Messiah that he had studied about. And he had told the congregations that came to hear him, when he comes, he's going to have an axe in his hand, and he's going to lay the axe to the root. When this Messiah comes, he's going to burn up the chaff.

And quoting, I'm sure, from Isaiah and the other prophets, he said he's going to bring down unjust judges. He's going to bring justice. He is going to raise up an army.

And he is going to march against... I believe John shared the attitude of the Jewish mindset of the time that the Messiah, when he came, would bring down the Roman Empire, would set at least the Jew free, would set Israel free from the bondage of the armies and the rulership of Rome. He's going to come in power. He would gather an army.

He's going to overthrow and drive out the Roman armies. And he's going to deal with sin. He's going to establish and legislate righteousness.

And there's something bothering John in prison, because what he sees and hears of Christ now does not compute with what he has studied all his lifetime. He's in prison now. Here's a man who spent years out in the desert, and this past year they found a cave that they say that John made as his home near the Jordan.

They call it John's cave, and people are going now to visit the cave where John supposedly lived to spend his time. And there's something that bothers John, because this Christ, this man Jesus, he has no axe in his hand. There's no fire quenching the wicked.

He hears about Jesus at a wedding turning water into wine. There's no army. In fact, he's sending out his disciples two by two.

And Jesus is all alone right now, and he's going about doing good, healing the sick, and casting out devils and miracles. And the devil comes to John and says, you heard and preached about this man who would come and set prisoners free. He opened prison doors.

And why are you here? Why isn't he here to open your door? Why are you in prison? And why is he so passive? He's just going about doing good. There are no armies. There's no axe.

There is no fan. The judges are worse than they ever were. The Pharisees not only have turned against him, but they're trying to crucify him.

They're talking about bringing witness together. And here I am in prison, and I'm sure John hears the gossip of the men around him that he was going to be beheaded. And John sends two disciples, and these are the words that they were given.

The Bible says, first of all, the disciples showed John all of these things that Jesus did. And Jesus stops them and says, Go, ask him. Are you him that should come, or do we look for another? What is happening to John? What climatic things? What is so bothering John the Baptist here, who had spent a lifetime in solitude? Can you imagine? Jesus so loved this man.

He said there's no greater born among men or women than John. He's the voice. He's the one who's come to prepare the way for me.

You see, John's a human. I couldn't relate to this story unless he was human. John was not God in the flesh, only Christ.

He was a great man of God. And Jesus knows the pain this man's going through, because you've got a man who loved nature. You have a man who's lived in a cave in the open.

Here's a man who's meditated under the sun. Here's a man who knew how to draw honey from the nest. He knew about nature, a nature lover.

But that's where he meditated, and that's where he learned Christ, and that's where he studied Isaiah and the prophets. Now he's caged like an animal. And nothing can be more devastating to such a man, a nature man, as John the Baptist.

And Jesus knew the pain that he's going through. And Jesus didn't answer these men. He didn't answer John directly.

He just said, go back and again show John the things that you see and hear. Tell him about all of these miracles. Tell John that the poor have the gospel preached to them.

In fact, when these two disciples came to Jesus, and apparently this question was asked before witnesses, others, probably many of them John the Baptist's own disciples. And how shocked, how devastating it had to be to hear these words from John the Baptist of all men. Ask him, are you the one? What are you saying? Are you the one that Isaiah spoke of? Are you the one I've been studying about? Are you the one that I gave my life to? Are you the one I'm about to die for? Are you really him? And he's not doubting Christ as much as this word that he has interpreted.

Did I misinterpret the word? It's there. I see it, but did I misinterpret it? Should I look for another? Do I go back to Isaiah? Did I somehow miss something? John the Baptist is in doubt. Do men of God who have walked with God for years, who spent their life with God, do they have times like this of doubt? Do they have times when they question whether or not God answers prayer? Do they have this kind of depressing times? Does Christ really hear the cry of my heart? Yes.

Just ask all of these men in the scriptures. Ask Jeremiah. Ask David.

Ask Job. Ask all of these great men. Elijah.

Jeremiah. Ask these men. Men that asked to be taken from this earth because they couldn't comprehend.

They couldn't match the word of God to what they were seeing. And that's why so many people don't believe in the Lord and have lost their faith because they have not seen God answer the prayers that they believed were according to his word. A teenage daughter writes to me and says, I can't believe in God anymore.

I can't believe in prayer being answered. My father was a godly man, and I have been to church all my life, and I've heard about God answering prayer, and I've heard about laying hold of God and believing it. I prayed that God would not take my father who was dying of cancer, and I prayed.

And for three months I waited on the Lord, and I had faith, and my father died. How do I believe? I cannot believe in Christ. I can't believe because my prayers were not answered.

I received a letter from a missionary who a number of years ago had spent five years on a mission field. I believe it was in Africa. And he said, my wife and I went sent by God.

The word of the Lord came to us to go, and we had a vision of many souls coming to Christ. We went and sacrificed. We sold our house.

We sold everything to invest our life in missions and give our literal bodies to the Lord, physically, spiritually, every way. Sold everything. Had nothing left.

We said, we're going. We'll die on the mission field. And he said, when we got there, the missionaries did not accept us.

The people of that nation rejected us. My wife was rejected and near a nervous breakdown. He said, but I put on this nice front.

I put on this attitude that all was well. He said, I would go to mission conferences and I would smile and I acted like I had it all together. But I was hurting inside.

And he said, the ironic thing is that they came to me, missionaries who were suffering and going through this John the Baptist experience. Where are the answers to my prayers? Where is the God who hears from heaven? This missionary said, Brother Dave, in his letter, he said, God sent me out in the wilderness and left me like a sheet hanging in the wind to dry out. And he said, yet I put on a front and at the mission conferences, I would counsel them and say, God has everything under control.

Just hold your faith. God will answer. He said, but I was dying inside.

And he said, I couldn't handle it anymore. My wife and I left the mission field. We came home broke.

We came back to the United States totally in poverty. And I gave up my confidence in the Lord. God failed me.

This was his attitude. He got a job driving a truck. And for 17 years, he drove that truck.

I'm carrying this in his heart. The scripture that I read and believed has not been fulfilled in my life. How do I pray? How do I believe when year after year, five years of dedication and everything, and I see no answers to prayer.

17 years in bitterness. In his past year, he happened. His truck route brought him from the West into New York City.

And he attended Times Square Church. And the spirit of God came on him and renewed his spirit. And he wrote a beautiful letter.

And he said, Pastor, I want to tell you why I dried up. I want to tell you why. He said, I didn't take roots.

I didn't put down roots. I was looking at feelings. I was waiting for God to keep.

I made a bargain with God, is what he was saying, because I felt that God didn't keep his end of the bargain. And he said, I became impatient. I said, and really, he was giving God deadlines.

You can't give Christ a deadline. You can't give God deadlines. He doesn't work on our deadlines.

I believe in Holy Ghost timing. God is always on time, but it's his time. It's Holy Ghost timing.

And the hardest part of faith is the last half hour. Just before God's about to answer, we give up. And then we say, oh, God, forgive me.

If I'd only believed. And then we have to go through the process all over again. Jesus doesn't answer those two men, and he calls them aside.

He said, tell John again about the miracles of the poor. And I believe he whispers, please tell John, blessed are those who are not offended in me. Jesus is saying, John, I understand.

The same devil that's coming at you came at me. And I know that this is a trap. And this word that we're talking about, offended, right, in the original, it means to be entrapped.

He said Satan's trying to entrap you with a trick. Because, you see, what the devil's trying to do, he's not trying to get you to disbelieve me. He's trying to get you to disbelieve in who you are in me.

Did you hear me? He's saying, if you doubt, if you allow the enemy to doubt who I am, you're having to admit, the devil's going to have to make you admit, well, then I'm not who I am, I'm a false prophet. I wasted my life. I have spent all this time and all this energy, and I thought I believed God.

And what Jesus is telling John, there's a blessing, John, waiting for you, if you'll understand and let this trap be exposed before your heart and your eyes. The enemy is out to have you doubt who you are in me, to doubt that you are truly a man of God, that you've truly been called, that you're not a false prophet. And this is how the enemy comes at us today.

I have to tell you, there have been times that I have warned people about what is coming, and five years goes by, ten years go by, and I know what it is, honestly, and I've never made this confession publicly before, but there are times that I have gone to the Lord in prayer and said, Lord, am I a false prophet? People have trusted my words and they've stayed out of debt when I told them to stay out of debt and not go into debt, and now they're missing out on all of these stock market high rises and everything that's going on, and many of them could have had so many needs met. I've said, Lord, am I a false prophet? I came to a place where I was willing to tell God, Lord, I'll go on television, I'll write a book of confession, I'll do anything, but I went through what we're hearing about John the Baptist. I loved the Lord and I didn't want to dare disbelieve that God is true, that he didn't answer prayer, but I said, God, I'm out on a limb.

I'm out here and I'm not seeing anything, and I'm not talking about things that I just heard in prayer or something came to my mind. These were biblical, based on Bible. I read them from the Scripture and I began, I said, well, I have somehow misinterpreted or I put times on this, and I know what I'm talking about, this word that comes from the Holy Spirit, that comes from Jesus Christ himself.

Blessed are those who are not offended in me. Blessed are those who will not fall for this trap. And let me tell you, when you know that you have fallen for this trap, it's when you no longer pray for the impossible.

It's when you no longer ask God for that one thing that you've been praying about for so long and you've just given up on it. The prayer for an unsafe loved one, the prayer of something about your ministry, something God showed you and you have given up. You say, I'm just going to go on.

If it happens, it happens, then I'll know it's God. If not, then so we just lay back in a wavering faith. We sit back as if to say, well, I just don't want to accuse God.

We pray for our children. We pray for our grandchildren. And you see, folks, we want evidence here and there.

Lord, just give me a little bit of evidence. Give me something to encourage my faith. And there are some of you listening to me now and I speak the mind of the Lord and I know that some of you have given up.

You have lost patience with the Lord. And this was the trick of the devil for John the Baptist. If he could just say, if he could just get him to say, I have regrets.

I have unfulfilled expectations. I expected by now that God would hear me. I expected by now there would be some kind of evidence.

And all the devil had to do was have John say these four, five little words to any of his disciples. I have unfulfilled expectations. I expected more than this.

And what Jesus is saying, John, you offended about the way I am bringing about my kingdom. You offended because I, and your eyes appear to be too slow. You offended because I look so passive to you.

Offended because I'm at a wedding and turning water into wine and I'm sitting and eating and suffering and ministering to Pharisees, the very ones that you said I came to consume. This is something that we've got to understand in the Holy Spirit. You have needed patience after that you received the, how does that go? Somebody quote that to me.

You've needed patience after you've done the will of the Father that you may receive the promise. The need of patience. And what Jesus is saying to John the Baptist, just be patient, John.

Everything you saw, everything I promised you, everything you read about me, everything in the scripture, in my time, in my way will be fulfilled. We look at a world today headed toward chaos. We see the wicked trying to push God out of society.

Right now while I stand here, sandblasters have been hired all over the United States to remove from every federal court those, the Ten Commandments that were embossed and granted in the walls. Some of them have been there 100 years, 125 years or more, the Ten Commandments in granite. And they're being blasted out.

Now sandblasted or dug out and replaced because the government now of the United States has said you cannot show the Ten Commandments in a federal courthouse. In our schools in the United States you cannot take, you cannot, a teacher cannot put a Bible on her desk or his desk. You can put a Playboy magazine, a pornography magazine, you can put the Koran on that desk, but you can't lay this Bible on your desk.

And one of our teachers did and they tried to fire her. Pushed out of our classrooms. Pushed out of our society.

It's the same now in Europe. And I'll tell you that gets in my spirit, it gets in our spirit. God, why do you allow this? Where are those scriptures that you will not let your name be blasphemed? What about all these scriptures I read where you're going to judge sin? As Billy Graham said, if God doesn't judge America, he's got to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

God, it's not because there's something in us wanting to get even with sinners. It's not something of revenge. It's something, Lord, how do I trust it? It is not computing in my mind.

The Lord is saying to John, John, be patient with me. I know you love me, John, but you have need of patience. What lies the devil comes to tell us to try to get us to stop praying in faith.

Stop praying for the impossible. Stop praying for miracles. And you will find that when you testify to young people around the world, not just in the United States, but here in your country and around the world, you ask them about giving their life to God.

And the majority will say, well, it's not that I hate God. It's not that I want to be an unbeliever. But I have prayed and God has not answered my prayer.

Just about every sinner on earth will tell you that I prayed. I was in a crisis. I wrote, I published a book, Triumph Through Tragedy.

Just a couple hundred pages of stories and testimonies of those who were tested and tried. They had prayed and prayed over things and they didn't seem to get the answer. And yet they held on in God's time, in God's way.

If he didn't answer the way they asked him to answer, he did something so beyond what they were asking. He did something so supernatural in their lives that they look back and say, thank God you didn't answer the way I asked it. If God answered the way I have asked prayers over the years, I wouldn't be here tonight.

I would be one of the most miserable men on the face of the earth if God had given every desire of my heart, the way I wanted it, the timing that I wanted it, and the way I wanted it. I'm so glad God said no to me on my conditions and on my time schedule and said be patient, just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. To you that have unsaved children and grandchildren, hold on, keep praying, seeking the face of God.

God is faithful to his word, but he wants you more than anything else to hold to that position of faith. I received, I was trying to practice this and I don't even know if I told this story since I've been here. I get these senior moments that just overwhelm me.

I had to go home this afternoon and ask in the room, I asked, did I preach that same thing last night? Did I tell that story last night? I don't even remember last night. Some of the things I said, I'm being honest. You may not like my vulnerability, but man, that's what's keeping me alive nowadays.

I forgot where I was going. I'm always safe if I go back to the scripture. Hebrews 6.12, be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

It's this impatience. It's this hurried sense. What are you regretting tonight? I'm not going to preach long.

I'm going to close in just a very short time. Do you have regrets? Have you been praying about your marriage? Is there something happening in your marriage that you've been praying about and you've been praying about it for a long time? How many wives are praying that God would make your husband more like Jesus? My wife did. And I asked her recently, honey, do you see me growing? Am I more like Christ to you? And she said yes.

Sweetest thing she's ever said to me in my life. But you see, in all seriousness, these things that we pray about and see, and by the way, a lot of husbands here are praying the same thing. I'm not trying to be facetious.

I feel that God just put on my heart this simple word right now. You see, John did the right thing. He took it right to Christ.

He didn't take it anybody else. He said he came right to Jesus with this question. Are you the one? Are you everything Isaiah said of you? He's not talking about what I said of you.

He's saying what the prophets, what the word says. He's asking questions. Is your word true? Can I stake my life on this? Can I face death with this word, believing in this word that you are the living word? And that's where we have to come.

That's what the world is waiting for, that we're ready to stake our lives on this. Say live or die. I am the Lord's.

I'm going to believe God no matter how long it takes, no matter how God chooses to do it. I believe God answers prayer. I believe God.

And I believe John went to the he went to his death singing the praises of Christ. He is the son of God. Behold, the lamb of God.

And he died in faith. Glory be to Jesus. Folks, we're going to stand soon one day before the face of our Christ.

And when I stand there more and more, I think of it. I want that smile. David, you held on.

You trusted me through it all. Do you believe he answers prayer? I said, do you believe he answers prayer? Well, if we believe that, then we get back to praying about what you once prayed about so diligently now. And some of those things that you just laid aside in the back corners of your mind, bring it to the forefront right now and say, oh, God, once again, renew my faith and my confidence.

Believe more than ever that your children are coming to Christ. I can stand here and say now, as far as I know, all my children, four children in the ministry and ten grandchildren now falling passionately in love with Jesus. And God has answered prayer and that it takes daily prayer.

Now the prayer is more. Keep them. Keep them by your grace.

God's made promises to some of you. And you have laid aside those promises. And God wants you in these meetings.

If this is one of the few things that you take from these meetings, that God has brought to the surface your faith, new confidence, that promise that he made you a long time ago. And many of you have not seen it. And some of you have given up on that promise.

But I'm speaking supernaturally through God is speaking through my lips and through my heart that God has not forgotten what he told you. God has not forgotten what he promised you. And if you will hold on, if you will believe and trust him and just glorify his name and rest in him, pray in faith, but trust him.

God is going to keep his word. He kept it to where it took 17 years for this missionary. But this missionary is saying now I am a missionary at home.

If he wants to send me again, it's not where he sends me anymore. He says that I'm taking down roots. I'm believing God going back down into the roots of this word and believing it to be the gospel.

Will you stand with me, please? Musicians, will you come? I didn't know. These are, I guess, many or most are Anglicans. I didn't know I could sing like that.

I didn't know. You're a mixture. A few Anglicans, Baptists, Assemblies of God.

Well, praise the Lord. We have we have a brother that flew in for these meetings from India. We've had a few from Malaysia and from other countries.

God bless you. We're so delighted to have you. We're going to have a glorious time in the morning, two more services.

And we're not just going. It's not going to just flutter out like a candle that just wavers and sputters out. We're going to go out in glory and the glory and the presence of the Lord in a wonderful way.

I have no invitation. God's given ministry. But I have felt strongly this afternoon that what he wanted was that we would minister to him.

Thank him and ministered him praise. I believe this with all my heart, that if God has done a work, joy has to break out. That is the that is the automatic or that that is the outbreking of a work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

And in Times Square Church, I told you that we spent the first three or four years preaching the law and then bringing in the grace. But when we confronted when I say preaching the law, we had to tell all those who were musicians in the Broadway shows that were filthy. You can't come here, praise the Lord and go back and and be a part of that filthy show.

Come out from among them, be a separate and clean. And when they started separating from the world and when those transvestites that were men dressed as women started growing beards. And taking off their ladies clothes and getting married and having children and active in the church.

Joy broke out. And now for 14 years, there's been a spirit of joy, unspeakable and full of glory. And I saw some people now I told in Perth, David danced before the Lord.

Some people I used to get a little upset because I didn't like to see people waving flags and and all these things. I guess I'm getting older. I'm getting I don't care if you have a flag or a handkerchief, you want to wait.

I have to tell you this. When I was a young boy in Pentecostal movement, my father, Pentecostal preacher, Assemblies of God. We have we have Pentecostal people now, you know, Brother Sunday's church in Ukraine.

He's got 20,000 people. They come marching down with flags waving everything. When we were kids, we took we were told everybody took out their handkerchiefs.

Wave your banner back to glory. That was the song we we we waved. I'm not asking you to bring your handkerchief.

I should not have brought this one out anyhow. But there has to be joy in the Lord. Would you turn to these three people? Don't leave.

We're going to sing and we're going to rejoice. We're not when the Holy Spirit is in control. It's divine order.

I thank God for the divine order I've seen in these meetings. And he's here that we owe the Lord an offering of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. Turn around and shake hands with at least three people.

Now let's sing and let's clap our hands and rejoice in the Lord. Because he is good and because he has everything under control. Hallelujah.

Do you believe he has it under control? He has everything under control. Everything in your life, everything in the church, everything in the world is under his control. Let's tell him that.

Let's sing and rejoice in his presence.

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