

Luke 7:18-23. the Visit of John the Baptist's Disciples.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus performs miracles to convince those who are desirous to believe, but warns that many will be offended by him despite his miracles.

Scripture: Matthew 11:3, John 20:29, Romans 10:17, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Corinthians 4:4

Topics: "Doubt And Faith", "Divine Guidance"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the importance of seeking guidance and clarity when facing doubts about Jesus as the true Messiah. He emphasizes the wisdom of confiding in experienced Christians rather than keeping doubts to oneself, as it can lead to uneasiness and danger. Mortimer highlights the compassionate nature of Jesus towards those who are eager to believe and know the truth, using miracles as a means to convince inquirers. He urges believers to witness the transformative power of the Gospel in people's lives as evidence of its divine origin, despite the various temptations and stumbling blocks to faith in Jesus.

Transcript

We know that John at this time was shut up in prison. While there he was visited by his disciples. Though they had often been directed to look to Jesus as the Savior of the world, it appears they now doubted whether he was the true Messiah so long expected. They did well to come to their teacher to express their doubts. It is always well to confide such thoughts to those who are able to help us, for by hiding them in our own bosoms, we may often occasion ourselves much uneasiness, and expose ourselves to great danger. It would, indeed, be very wrong to express our doubts to ignorant, or unbelieving people, but it is wise to open our minds to experienced Christians.

The disciples of John must have heard reports of the miracles which Jesus did, but they did not believe these reports. Probably they were prejudiced against the Lord on account of his manner of life, which was very unlike that of John; for Jesus freely mixed with sinners, and ate and drank with them, while John had always led a solitary life, and had lived upon the plainest food. John took an excellent method to convince his unbelieving disciples. He sent them to Jesus.

We often find that the Lord refused to perform miracles to convince unbelievers. When the Pharisees asked him for a sign, he said they would have none but that of the prophet Jonah, (the sign of the

resurrection.) But he did not refuse to perform miracles to convince these inquirers. What was the reason of this difference? No doubt he knew that they were desirous to believe, and he always treats those with great compassion who are anxious to know the truth.

If any doubt whether the Gospel is from heaven, let them go and witness its effects. Behold John Newton, the slave-dealer, transformed into a tender-hearted man, who delights in freeing the slaves of Satan. Behold thousands of blind idolaters throwing away their idols and abandoning their vicious practices. But time would fail us even to glance at the wonders the Gospel has wrought among all nations, from the days of Paul until now.

Yet still it is necessary to hearken to our Savior's warning--"Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me." Blessed is he whoever shall believe in me in spite of all he sees in me to hinder his believing. By these words Jesus taught John's disciples, that notwithstanding his miracles, many would refuse to believe in him.

There are still many temptations not to believe in Jesus. The world does not believe in him--this is one temptation; there are so many hypocrites and inconsistent Christians--this is another temptation; the people of God are generally poor, lowly, and unlearned--this is another stumbling-block; and the doctrine of salvation by faith is unpleasant to proud and earthly hearts--this is the greatest stumbling-block of all. But those who believe, notwithstanding all these hindrances, shall receive this blessing. "Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended by me."

We have reason to hope that John's disciples did believe in Jesus, because they appear to have been men of a right spirit. When they returned, according to the Savior's command, to their imprisoned master, and related the wonders they had seen, how great must have been the joy of that faithful man! His gloomy prison must have been enlightened by the tidings of his Savior's glory. Nothing cheers the servants of God so much as to hear of the triumphs of their Lord. They rejoice when they read of the success of missionaries in far distant lands, and they look forward to the day when every knee shall bow to the eternal Son of God. Are our hearts interested in these great and glorious subjects? are they wrapped up in the insignificant occurrences of the passing hour? We all have selfish hearts by nature; but God can enlarge them by his grace, and make them delight in those events which are the joy of saints and angels.

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