

# Dealing With Doubts

by John McGregor

---

*John McGregor's sermon emphasizes the importance of turning to Jesus for strength and reassurance in times of doubt.*

**Duration:** 34:28

**Scripture:** Genesis 22:1-14, Psalm 119:105, Isaiah 40:31, Matthew 6:33, Luke 7:18-23, John 15:1-3, Acts 1:8

**Topics:** "Doubts"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the pastor discusses how Jesus gives an immediate word of encouragement to his disciples. He emphasizes the importance of speaking the words that have been heard and seen, as well as keeping our focus on Jesus in times of doubt and struggle. The pastor also highlights the various ways that discouragement can affect us and reminds us to give our situations to God. Lastly, he mentions the timing of God's word and how it can provide comfort and assurance, even in the face of difficult circumstances.

---

## Transcript

Chapter 7 and verses 18 through 23. And in our moments together this morning, we just want to think about how Jesus deals with doubt. And if you're human, you have doubts and concerns.

And doubt is one of those things that attacks our faith. And so in this passage, we see some, some wonderful encouragement for us. So look chapter 7 and verses 18 through 23.

The disciples of John, that's John the Baptist, reported all these things to him. And John calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord saying, are you the one who is to come? Or shall we look for another? When the man 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.

And he answered them, that is the messengers from John, go and tell John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up. The poor have the good news preached to them.

And blessed is the one who is not offended by me. Lord, thank you for your word. And we pray that you would indeed speak to our hearts this morning.

And just encourage us, Lord, on this November Sunday as we worship you through the word. May your Holy Spirit take that word and strengthen our lives through it in Jesus' name, amen. If you stop and think about John the Baptist, he has done what God asked him to do.

And he's in prison and he's got some questions. Do you ever run across people who have some questions? And when things don't go quite the way that we think they should go, that's a normal thing, isn't it? We have some questions. And so John the baptizer has some questions.

He's kind of looking around at his circumstances and it doesn't all add up for him. And so as he hears from his own followers, his disciples, what's been going on in the life of Jesus, he sends them to Jesus and says, you need to ask him this question for me. Now, I want you just to remember a few months back when we looked at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke, because sometimes we have the idea that it's only wimpy people who have struggles with faith.

And it's really just somebody who's a backslider who has struggles or doubts. But if you remember back a few months ago when we talked about John the Baptist and his conception and the pregnancy of Elizabeth and so on, do you remember what it said about him? It said that the baby leapt in Elizabeth's womb through the Holy Spirit when Mary with Jesus in her womb came into that house. It said this man was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth.

It said that he went and preached the word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit, didn't he? And I want you just to see the frailty of our humanity. There are times when we think that we are strong, but you know, our strength is pretty small. When you consider this man and the ministry and the power of God pulsing through his veins, and yet as his circumstances change, and as it feels as if he has been set aside for a while.

You know, we don't do waiting well. We just don't do it well. And here is a perfect picture again of that.

So John, in discouragement and in doubt, sends his questions to who? To Jesus. And you know, if you don't hear another word that I say in the next hour and a half as I preach this message, now you look really, just remember this. That's all.

Thanks, Al. I love you, brother. Ah, man.

You just think about this. In times of doubt and times of struggle, in times when it doesn't seem to add up, there is someone to go to, and his name is Jesus. And if we can just keep our focus on him, it changes everything.

What a great lesson there is here for us. And we know that discouragement comes in a variety of ways. There's all kinds of things that can discourage us.

You can lose five pounds and, you know, somebody notices and you go up like a rocket ship. Woo-hoo! And then the next comment that comes by is, are you putting on weight? Doesn't take very much sometimes to discourage us, does it? In John's circumstances, we're not lucrative. He's in jail.

But I want us this morning just to notice in these moments together how Jesus deals with this. And there's three things we want to focus in on. When the Lord starts to answer that question that is asked, are you the one, or should we be looking for another? We see very purposefully how Jesus answers it.

And we see that what he's really saying is, I am the sufficient one. You don't need to look for another. I am the sufficient one.

The first thing that we want to just zero in on is that to the question, Jesus gives an immediate reminder of his power. There's a demonstration of the power of God going on in our text as we see what is happening here. Right after that question in verse 20, it says, in that hour, he healed many people.

Now, that means that in that hour, Jesus didn't answer the question. I like this because we're accustomed when somebody asks us a question, we want an answer right away. Am I tying on straight? We like that kind of thing.

Maybe, Al says. But when they asked Jesus the question, in that hour, he was doing healing. He was healing the blinds.

And he's answering the question, not by what he's saying, first of all, but by who he is and what he is. Here we see in that verse 21, the wonderful power of God, the touch of those who were in great need brought about immediate change. The lame are healed.

I like that. Wouldn't it be nice if we never had to have surgery again? But he can use surgery too, and he does. But in this instance, it is an immediate thing.

And you know, in times of doubt and fear, it's good for us to be reminded of what he does. And I love sometimes when there's stress and pressure and you feel like you should be reacting to it, I love just to stop and say, God, I don't know. I'm just gonna give you God and allow him to work it in and through my heart and life.

The power of God is at work here to save and to cleanse and to heal and to encourage. And in our times of doubts and struggles and discouragement, isn't that the first thing that we need to be reminded of? We have a Savior who has the power to make a difference and to make changes in life, in circumstances, in health, in all of those things. In John chapter one and verse three, if you wanna keep your finger there in Luke and just slip over to the beginning of John's gospel, it makes a wonderful statement about the power of God that Jesus is displaying.

All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. Wow. He is the creator.

Nothing was made unless he made it. Now at a men's breakfast yesterday morning for Heritage Alliance, Eugene Kelly, Dr. Kelly, was doing the announcements and he said, I read lately that Stephen Hawking says, the world was created without God. And the fact is nothing was created without the Savior's involvement.

That's exactly what John 1:3 says. And despite all of our human endeavor and knowledge, we cannot go past the word of God because it is so clear. The power of a changed life.

What a statement to answer doubts and fears. Somebody once said to me, there is no hope for my life at all. I've done so many wrong things.

I know preacher that you couldn't understand this. And I remember saying, do you ever shoot at anybody? No. Do you ever become involved in violent actions against other people? Well, I punched a guy once.

Said that wasn't quite what I had in mind. I had the joy of leading that man to Jesus. Because as he began to see the power of a changed life, it makes a difference.

I've been rereading a little book called Memories of Sandfields. It's written by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones's wife, Bethan. And there's a story in there of a man who was a great young medical doctor, a surgeon of great promise, a man who was gonna go far in his field.

And God called him to go and preach instead. And at 27, 28 years of age, this young man said, I'm done with medicine. And his denomination said, you go to Aberavon, a little community in Wales, and you become the pastor of the Bethlehem Forward Movement Church.

How would you, would you like a name change like that? Glencairn Forward Movement Church. People used to just call it the Forward. And some people laughed and said, well, what kind of difference is he gonna make? Very educated man in a coal mining community.

Come on. One of the men in that community was known as Staffordshire Bill. He would drink himself to oblivion.

Staffordshire Bill was sitting in the men's social club one Sunday night, almost drunk. And he heard two guys in the next table say, I went to that forward thing last Sunday night. And you know, that little preacher over there said, there is nobody who is hopeless.

Jesus can bring hope into any life, and he can meet any need. And you know, that man, Staffordshire Bill, sat there in a bar, and those words went into his heart and into his life. And he said, could that be true? Could there be hope? Could it be even for me? And he went out of there, half drunk, across town to the Forward Hall, and got to the gates, and they were singing inside.

And he said, I can't go in, late, started. And he went home. And all week, he was in an agony as the Holy Spirit brought those words in that bar back to him.

There is no one so hopeless that Christ can't touch them. And the next Sunday night, he went again. And as he got closer, he got this uncomfortableness, and he got to the gate, and people were going in.

And he walked on by. And he spent another week in agony as a conviction of the Holy Spirit brought him back to those words. There is hope in Christ Jesus.

And on the following Sunday night, now, I attempt number three, if I have my math correct. He got to the gate, and people were going in, and he stopped, and he just stood there. And one of the church members came over in absolute shock and said to him, Bill, why don't you come in and sit beside me? He was saved that night, washed in the blood of Jesus, set free.

How surprising that the Lord would take the least. It's almost like the resurrection of Lazarus, isn't it? Oh, such an impossibility. Somebody said to him on the way out, Staffordshire Bill is born again.

Everything is new now. And he said, don't call me that. That's a bad old name for a bad old man.

Call me Bill Thomas. That's my name. Through the week, he didn't realize it, but his language was so perverse, he couldn't say a word without a swear.

And so one morning, halfway through that first week, he got up, and he's looking for his socks. And he said to his wife, where's my socks? I need them. And then he realized what he said.

He went up to his bedroom, and he laid down on the bed and said, oh God, God, would you clean it up? He never swore again from that day to the day he went home to be with Jesus. You know, there are things that we believe can't happen in our lives. Jesus gave John that demonstration of his power because we need to trust him and to know that he can do it.

He can, and he will. Pastor, hurry up or we'll miss the game. Okay.

Green is the color. Thank you, Sharon, I love you too. And we'll pray that they win, right? Second thing that Jesus does here is he gives an immediate word of encouragement.

Look at verse 22. When he begins to answer, he answered them, go and tell. Here's what to say.

You ever fuss, what am I gonna say? How am I gonna give an answer to this? Jesus says, you go and tell. This is what to say. The words that were being spoken, he talks about all the things that are happening.

He says, the things that you have seen, and we just dealt with those, and heard. His word is what is being heard. Keep your finger there in look and flip over to John chapter 15.

And I just wanna read verses one through three. And then verse seven, John chapter 15, one through three. I am the true vine and my father the vinedresser.

Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away. And every branch that bears fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

You see that in verse three? Already you are clean because of the word I have spoken to you. This word is so strong and so necessary. In verse seven, in that same passage, it says, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

His word not only cleanses and encourages, but it has a great deal to do with our prayer life. And that's why we often say, learn to pray the word of God. Because it is that word that gives us effectiveness as we're praying according to his word and his will.

Now, dear ones, this word is so vital. And I wanna say this graciously because I'm not mad at anybody except the devil. But I often wonder if many of our problems come from the fact that oh so often there isn't time in families to read the word of God together and to pray together.

Now, I had an advantage as a little child in my grandfather's farm once a week when the family came together to see the word read and prayer offered. And that was only once a week, but it made a difference. And it ought to be so and it ought to be true in our lives as well.

The all powerful one, you know, is ever with his own. And he says, take my word and ask. This word, he's telling them this is what to say.

Nothing encourages us like the word of God, does it? Just think at the right time how this word comes to us. Let's take just a few instances from scripture to encourage us this morning. Abram takes Isaac to be an offering on Mount Moriah.

And he gets to the place where he has the knife in his hand to plunge it into that son that God has given to him in his old age. And at just the right moment, there's the word. And that ram is there in the thicket.

God's timing is immaculate, isn't it? You think about Gideon in the book of Judges and he's only one of many. Threshing out a little bit of grain hidden behind a wine press in case somebody sees him. And the word comes, hail, mighty man of valor.

Me? No, it's you, Gideon, it's you. That word, it comes at just the right place and in just the right way. Isaiah has gone to King Hezekiah and said to him, put your stuff in order because you're gonna die.

See ya. One thing I discern as I read through the prophets of old, they probably did not have any courses in political correctness, anger management, or those kinds of things that we see around today. They seem to be able to just stroll in, say it, and go.

I think I might have been inclined to say, how are you feeling today? I, you know, I have something you might need to think about. You know, what if you don't get better? But no, he just said, thus saith the Lord, put your house in order, you're gonna die. But before Isaiah got out of that king's palace, God spoke to him again and said, you go back and tell Hezekiah, I have heard your prayer, and I will add to your life 15 years.

Woo-hoo! Sorry, that was Hezekiah's Irish moment. Talk about the right word at the right time, and isn't that so often our experience too? That when we really go to the word of God and ask him for something for right now, in our discouragement and so on, he will give it, he will bring it. Think about Stephen dying as the rocks come, and his bones are being broken.

But the scripture says that as he was going down, he lifted up his eyes, and who did he see? Jesus. Think about Paul in the prison cell, accused and alone, and Jesus stands by him and says, you're not finished yet. Oh, friends, I love that concept, you're not finished yet.

His word comes in just the right way at just the right time. December 7th, 1941. You history buffs will know exactly where I'm going with this, but keep it till later and you can talk to me about it.

A preacher, Scottish preacher, who had grown into the role of the pastor of the Church of the Presidents in Washington, D.C., was asked to drive out to the Naval College of Annapolis, Maryland, and deliver a message to all of the sailors who were in the college at that time. As he got closer and closer, he knew that the message he had with him is not what he was gonna preach. And that morning, that Sunday morning, Peter Marshall got up and preached on death, preached on the fact that it comes to every single one, preached on the fact that we must have a relationship with Christ Jesus.

By the time that service was ending, news was coming through of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and the United States was in the Second World War. Look at the timing of that, and the Word of God coming at just the right time. I think those young men going into battle knew, wow, I'm facing death, but there is a Savior whose name is Jesus.

Lastly and quickly, let's look at verse 23. Jesus also gives an immediate proclamation of his work. Blessed is the one who is not offended by me or in me, some versions say.

Don't be offended in the Lord and consider his work. It doesn't always happen the way we think it should, but that doesn't mean that the Lord is not at work in all of these things. Very quickly, keep your finger there

and flip back to Isaiah in chapter eight, Isaiah chapter eight, and I just want to read 11 through 15.

You know, it's hard to read small print when you have tears in your eyes, so forgive me. For the Lord spoke this to me and with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear when they fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy.

Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and many shall stumble upon it. They shall fall and be broken, and snared and taken. When you look at this, it is a prophecy about the work of Jesus, but it says so clearly what his work will be.

He did not do what people always expected him to do, but he always did what his father asked him to do. Jesus is a sanctuary, and a sanctuary is a place of peace. That's what it says.

He will be a sanctuary. Oh, that place of peace is so important in the midst of this world, isn't it? All the stuff that comes, all the pressures and stresses, all the busyness of the Christmas season. I love looking at people's faces, and by the time we get to December 24th, I see an absolutely exhausted, overwrought bunch of people.

Joy to the world. Thank God Jesus is a sanctuary. He's a place to go and rest in him, and to know the fullness of his love and grace.

It says he is to be a stone of offense to both houses of Israel, and it was so true, because he didn't do what they expected. And you know, we should never fall into the same trap. Lord, your will be done in my life.

It says that he was that stumbling block, and people are still stumbling. How could it be that Jesus could do all that is said of him? But dear ones, he can do all and far more. Indeed, he can.

No wonder this morning, am I speaking to someone, and you just need that fresh touch from him, that place of sanctuary, that place to draw aside, and know his hand upon you. That's what Isaiah says, the hand of God was upon me, and God revealed these things, these beautiful concepts of the coming Savior. You know, he's really teaching the disciples of John that we can trust in him, trust that he will do what he says he can do.

And you know, when you look in Luke chapter seven at verse 28, Jesus says this about John. 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. And here's a whole bunch of greater than John.

He's the end of the prophets, but you are the kingdom if you are in Christ Jesus. May we pray together. I wanna ask worship team, would you guys, while I pray, just slip back up? I'd like you to do that.

It is well with my soul as we close this morning. Dear Heavenly Father, when we look in your Word, we see how honest, how raw it is. We recognize if even John can have struggles with doubts, it can happen to any one of us.

But we realize too, Father, that we have a sanctuary in Jesus Christ, a place where doubts and fears need not assail us, need not overcome us, a place where we can rest in Jesus. And oh, Father, this morning,

you know the struggles that are going on in our hearts and lives. You know there's another week till the end of the month.

You know the physical needs that we have. You know the spiritual needs that we have. Would you just touch us, Father, in the power of your Spirit with the love of God this morning? And just as you did not forget John in that prison cell, but sent him these three very clear words, may they come to our hearts this morning as well.

You are the all-powerful One. I will give my situation to you. You are the living Word of God.

I will trust what you have said. You are the One who fulfilled the work and the plan of the Father that I might be saved for time and for eternity, that we as brothers and sisters in your church might walk together in unity and love and the fullness of your Holy Spirit. And Father, as we retire from the sanctuary here this morning, may we each take the sanctuary with us into this busy week.

May we know the presence of the living Lord surrounding us. For it is in Jesus' name that we ask it. Let's stand together as we sing.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21831.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-mcgregor/dealing-with-doubts/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**