

John the Baptist's Last Message to Our Lord

Luke 7:18-35

by R.A. Torrey

Jesus Christ is the Coming One, the Messiah, and the Son of God, as demonstrated by His miracles and preaching of the Gospel to the poor.

Scripture: Proverbs 13:13, Isaiah 8:14-15, Isaiah 35:5-6, Malachi 3:1, Matthew 11:11, Luke 7:18-35, John 1:29-34, John 4:34, John 5:36, John 14:11

Topics: "Faith and Doubt", "The Role of Prophets"

Description

R.A. Torrey explores John the Baptist's moment of doubt while imprisoned, questioning whether Jesus is truly the Messiah. Despite his earlier confidence, John's circumstances led him to seek reassurance from Jesus, who responded not with lengthy arguments but by pointing to His miraculous works as evidence of His divine identity. Torrey emphasizes that Jesus affirmed John's role as a prophet and the greatest among those born of women, while also highlighting the mixed reception of John's message by the people. The sermon concludes with a reflection on the unreasonableness of the generation that rejected both John and Jesus, illustrating the importance of accepting God's counsel.

Transcript

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. John the Baptist's Perplexity, vv. 18-20 Who is the central figure of this lesson? Where was he at this time? How did he get there? What news reached him? How did he come to hear it? What clear revelation had he had concerning our Lord at an earlier day? (John 1:33, 29, 34.) In what state of mind do we find him in this lesson? What led to his doubt? (Compare 1 Kings 19:3, 4.) Is it credible that John who had formerly had such clear faith should afterward get into doubt? What will help us to understand it?

What proof have we here of the genuineness of the Gospel story? Had he lost all faith in Jesus? How much faith had he yet? How did he show his wisdom? What is the wisest thing any man can do with his doubts? Did he remain long a doubter? Why not? Just what was the question he asked of our Lord? What is the meaning of "He that cometh" (R. V.)? What seemingly good reason had he for questioning whether our Lord was "the Coming One"? How did his messengers prove their fitness for their mission? 2.

Our Lord's Answer to John the Baptist, vv. 21-23 What was occurring at the very moment John's messengers arrived? Of what was this proof? (Is. 35:5, 6; 42:6, 7; 61:1-3.) Did our Lord enter into any long discussion to prove that He was "the Coming One"? What did He do? What is the best proof that He is indeed "the Coming One" and the Son of God? Are there any other passages where He appeals to His works as proving His claims? (John 5:36; 14:11; 15:24.) What were the specific things to which He appealed in this instance?

To what things that He is doing can we appeal today to prove that He is the Son of God? Does the mere fact of healings prove that one is the Messiah, the Angel of the Covenant, or even a man sent from God? To what crowning miracle did Jesus call attention? What dead one had been recently raised (vv. 11-16)? To what did our Lord appeal besides His miracles? Do pretenders usually preach the Gospel to the poor? What do they do to the poor? What final word of warning did our Lord add?

To what O. T. prophecy did this refer? (Is. 8:14, 15.) What occasioned the word of warning just at this time? 3. Our Lord's Testimony to John the Baptist, vv. 24-30 What do we find our Lord doing in the verses that follow? When did He bear His testimony to John? Why did He not bear His testimony while the messengers were still there? How did John win the honor of having our Lord bear testimony to him? How can we win this honor? (Matt. 10:32, 33; 25:20.) What might the people be tempted to think concerning John?

Why might they think that he was a "reed shaken with the wind"? Who defended him against this suspicion? What in the second place did our Lord say John was not? Where did He say that those who were gorgeously arrayed and lived delicately were to be found? Where was John to be found? What did He say John was? (1:76; 20:6.) What is a prophet? Did John attain to anything higher than that? To what? Where is this prophecy found? (Mal. 3:1.) What two "messengers" are there mentioned?

What was this messenger to do? How high a position among men did John occupy? How did his position compare with that of our Lord Himself? (Matt. 3:11; v. 28.) Who else occupies a higher position than John? Why? (Luke 10:23, 24; Eph. 3:8, 9; Col. 1:25-27; 1 Peter 1:10-12.) Ought we to aspire to be John the Baptists? Why not? What can any one of us be? In what two ways had John's message been received? Who had accepted it? Who had rejected it? By accepting the message what did our Lord say the people had done?

How justify God? How did they show they accepted John's message? What does our Lord say the Pharisees and lawyers rejected? (R. V.) How did they show it? Is it a serious thing to reject God's counsel? (Prov. 13:13.) 4. The Unreasonableness of Men, vv. 31-35 To what did our Lord liken the men of that generation? From what was the illustration taken? What insight does this give us into Christ's character? Into His method of teaching? What is the point of the comparison? How did He describe the life of John?

What kind of a life was it? To what was the authority attributed? What was the true explanation of it? If a man should live such a life today what would be said of him? What is Christ's description of His own life? Does this imply that He drank wine? What did they say of His life? Was He a glutton? Was He a wine-bibber? Was He a friend of publicans and sinners? What did His enemies mean by calling Him such? Was He a friend of publicans and sinners in the sense they meant? If one is a friend of publicans and sinners in the sense in which our Lord was, will he be contemptuously so called nowadays?

What was His real meat? (John 4:34.) While the most of the people received the message of John and our Lord in this contemptuous way, were there any who received it differently? What does He call those who received their message? (John 8:47.) What is the crowning proof that one is one of wisdom's children? By receiving wisdom's message what had they done? CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. Jesus Christ

(1). What He is:

Divine, 27 (Mal. 3:1); the Lord, 19; the Coming One, 20; the healer of all men's diseases and troubles, 21; the Messiah, 21, 22 (Is. 35:5, 6; 42:6, 7; 61:1-3); the friend of publicans and sinners, 34.

(2). What He did:

Cured diseases, cured scourges, delivered men from evil spirits, bestowed eyesight on the blind, 21; made the lame to walk, cleansed lepers, made the deaf to hear, raised the dead, preached the Gospel to the poor, 22.

Blessed is he whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in Him!

2. John the Baptist

An imperfect man, a temporary doubter, an honest doubter, went to the right One with his doubts, 19; a prophet, much more than a prophet, 26; God's messenger, the preparer of the way of the Messiah, 27 (Mal. 3:1); none greater than he among men, not so great as the one who is but little in the kingdom of God, 28.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ra-torrey/john-the-baptists-last-message-to-our-lord-luke-718-35/>

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