

(Men God Made) John

by Willie Mullan

The sermon explores the life and significance of John the Baptist as the greatest prophet and the importance of his parents' faith and prayers.

Duration: 59:24

Scripture: Matthew 3:1-11

Topics: "John"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the life and ministry of John the Baptist. He emphasizes that John was a great preacher because he constantly preached about Christ and was not afraid to confront sin. The preacher reads from Matthew 11, where John, who is in prison, sends his disciples to ask Jesus if he is the Messiah. The preacher argues that John's question was not a sign of faltering faith, but rather a confirmation of his belief in Jesus as the Messiah. He concludes by highlighting John's character as a unique and rugged individual who humbly served God.

Transcript

786, please. Here's a lovely little hymn. 786.

Lord, speak to me that I may speak in living echoes of thy tongue. As thou hast sought, so let me seek thy erring children, lost and lone. O lead me, Lord, that I may lead the wandering and the wavering feet.

O feed me, Lord, that I may feed the hungry ones with manna sweet. O strengthen me that while I stand firm on the rock and strong in me, I may stretch out a loving hand to wrestlers with the troubled feet. 786.

Now I've changed the tune, because I like this tune for this hymn. You'll easily get it. Thank you.

Lord, speak to me that I may speak in living echoes of thy tongue. As thou hast sought, so let me seek thy erring children, lost and lone. O lead me, Lord, that I may lead the wandering and the wavering feet.

O feed me, Lord, that I may feed the hungry ones with manna sweet. O strengthen me that while I stand firm on the rock and strong in me, I may stretch out a loving hand to wrestlers with the troubled feet. And it doesn't matter how many men we look at and how many characters we come to, I don't think we're going to better the one we have tonight.

I have learned so much in life through watching John the Baptist in the School of God, that you'll find out as we go on that I have really learned. Yes, John the Baptist, we're up this evening, and as we look at this unique, rugged character, and mind you he was both unique and rugged, and we look at him humbly taking his place in the School of God, first of all I want you to listen carefully to the testimonial that the Lord Jesus gave him. And we're commencing at Matthew's Gospel, chapter 11 please.

Gospel by Matthew, and we're at chapter 11. I want to read from the first of the chapter, but the first five verses don't concern us now, but they will concern us at the end of the message, because John is in prison. But this is the proper lead in.

And it came to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding his disciples, he departed faith to teach and to preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said unto him, Jesus answered and said unto them, And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, and that's very interesting because this is our Lord Jesus preaching about John. And I assure you I can fill in the next two hours about John preaching about Jesus, and all things that John said about Jesus were true.

So this book says. But this is not John preaching about Jesus. This is Jesus preaching about John.

That's very interesting, isn't it? And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? Because clouds went into the wilderness to see this mighty creature. Jesus is asking the question, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? Let me tell you there was no wind from any staff or cloud or council in Palestine that shook John for a moment. Not a bit of it.

Oh no, he never shook for a second. Some of the critics think he did. I'm afraid not.

Then he asks another question, But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in keen service. You see John wasn't a film star of any kind. Wasn't any sort of dressing up dramatic show there, you know.

Oh no, he wasn't clothed in soft raiment. He had the leather and giddle about him. And he was clothed with camel's hair.

You see, God never meant his man to be an affection. God meant his message to be an affection. Not the man.

And so the Lord Jesus is asking questions. Verse 9, But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, I'm more than a prophet. Now it would be wonderful if the Lord Jesus were to say you're a prophet.

It must be so much more wonderful when he says yea, more than a prophet. He's writing John's testimony, isn't he? No. Yes, he's very wonderful.

For this is he of whom it is written, and it is our Lord Jesus Christ who is saying this, Behold I sent my messenger before thy face. You see that's in the book of Malachi. And when old Malachi said these words, behold I sent my messenger before thy face, he was talking about John the Baptist.

Now yes, it was written in God's word about him coming. And that the Lord would send him before his face. He was to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

Yes, he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, and a forerunner. Very interesting. Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.

And it was our Lord who said that. You can argue with it if you like. I have had people cheeky enough to argue with it.

I would think the Lord would know. If our Lord Jesus said, verily, among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, then that's just how it goes up to that moment in this whole world of ours. There was not a greater.

Yes, that's why I put this heading here this evening, John the Baptist, none greater than he. That's what Jesus said. And you can go back through the Old Testament and look them all over.

And Abraham was there, and Moses was there, and David was there, and Daniel was there, and I can quote them for you. None greater. Let's really believe this.

This is our real character we have in hand tonight. You see, if I came to the platform and said, none greater than John the Baptist, well, you would question me, that's all. Oh, but it is Jesus Christ that's talking.

And he must know it. There's none greater. And yet, you see, he went on to say this, Verily I say unto you among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding he that is raised in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Now what are we talking about now? Let's read on just and we'll get it quite easily. And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent taken by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

Oh, let's get hold of that. Want you to see this, you see. You see, John was the last of the Old Testament prophets, until John.

That's when it stopped. They stopped there. You can tell me the first one, can't you? Oh, Enoch was the first one.

The seventh from Adam. He prophesied, didn't he? He was the first prophet. John the Baptist was the last one, although he doesn't appear in the Old Testament, only in the writing of Malachi and Isaiah.

But he himself was in the New Testament, but he's the last of the Old Testament prophets. For the law and the prophets continued up to there. No further.

I wonder if the seventh-day Adventist tried to carry it on a little bit. Because the book we're reading now says on till John. I don't want to get lost in that stupid argument.

You see, our Lord Jesus has appeared now. And he has come to do something else. Because the law was given by Moses.

That's great and true saying by Jesus Christ. And he stood up and he said, I will build my church. That's different, you know.

Because when you go back to the law and the prophets, you have the nation of Israel all in there. But when you come to our Lord Jesus building the church, you know, he loved the church and gave himself on it. Let me turn you to the letter to the Ephesians for a moment or two.

Just look at it now, because I think for the younger ones it's good to look at it. And we're at Ephesians. And we're looking at chapter 5. See verse 25.

For saying husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself on it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So what men to love their wives as their own bodies, he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

You see, what I'm trying to establish is that the church is the bride of Christ. And as he builds the church, and we are saved and put into it, we are part of the bride. Ah, well, John was never part of the bride.

When John's talking in John's gospel chapter three, John says, I'm the friend of the bridegroom. That's what he said. Have a look at John's gospel chapter three now, just for a moment.

And we cannot waste too much time on this. John's gospel chapter three, John's answering the crowd here in verse 27. And John answered and said, A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.

Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom. But the friend of the bridegroom, he's quite different from the bride, isn't he? Which standeth and heareth him rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.

This my joy. Therefore, it was only the friend of the bridegroom. So you see, while he was the greatest born of woman up to that particular point where the law stops, any one of us said beyond that point, we're a part of the bride, we're greater than he.

Because he's just a friend of the bridegroom. A real part of the bride. Oh, the Lord was teaching them things.

Let's go on over here. I want you, let's go back to Matthew 11. But to establish this a little bit.

You see, he's talking to this crowd here. And he's showing the courage of John. He wasn't easily shaken.

And he wasn't a dramatist of any kind. Didn't wear soft clothing. And he was the messenger that was mentioned in the Old Testament.

And in his own dispensation, among them that are born of woman, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. Now watch verse 14. But if ye will receive it, this is Elias.

Which was for to come. Because the Old Testament talks about Elijah coming again. Ah, well this was the fulfillment of that.

What a testimonial this is. This is our Lord's testimonial to John. No wonder he said none better than him.

So let's start by looking at his parents this evening. Because I think it's good to look at the parents all the time. Have a look at Luke's Gospel, chapter 1 please.

Luke's Gospel. And we're at the first chapter. See verse 5. There was in the days of Herod the king of Judea.

A certain priest named Zechariah. Please let's get the word priest in there. He was a Levite.

He belonged to the tribe of Levi. Certain priest named Zechariah. Of the course of Ali.

They served in the temple in different courses. And this was his course. And his wife was of the goddess of heaven.

So she was a Levite too. And her name was Elizabeth. Now, this is John the Baptist's father and mother.

Zechariah and Elizabeth. They belonged to the tribe of Levi. The priestly tribe.

Now watch what is said about them here. And they were both righteous before God. Want you to get that? That's what I was at a minute ago.

You see they had faith in the sacrifice. They were depending on the blood. And because of their faith in the sacrifice.

Then they were justified before God. That's what the word righteous there means. They were both righteous.

That's their standing before God. That is not the state. Nevertheless their state was pretty good.

Look at their state. Here's their standing. They were both righteous before God.

They were both saved. Justified, yes? Now here's their standing. Here's their standing.

Walking in all the commandments. And ordinances of the Lord shameless. That's how they carried on.

You see they were not only righteous. They were godly. They were two godly souls.

They had learned to live righteously and soberly and godly in this present world. Watch this word again. Walking in all the commandments.

And ordinances of the Lord. Let's get the word blameless. Because you see some people go too far with this.

And they say you know John the Baptist father and mother were sinlessly perfect. Oh not on your life they weren't. Oh not on your life.

The word blameless is not the word faultless you know. It's quite a different word. You see when I went to school and I didn't go many days.

I'm afraid the record is poor. But I was there some days. And they used to give me a copy book.

Do you remember the copy book? And they had a writing across the top of the copy book. It was done in copper plate. And the letters were so beautifully formed.

And they widened out just where they should widen out. And they were thin where they were thin. And they expected me to copy this.

Now there were times when I didn't give two hoots what way I wrote it. And I got the hiding for it. He's rather pleased about it you know.

But I can assure you you know once or twice. I set out to do the things properly. To copy it out perfectly as I could.

Now I want to tell you that no matter how I tried. It was never, it was never faultless. But when the teacher came around and leaned over me you know.

I was blameless. I'd done my best. Now that's the difference between faultless and blameless.

You see the copy book's heavy. It's faultless. But when I did my best.

It was never faultless. Oh but I'm blameless I did my level best. Now they were walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Couldn't blame them. Now when you think about all the commandments. Way back there in the old economy where John lived.

There were a lot of commandments in there. Not only the ten commandments. But they were ceremonial commandments.

Social commandments. National commandments and all that. But in all the commandments.

You know I get really annoyed with some of these modernists. And the Methodist man Bletherhead. And it should be Leatherhead and Bletherhead.

I don't know what you would call them. I mean to really rub this home. Because the Methodist conference had the audacity to make them.

The Prime Minister of the whole conference. I'll tell you what he wrote. He wrote that Zacarias.

The father of John the Baptist. That the Virgin Mary. And shut her in the temple and kept her there until he made her pregnant.

He'll go to hell. And he'll be in hell for all eternity. Let me tell you that.

That is blasphemy of the deepest lie. With a statement like that before him. How could John the Baptist's father commit adultery with the Virgin Mary.

And be blameless. We put up with these boys far too much. My God you should never put your nose through a Methodist door again.

I mean to defend the truth you know. And I'm not backward at doing it. And I never will be.

And nobody will muzzle me. That is ridiculous. And blasphemous.

And horrible. How are they going to unite with the Roman Catholics. They're trying to mooch in now.

I'll tell you no wonder the Pope threw them out. My dear friends it won't do. Virgin Mary was a pure woman.

And what is more John the Baptist's father and mother. Walking in all the commandments. And ordinances of the Lord blameless.

And we won't put up with that sort of nonsense. If the Methodists put up with it we won't put up with it. Stand for that.

And that's written in the book. You don't need to worry about it. He claimed it and he has to stand over it.

And I think he's an apostate. And I think he hasn't a chance of getting saved. Well this is the father and mother of John the Baptist.

You can see their walk can't you. And you'll find that they prayed. It says in verse 7. And they had no child.

Because that Elizabeth was barren. And they both were now well stricken in years. You see they got married these two young Levites.

Of this priestly tribe. And they walked before God as they should have walked. But they had no child.

And there are godly people who have no children. Of course in those early years you know. Like many another godly couple they had prayed to God that God would give them a family.

If they had every right to do that. But you know those years had ruled out. And they are now well stricken in years.

No chance now. Not going to have a family. So it seems.

Verse 8 says. It came to pass that when he executed the priest's office before God in the order of its course. According to the custom of the priest's office.

His lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. That's what he did as a priest. And the whole multitude of the people were praying with us at the time of incense.

And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zechariah saw him he was troubled and fear fell upon him. And the angel said unto him.

Fear not Zechariah. For thy prayer is heard. That's a mighty living word.

And thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son. And thou shalt call his name John. And that must be hidden.

For he's an old man and he's well stricken in years. He stopped praying a long time back you know. Let me talk to you about your prayers for a minute.

You see I can see these two young ones getting married. And I can see them praying fervently. And then it came to pass that they got older and older and they're well stricken in years.

And they've got a marriage that's not going to happen. Oh but the prayer that they prayed you see. God put it on the shelf in the glory.

Until he wanted to bring it down. Thy prayer is heard. That wasn't yesterday's prayer.

That might have been twenty years ago. You prayed for a wee fella twenty years ago. Your prayer is heard.

Can I turn it round another way on you? See some of you mothers here. You sit still now. You've got a big fella now.

You remember when you prayed for him and he was born. And bless him. He grew up and he's a man now.

And he's drunk every night. Oh well your prayer's in the air now you must. God came into the bedroom tonight and said.

Those prayers that were going to save him this night. That would be a big night. My old mother prayed on her knees.

When she didn't have a chance with me. And she was in heaven. When I think an angel put his hand on her shoulder and said.

Your wee fella got saved tonight. That was a big night. It's very wonderful you know.

Abraham prayed for a lot. The cities were reclaimed. He says look if there's so many like you she'll spread out the city.

He wasn't worried about the city. There was a lot he was worried about. And he went on down and on down.

And said so many and so many. And he just didn't like to go any further. And then he left it off.

And when God reamed fire. On Sodom. God had said.

This book said. God remembered Abraham and delivered him off. Abraham's prayer for old Michelle.

See Cornelius in this book. Oh it's a mighty story. I'll tell you that this fella Cornelius.

Of the Italian barn. I'll tell you what it says here. Don't you turn to it.

A centurion of the Italian barn. A devout man. One which feared God.

Saw his house and prayed all days. Saw in a vision. An angel coming and saying.

Thy prayers and thine alms. Thou come up for a memorial before God. See you did a lot of praying didn't you.

Ah well we'll take it and burn up the shelves today. You're coming up for a memorial. Ah for goodness sake.

Would you pray on? Would you? Don't stop you now. We pray for big men in the police force. Every Sunday.

But I pray every day for. God will say. When he takes the notion.

He left this. This prayer of awe. Down from the chapel.

He said your prayers. And some of you fathers and mothers. Prayed for them before I ever knew them.

They are. See this fellow's father and mother. That's what I'm supposed to be actually.

Yes. You know. He saw a godly father and a godly mother at home didn't he.

He learned all about the priesthood. He learned all about the law. Learned all about the Lord.

Saw the example of a godly life. Knew what it was to have an old man and woman that could pray. Oh friend.

These young ones coming up and bringing kids up. May they realize that you can pray. There's one thing I remember about my mother more than anything else in the world.

And that was she could pray. Thank God she could pray. Keep on praying.

But we'll have to go on. I'm going to be beat with this. I just knew that before I began.

Anyhow let's do another bit of it. Let's have a look at his power. Look at his penance.

Well it looks gospel there aren't we. I want to do this bit because this is very important. We're a way down where the angel talks to Zacharias.

Verse 13. And the angel said unto him, fear not Zacharias for thy prayer is heard. And thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son.

Thou shalt call his name John. For the angel knew the sex of the child before the child was even conceived. Even with men too.

One of the few in scripture who got his name before he was conceived. Thou shalt have joy in gladness and many shall rejoice at his birth. Talking about the boy that's coming, John the Baptist.

I want you to get this bit. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord. And shall bring neither wine nor strong drink.

He says you're going to be a godly man or woman, I think you've got to pack this up. And he tried to argue with me about this you know. Some of the old brethren tried to argue with me about this but you can go and do it in the quiet.

Oh how dare you. The book that you're reading as it says passage. Is he that set a strong drink before his neighbor.

That wouldn't be enough for some of them of course. I'll tell you all the godly folk in this book. They neither touched strong drink nor wine from their baby.

They were Nazarenes, Nazarites. What's this? Verse 15. He shall be great in the sight of the Lord and shall bring neither wine nor strong drink.

I want you to get this bit. He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost. Even from his mother's womb.

There isn't anybody in the book like that you know. There isn't anybody in the world like that either. I want you to get the hold of that because that's very, very, very important for us tonight.

You see we get a lot of tripe talk about second blessings. And it's the greatest tripe in this world. Old schoolmaster said to me once.

From the royal school sir. Well he said to me once. He said you know right well that being filled with the Spirit is the second blessing.

I said I know nothing of the kind. He said that's what the second blessing is, getting filled with the Spirit. So I just opened a book in this particular bit here and I said now.

John the Baptist was filled. With the Holy Ghost. Even from his mother's womb.

So he was filled before he left the womb. So he had got the second blessing before he had got the first birth. And the old fellow looks at me.

Just as stupid as a school teacher can look. Sometimes when a man goes out of his depth. He may be a mighty school teacher and for that I will bow.

But if he doesn't know this book he shouldn't be talking tripe. Let's get a hold of this. See this little baby in the womb.

Well I'll tell you before he was born at all. He was filled with the Holy Ghost. Even from his mother's womb.

Right through his babyhood days in the continent. Not to scare you. Neelam Patsker said to me once.

He says you know we don't believe the things that you teach sometimes. But we are all beat when it comes to John the Baptist. He said that's right.

You can see that you talk sometimes can't you. He says well we don't know the answer to that. He says you are quite sure he was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb aren't you.

Yes. And it's certainly not rolling on the floor that got him that is it. Not clapping your hands in the middle of the night.

Oh no. They don't know the answer. Well I shall have to tell them the answer.

I shall tell you so that you know. You see the dispensation that John the Baptist came in. That ended with John.

The law and the prophets were up to John. Just up to John. That was the end of it you know.

And in that dispensation. Which is the dispensation of law. The Holy Ghost could come upon whom he would.

When he would. How he would. For what he would.

You will find that the Holy Ghost came upon did he and used to fight the battle. You will find that the Holy Ghost came upon Beverly Hill. Just to build the tabernacle.

And now I can go through the whole of the Old Testament. And make you see the Holy Ghost coming upon whom he would. For what he would.

When he would. As he would. That's why Jesus said in the sixty first Psalm.

Seek not my Holy Spirit from me. Because he knew that he could come and he could go. Oh but it's quite different today you see.

We're in a different dispensation. We're in the body of Christ. We belong to the bride.

You see the moment that you believe dear. At that moment you're sealed. With the Holy Spirit of promise.

Until the day of redemption. It says he has come. To abide with you.

Forever. That's a different thing. You know we can grieve him.

He's in there alright. We can grieve him. We can quench him.

We can resist him. But we cannot lose him. He's ever there.

And you see in that dispensation he elected. To come upon this baby. Before he was born.

And to be with him through it all the days. A very wonderful issue you know. If that was his power even though I needn't go into that now for right now.

I don't want to spend much time about. Him being the last of the Old Testament prophets. I don't want to go on with the preaching now because.

You know how John preached don't you? Come I'll say that in two minutes and save time. You see let's go to Matthew's gospel chapter 3. Verse 1. In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea. He's preaching you men.

You see that's all he ever was. He was just a preacher. This book says John did no medical.

Well I wish I could talk to all these charismatic fellows who were bull-minded at times. Because all I want to do is spectacular things. Let me tell you John was the greatest that was done.

He had told Jesus saying. He did no medical. And he certainly never talked in tongues.

Not for a second. He just preached. But he was the greatest prophet.

He just preached. And everything he said about Christ. All that John said about this man is true.

So it says in this book. But watch from preaching. It says in verse 7 of chapter 3. When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his bunches.

And he said unto them. O generation of buggers. Boy there was some preaching for you.

See he took no nonsense with these people. Crowds came. Sadducees lined up you know with their long robes on.

They usually put their hands up their robes and stood with their heads down. All it's all pretense. It's a bit pharisaical nonsense.

And of course the Pharisees were just the same. Long faces. Shut their eyes and made long prayers to the team of men.

So it says. And our Lord Jesus said. Woe unto you scribes.

Pharisees. Sepulchres. Whited sepulchres.

Full of dead men's bones and rottenness. How can you escape the damnation of hell? He was as hard on them as John was. See we have a lot of old religionists in this country of ours.

And they sing psalms and hymns and they inquire and they do everything. They have no time for Christ. They are a bunch of hypocrites.

Generation of rapists. Is the word. Perhaps I get into trouble if I do it.

Don't I? But I do it. And I shall continue to do it. That's what you call preaching.

He's exposing the hearts. They didn't get off with this. I'll tell you what's more is here.

See that verse 7. Generation of rapists who have warned you to flee from the last to come. Mind you he publicly professed his belief in the last to come. So he believed there was life.

He believed that God would open the heavens and come down on wrath upon nations. And the nations that had forgotten God would be turned into hell. Oh you're hardly allowed to preach like that now.

I'll tell you this. When he stood before the king King Herod you know. Ran about with a woman he wasn't allowed to go with.

His brother Philip's wife. And John leaned over the pulpit and said. It was not wrathful for me to have her.

That's good old preaching. I'll tell you he was a great preacher. You see.

He exposed the hearts of the faithful. You're just vipers. You're only pretending.

There's wrath coming. God will deal with you in wrath. And then he touched that particular sin.

And of course that got him into prison. In fact he lost his head because of that. The woman got his head taken off.

But you know he stood on the heights all the time. And cried from his heart. Behold.

The Lamb of God. Preached Christ all the time. No wonder he was a great preacher.

Let us stand up and speak out. Don't be afraid to put your finger on sin. And talk to the people about Christ.

Then you'll be a good preacher. Now he's seen in prison because this is an argument. And it has gone on down through the years.

When it's Matthew's Gospel chapter 11. That first bit now. Matthew chapter 11.

Now I'll read it over to you. And then I'll point out the problems. It came to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding his disciples.

He departed thence to teach and preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prison. He was arrested at this time.

He was in the prison. In fact it was coming near his end. Now 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 he do hear and see.

The blind receive the sight. The lame walk. The lepers attend.

The dead fear the dead. And raised up the poor and the gospel preached unto them. Now some people say your faith faltered here.

And I assure you all the critics of the Bible say this. They say you know. He began to think in prison.

Is this the Messiah at all? Is he questioning now. What he once truly believed. Now if you think your faith faltered.

And if you think that he is questioning now what he truly believed. You have to first of all. Believe.

That the Holy Ghost was withdrawn from him. You have to accept that. And as God is like my God.

When the servant of God has served him loyally. And because of his devotedness he couldn't prison. It just wouldn't be like my God to withdraw the Holy Ghost from him.

So I'm not accepting that. I've seen the critics on this before you know. You know.

John. In John Gospel Chapter 1. Let's have a look at that just for a moment. I think you need to look at this.

Because this is very important. John's Gospel. And we're at the first chapter.

Verse 29. Next day John feared Jesus coming unto him and said. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

This is he of whom I said. After me cometh the man which is prepared before me for he was before me. And I knew not.

But he. But that he should be made manifest to Israel. Therefore am I come baptizing with water.

John their record saying. I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and it abode upon him. I knew him not.

But he that sent me to baptize with water. The same said unto me. Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him.

The same as he which baptized with the Holy Ghost. And I saw. And their record.

That this is the Son of God. Now you'll have to. Accept.

If you think his faith faltered. If you think he's questioning if this was the Messiah. You'll have to accept not only that the Holy Ghost was withdrawn.

But that he's taking all this back. And remember he did see. The Spirit descending like a dove.

And their record that this was the Son of God. And I can't see him taking that back. I'm very sorry.

You'll have to accept. That when he stood up and said. Behold the Lamb of God.

That he'd made the biggest blunder of his life. And I'm not prepared to accept that. I don't think that's in the story at all.

Let's go back to the story now to see. Because I think sometimes we can't read. And we're at Matthew's Gospel chapter 11.

Verse 2. Now when John had heard in prison. The works of Christ. I want you to get back a little bit into your line.

He's sitting in a prison cell. And he's hearing all about the works of Christ. He sent two of his disciples and said unto him.

Two of his disciples and said unto him. Art thou he that should come or do we look for another? And Jesus answered and said unto them. Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see.

Now I don't think the problem was with John the Baptist at all. I think the problem was with John the Baptist's followers. I think his followers you know.

They were still John's followers. They were not Christ's followers. And they come into the prison daily don't they? And they say you know.

You know if this was the Messiah. He would come and visit you in prison. He would come and set the prisoner free.

He would do so many things. You know there are folks like this. Let me tell you folks that our Lord Jesus never visited John in the prison.

And that our Lord Jesus didn't do a thousand things that some people would like done. Of course I'm plagued with a lot of stupid followers too. They wanted their way.

Not God's way. Let me tell you that Jesus never visited that prison. Let me tell you he never set John free.

Let me tell you there's a thousand things he never did for John. Of course John's immediate friends, his followers. They're beginning to question.

And the only way to set them right is. Send them to the Messiah. John's still sending them to Jesus.

And John is sending them with this sort of question. Aren't thou he that should come? Or do we look for another? Oh John knew the answer to that quite well. Oh but he wants them to learn the answer at Christ's feet.

That's what he wants. See Christ looking at these boys? It was what he said to them. The blind receive the sight.

The lame walk. The lepers are cleansed. The deaf hear.

The dead are raised. The poor of the gospel preach. These are the credentials that's in the Old Testament.

That tell us the character and power and ability of the Messiah. They were learning that. I've never thought that John failed.

You cannot see John failing. Nor you would have to withdraw the Holy Ghost. He would have to forget the scene of the Holy Ghost falling on the Messiah.

And him bearing record. He would have to take back. Behold the Lamb of God.

It is not so. My dear friends. How the critics take the thing up.

What a character we have in our hands. I believe he died in the prison. In a blaze of glory.

He graduated in the dark. God bless you. Next week we're starting with Peter.

And I don't think that I would dare to attempt to do Peter for you all in one week. Or maybe two weeks. Maybe it will take three weeks.

Because there's a lot of things to learn there. Let's just bow together. Not sing anymore.

Lord how we thank thee for thy servants. How we thank thee for this mighty man of God. This man that was faithful unto death.

This man that was the last of the Old Testament prophets. This man who was a Nazarite. This man who was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb.

Oh God help us who are thy servants to be taken up with Christ the way he was. That we might proclaim him at every corner. Yea Lord that we might make every move that man might learn more about Jesus.

Lord talk us in thy fear this evening. And take us home in safety. And give us thy blessing for thy namesake.

Amen.

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