

Matthew 11:2-15 ESV

Look at the Evidence:

Jesus Is the Messiah!

Services: Sunday, 12/11 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 12/12 at 7 PM

Church Year: Third Sunday in Advent – 2016

During Advent: Wednesday Services at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: We like to act on things we are sure of; for example, if we *knew* a particular stock was sure to go way up, *we would buy it!* **Today**, let us be *sure* that Jesus is the Promised Messiah, *the One sent by God to defeat sin, death, and the devil*; then, as we would *surely buy the stock*, so, by God's grace, *let us surely follow Jesus Christ!*

1. **The Question:** ² Now when John [having] heard in [the] prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word ~~by~~ [through] [two of (Luke 7:19)] his disciples ³ and said to him [*Jesus*], “**Are you the one who is to come [lit., the coming one], or shall we look for another?**” // We could get the impression that **John** was unsure, but he may have asked because **his disciples** were unsure. Think about John's earlier testimony about Jesus; he called Him “**the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world**”; he also saw the Holy “**Spirit come down and remain**” on Him (John 1:29, 33 NIV). **If we are sure? Good! If not, let us listen carefully to Jesus' answer!**
2. **The Answer:** ⁴ And Jesus answered them, “**Go and tell John what you hear and see:** // Thus the things
 - ◆ you have heard that I have done and even the things
 - ◆ you have witnessed with your own eyes!

- a. **⁵ the blind receive their sight...** // As recorded in Matthew 12, “a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to [Jesus], and he healed him” (v. 22 ESV).
- b. **the lame walk,** // As recorded in Matthew 15, they brought to Jesus “the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others... and he healed them” (v. 30 ESV).
- c. **lepers are cleansed** // As recorded in Luke 17:11-19, there were ten lepers cleansed by Jesus!
- d. **the deaf hear,** // As recorded in Mark 7, after Jesus healed a deaf man, the crowd responded, “He even makes the deaf hear” (v. 37 ESV).
- e. **the dead are raised up,** // As recorded in Matthew 9, Jesus took the dead girl “by the hand, and the girl arose” (v. 25 ESV).
- f. **the poor have good news preached to them.** // Jesus told us about such people in Matthew 5, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (v. 3 ESV).

⁶ And blessed is the one who is not ~~offended~~ [made to stumble] by me.” // We believe in the very Son of God, **yet we struggle in many ways!** No matter the *degree* or *longevity* of our struggles, let us be certain that we **are saved through Jesus and will be blessed forever!**

3. **The Prophet John:** **⁷ As they [John’s two disciples] went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John:** // May these words challenge *our view of John!*
 - a. **“What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?”** // Jesus

asked the same question three times; *he wants us to really think about John!* Was he a reed shaken by the wind? *NO WAY!* He did **not** yield to popular opinion, but he stood on God's Word; *that's why people went out to see him!*

- b. ⁸ **“What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.”** // If John wanted to please the king, he could have had soft clothing; instead, *he rebuked the king for living in opposition to God's Word!*
- c. ⁹ **“What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.”** ¹⁰ **This is he [John] of whom it ~~is~~ [has been] written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’”** // This is remarkable: About 700 years earlier, God spoke *through the prophet Isaiah* to foretell about *the coming of the prophet John!* **Therefore**, John's arrival and his preparing of the way for the Messiah were HUGE! *So many went out to him; why?* **Lenski** gave this answer: **“to hear him and his proclamation with their own ears, to let him move them to repentance and to the baptism for the remission of sins”** (433).
- d. ¹¹ **“Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”** // The greatest—*as he prepared the way for the Christ*, but also much less—*than those believers who know of Jesus' suffering, dying, and rising!*

- e. ¹² “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of ~~heaven~~ [the heavens] has ~~suffered violence, and the violent take it by force~~ [been advancing with triumphant force and intense men grasp it quickly (NET)].” ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.” // Consider this explanation from God’s Word to the Nations: Those words refer “to men who act decisively on something they know or believe to be true. The next verse [v. 13] indicates the reason these men acted decisively, namely, because the Law and the prophets were beginning to convince them that the Messianic Age had come.”¹ Even for us, God has shown us that **Jesus is the Christ**, so, without hesitation, *the Spirit has enabled us to grasp the Christ and His precious gifts!*

Conclusion: ¹⁵ “~~He who has ears to hear~~ [The one having ears], let him hear.” // God has blessed each of us with *physical hearing*, but those words are talking about *spiritual hearing* – thus a God-given ♣understanding of, ♣faith in, and ♣application of *what Jesus said*. John was great, *but Jesus is far greater*; so **may Jesus be the One in whom we trust and the center of our Christmas celebration!**

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, You are the Promised One, *so keep us and many others very close to You!* **Amen!**

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