

Third Sunday in Advent – 2024

Saturday, 12/14 at 4:00 & Sunday, 12/15 at 9:00

Who Is Jesus? Are You Sure?

Text: Luke 7:18-28 NAS 1995

Advent Wednesdays: Service 11, Meal 12 | Meal 6, Service 7

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Think about people you know who do not follow Jesus... For one reason or another, they are ▶uninterested or ▶hesitant. Why? ***Because they are unsure about who Jesus is – Creator, Lamb of God, the ONLY WAY to Heaven!*** Some who followed John the Baptizer were in that same category – ***UNSURE ABOUT WHO JESUS IS!*** Let's see ▶how John helped his followers and ▶how we could help people who are not currently following Jesus.

1. **Background Information about John the Baptizer and His Followers:**

- a. Isaiah wrote about John, 700 years before his birth.
- b. God sent John to prepare the way for Jesus.
- c. John lived, preached, and baptized in the wilderness, and multitudes came to him.
- d. John had followers who learned from him and tried to follow what he taught.
- e. When John identified Jesus as “**the Lamb of God**” ([John 1:36](#)), two of John's disciples, *Andrew (Peter's brother) and John*, began to follow Jesus ([John 1:37](#)).

f. In the following months, John was ✦arrested and ✦put in prison. However, John still had loyal followers who were unwilling to begin to follow Jesus. Why? ***They were UNSURE ABOUT WHO JESUS IS!***

2. **Leading Up to Today's Gospel Reading:** As recorded earlier in [Luke chapter 7](#):

- a. Jesus Healed a Centurion's Servant – simply by saying “the word” (7).
- b. Jesus Raised the Only Son of a Widow. The Bible says that Jesus “came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise!’ The dead man sat up and began to speak... This report concerning Him went out all over Judea and in all the surrounding district” (14-15, 17).

3. **John's Plan to Point His Followers to Jesus:** ¹⁸ **The disciples of John reported to him about all these things [healing the sick and raising the dead].** ¹⁹ **Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are You the Expected One [the Messiah], or do we look for someone else?”** // The answer was not for John's benefit. John had already proclaimed Jesus to be “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). John also said about Jesus, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (Jn. 3:30). Therefore, the answer was intended to help his remaining followers ✦become **SURE ABOUT WHO JESUS IS** and ✦follow Jesus.

4. **John's Followers Question Jesus:** ²⁰ **When the men came to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, ‘Are You the Expected One, or do we look for**

someone else?” // Jesus could have said, “Yes,” but we know that **ACTIONS speak much louder than words!**

5. **Jesus’ POWERFUL Answer:** ²¹ **At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind. // WOW, WOW, WOW!!! ♥ Many immediate cures! ♥ Many evil spirits cast out! ♥ Many blind people were given sight!**

6. **Give this Report to John:** ²² **And He answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM. ²³ Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.”**
 - a. The OT Promise: *When the Messiah comes:* **Isaiah 35:5-6** “Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.”
 - b. The Eyewitness Fulfillment: John’s followers **saw with their own eyes** and **heard with their own ears!**
 - c. John and Jesus were Different: Jesus made this comparison: “...John the Baptist has come eating **no bread and drinking no wine**, and you say, ‘He has a demon!’ The Son of Man has come **eating and drinking**, and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’” (Luke 7:33-34). The differences may have caused some to take offense at Jesus, **but BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO DO NOT!**

7. **Let Me Tell You about John:** ²⁴ When the messengers of John had left, [Jesus] began to speak to the crowds about John, “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind [a man wavering on the truth]? ²⁵ But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing [John was the opposite]? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are *found* in royal palaces! ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is the one about whom it is written, ‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.’ ²⁸ I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

- a. What Described John the Baptizer? Firm on God’s word – *no compromise!*
- b. How Great was John the Baptizer? He ✦ was written about by Isaiah, ✦ was the last OT prophet, ✦ prepared the way for Jesus, and ✦ baptized Jesus!
- c. How Much Greater is Kingdom Membership? Those beyond John ✦ know of Jesus’ death, resurrection, and ascension, and ✦ have the Holy Spirit living in them!

Conclusion: How can we encourage others to begin following Jesus? ***Let us help them be sure ABOUT WHO JESUS IS!***

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, TYSM for Your word, which ✦ is true and ✦ makes it crystal clear who Jesus is. Please draw many to ❤️ BE SURE ABOUT JESUS and ❤️ trust Him as Savior and Lord!

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube and Podcast:** “Benefit from the Bible”
Facebook: “Bethlehem Parma” / **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com; 440-292-5915
7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134 / 440-845-2230