

John's question: *Are you the one, or should we expect someone else?*

How does Jesus respond to such a question loaded with disappointment?

he criticizes neither John nor the ones who brought the message

he doesn't correct their misunderstandings of the Messiah

he simply points them to the evidence and lets them evaluate it

The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor

the evidence says that God's kingdom has invaded our world

How Do We Deal with Doubters Today?

1. We don't criticize them; there is no value in doing so
we probably have little idea of what they are living with

if they have honest doubts, we should affirm their honesty
2. We can correct misunderstandings, but it probably won't be enough
some people have legitimate questions that need answers

many people use questions as a smokescreen to avoid committing

hearts need changing more than heads need educating
3. We can point them to the evidence today; God is still working!
 - a baby who weighed 17 oz at birth is graduating this year
 - a man consumed by pornography has a vibrant marriage & faith
 - a woman overwhelmed w guilt & shame over an abortion has been set free and is a loving mother & grandmother
 - addicts have been set free & are helping others to freedom as well
 - sinners have been forgiven & now know the joy of obedience
 - inoperable cancers are gone, leaving even doctors amazed
 - those who knew there was no hope in ever believing in God now are used by God to lead others to faith in him
 - the angry are gentle; the hateful love; the broken are whole; the mute speak; the spiritually blind see; the infertile give birth; the abused are cherished; the rejected are wanted; those that dead live

Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me

A DAY WITH JESUS: DEALING WITH A DOUBTER

INTRODUCTION

Today we begin a new series: *A Day In the Life of Jesus*
may be surprised how often what he encountered we encounter
can learn much from how he handled, or helped others handle, life

Today Jesus deals with a key person who is doubting his ministry
this is a special kind of doubt rising from deep discouragement

God is not doing what God is supposed to do

have you ever felt that? known anyone who did?

LUKE 7:18-23

John the Baptist is sitting locked up in prison
had challenged King Herod about marrying his sister-in-law

John's once-promising career is now apparently over

that would be okay if Jesus was doing what John expected

What did John expect of Jesus the Messiah?
he would speedily destroy all the powers of darkness

he would bring judgment on all the wickedness and unrighteousness

he would usher in God's kingdom of light, love, peace & prosperity

he would draw all Jews into a wonderful unity under God

yet as far as John could tell, none of this was happening

How often have you felt discouraged because God has let you down?
if Jesus could heal all those people, why not your loved one?
if he could raise the dead, why are you stuck in a dead end marriage?
if he opened the grave, why can't he open work doors for you?
if he calmed the raging seas, why can't he calm your inner anxieties?
if he had power over all creation, why is the world such a mess now?