

Lord I Believe, But Help My Unbelief!

November 29, 2020

Luke 7:18-35

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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



In this week's lesson, **Luke 7:18-35**, we learn that John the Baptist questioned if Jesus was the "Expected One." For whatever reason, John was distressed and had thoughts and feelings of doubt. The Scriptures record numerous examples of the faithful who struggled with doubt: **Abraham** (Genesis 17:17-18); **Sarah** (Genesis 18:12-15); **Moses** (Exodus 3:11); **Jeremiah** (Jeremiah 1:6); **Jesus' disciples** (Matthew 14:16-17); **Martha** (John 11:39); **Ananias** (Acts 9:13-14), to name a few.

No matter how long we have walked with the Lord, our faith will be tested with thoughts and feelings of doubt. It may be due to life's unfairness. Or possibly prayers that seem to go unanswered. Or maybe mistreatment from those closest to us. So, unless we view ourselves as Super-Christians, we will experience periods of doubt.

"Does this mean we should be afraid of asking questions? Shove them out of our minds at their first appearance? No, because sometimes it's in the depths of doubt that we discover God's richest treasures." *

So how should we respond when confronted with thoughts of DOUBT? Not by asking God, **why** things are the way they are? But by asking God, **what** He would have us learn from the way things are?

"Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." (Isaiah 1:18) ESV

* (Swindoll, C.R. (1995). *The Continuation of Something Great: A Study Guide of Luke 7:1-10:37* (Pg. 10). Word Publishing)

Luke 7:18-35 (ESV)

John's request to Jesus (Vs 18-20)

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'"

Jesus' reply to John (Vs 21-23)

²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

Jesus' respect for John (Vs 24-30)

²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written, "*Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.*"

²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." ²⁹(When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, ³⁰but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

Jesus' rebuke of certain Jews (Vs 31-35)

³¹"To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, "*We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.*"

³³For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

What questions do you have about these passages?

① EXAMINE His Word (Observation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is repeated to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are like or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

② **EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)** (For Community Group discussion)

What does God MEAN?

8. Where was John the Baptist when he sent two of his disciples to Jesus? Why was he there? (See *Matthew 4:12; 11:2-3; 14:3-4*)

9. In *Verse 19*, why was John wanting to ask Jesus: “*Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?*”

10. In *Verse 21*, what was Jesus doing when John’s disciples arrived?

11. In *Verses 21 and 22*, list all the things that Jesus had been doing for those in need.

12. In *Verse 23*, why might someone be offended in Jesus?

13. In *Verses 24-26*, why do you think Jesus asked the crowd questions before giving them information about John?

14. In *Verse 27*, Jesus quotes *Malachi 3:1*. Who are the two messengers spoken of in this verse?

15. In *Verse 29*, why did “*all the people and the tax collectors, declare God just*”?
16. In *Verse 30*, why did “*the Pharisees and the lawyers reject the purpose of God*”?
17. In *Verses 31 and 32*, Jesus presented a parable, suggesting certain people of that generation were like fickle children. Who was He speaking of?
18. In *Verses 33-35*, Jesus draws a comparison between Himself and John the Baptist. When He says “*wisdom is justified by all her children*”, what did he mean?

③ **EMBRACE His Word (Application)**

Why does this MATTER to me?

19. What are some reasons why Christians may have thoughts and feelings of doubt?
20. Have you ever experienced times when you doubted the Lord? What was that like?
21. When doubt creeps into your mind, how do you counter those thoughts and feelings?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO.

