

Matthew 11:1-6 – Blessed are the Unoffended

Huntingdon Missionary Baptist Church – Sunday, May 12, 2024 PM

Context: Jesus just finished instructing the 12 Apostles on ministry (now and later) and sent them on a short mission.

Matt 11:1-6 – John questions Jesus

Matt 11:1-6 *And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.*

The ministry of the Apostles didn't relieve Jesus of ministry, it expanded His ministry.

John's Ministry Timeline:

- Ministry in the wilderness of Judea, along the Jordan.
Matt 3:1–2 *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea....*
- Baptizes and Announces Jesus
John 1:29, 36 – *“Behold the Lamb of God!”... Matt 3:13-17* – Baptized Jesus, heard the Father, saw the Spirit
- Ministry Transition
John 3:25-30 *Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. 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, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.*
- **Matt 14:1-12** provides the context of John's imprisonment.

John's Expectations

Matt 11:2-3 *Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, ³And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*

- He is facing a severe trial (end of ministry) and likely execution. **Sometimes this affects our judgment.**
 - Jesus' ministry and possibly the present state of his ministry are not in line with his expectations.
Expectation – a strong belief that something will happen (or should happen) in the future... not only what but how.
We all have expectations, but they vary by degrees (what COULD happen vs. what SHOULD happen).
 - Our limitations and experiences DEFINE our expectations, and our sin nature CORRUPTS our expectations
 - God is limitless in understanding and ability and perfect in all His ways.
Because of these differences, it is inevitable that God will defy your expectations.
 - **John's question:** Are you “he that should come”?
Matt 3:11 *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I...*
 - John (like all of us) was a creature of his environment and the expectations of his culture.
God had historically redeemed Israel from bondage through a physical deliverance.
 - John had preached with a sense of urgency and immediacy (**Matt 3:2-3, 10-12**)
Matt 3:2-3 *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’ ” (ESV)
Matt 3:10-12 *Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” (ESV)*
He may have taken the “at hand” nature of the kingdom and applied it to other aspects of his prophecy as well.
 - Baptism of H.S. he preached of wouldn't take place for 3.5 years
 - Separation of wheat from chaff (perhaps partially in 70 AD, but a part of that separation remains).
- John was not the first prophet to struggle with his prophecies or the fruit of his ministry (1 Peter 1:10-12).**

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Back to the Bible

Matt 11:4-5 *Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: ⁵The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

- **Isaiah 35:4-6** *Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: Behold, your God will come with vengeance, Even God with a recompence; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, And the tongue of the dumb sing: For in the wilderness shall waters break out, And streams in the desert.*
- **2 Kings 5:7** *And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.*
- **Isaiah 26:19** *Thy dead men shall live, Together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: For thy dew is as the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead.*
- **Isaiah 61:1** *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; Because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to them that are bound; **This is the passage Jesus quoted at the inauguration of His ministry.**
Every one of these “deeds” were miraculous, inscribed biblical revelation, and Messianic.*

Jesus’ response to John took him back to the Bible. Consider our conviction.

Scripture is, “the supreme and sufficient standard by which all human practices, creeds and opinions should be tried.”

– From HMBC’s Draft Declaration of Faith. **We believe this because Jesus believed it.**

God had not broken one of His promises or violated any of the plans He laid out.

A New Beatitude

Matt 11:6 *And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

This is a new beatitude.

- Blessed – Happy, a mark of well-being
- offended – to stumble, be trapped, cause to sin

In what way was John being tempted to stumble by Christ’s ministry?

Man is offended by Christ when our expectations of Him are exalted above His revealed identity and sovereignty.

All of John’s experiences did not render him invulnerable to an assault upon his faith. This is the power of this passage.

For John, the Scriptures and this gentle rebuke would be enough.

Two Questions to consider:

1. Do you know God is on the scene?
2. Is He being faithful to His Word?

Let that be enough, do not be offended. Let God be God.