

Sermon: Third Sunday after Advent 12/15/2025

Sermon Matthew 11:2-10

May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?

Today is the third Sunday in Advent.

We see that the Gospel today isn't about Mary and Joseph, nor the times before the birth of Jesus. It isn't about angels, or wise men. It isn't about Christmas. The Gospel tells us of an occurrence from the middle of Jesus' ministry, and the discussion He has with two of John the Baptist's disciples.

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John was doing what God had called him to do. He was the prophetic voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Repent The Day of Wrath is coming."

By the hundreds, by the thousands, they came to the river, asking for forgiveness. But not the Pharisees nor Sadducees, and not Herod Antipas, who had traveled to Rome taking his sister-in-law with him. They had an affair. Upon returning to Jerusalem he had his brother Philip killed; then he married his sister-in-law. John the Baptist condemned the king's behavior and was sent to prison to await his death. He was silenced.

As John the Baptist sat in prison, staring at the end of his life, he started to wonder if Jesus was everything that he expected Jesus should be. John knew of the ministry of Jesus. He had heard the stories. The miracles. The preaching. The crowds.

He knew in the Book of Isaiah, In Vs 61, it states: "The anointed one would proclaim the day of vengeance of our God." So, why is Jesus preaching love and mercy and forgiveness? John sent his disciples to ask: "Are you the one? Or should we expect someone else?"

Why do we have to hear of John's doubt and questioning? Why do we hear a question about why people would journey for a day or more, to go see what some might think was an eccentric, radical, seemingly anti-establishment prophet out in the middle of nowhere?

Why did people go to hear John? Was it because he gave a very encouraging message that built up their self-esteem, and enabled them to conquer the battles of life? Did he make them feel good, and give them a purpose to life? No. He called them on their sins, pointing out their hatred, and adultery and coveting, and stealing from each other. He pointed out their rebellion from God, and called them vipers and snakes. John's question still matters today. "Was Jesus whom He claimed to be?" Is He the "way, the truth, and the life". In John 14 when Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Was that the truth? Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?

What this question means for you is simply: either Jesus Christ is your Savior or He isn't. Either you can really celebrate His birth at Christmas, or you can forget the festival altogether. There are no other choices.

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That is why Jesus pointed out what the disciples should tell John – what they saw and heard was that Jesus' radical actions resulted in people being made whole - and indeed, more than that – made holy.

For John, this answer would fulfill his hopes – and prove his role had meaning. For us, it means so much more. For we look at all of this in retrospect – we hear the story, and try to understand how it impacts our lives.

After three years of ministry, - miracles proclaiming God's offer of forgiveness, - there were still those in the land of Israel who rejected Jesus. They had Him arrested. They pushed a crown of thorns down on His head. They had Him whipped and then they crucified Him on a Roman cross. He had died They had buried Him.

This happened because the same religious authorities who had heard John preaching at the river could not and would not believe that God the Creator would show up on earth in human flesh and bone. When Jesus preached in His own home town of Nazareth, they tried to throw Him off a cliff. Why? Because they heard Him claim equality with Yahweh, the God of Israel, who dwelt in the Temple in Jerusalem.

Many people in this world still have not accepted Jesus. Atheists still put up their billboards. They think you have been hoodwinked by some "once upon a time story". They believe that everything is relative, sin is subjective. Yes, Satan has planted the seed of doubt in the world. We must not let it grow. We see court cases against the cross, and against the manger displays. They go to extremes to deny Jesus. (*X-Mas - - Chi Rho Iota Sigma Tau - - Christ*) We know the debate rages whether or not creationism can be placed in school text books alongside the theory of evolution or "Intelligent Design". Some scientists tell us that new discoveries are not created by "intelligent design" but grew out of matter that already had existed, but they do not and can not explain where the matter, which had already existed, came from.

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There are man-made religions: Islam was formed by a blend of the Old Testament and the New Testament and other traditions. It believes in a virgin birth, but states that God would never come to this earth, nor have a son. Jesus was just a great prophet. Others prefer to blend a little Hindu "reincarnation" with Buddhism. And then, there is Mormonism which tells you that you can be the "god of your own planet in the world to come." Some choose to deny the very existence of a Creator God, calling religion a delusion.

If you are being logical. You can look up into the sky and see the stars and the planets, you can look all over, and see the beauty of God's creation all around you... the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, the plants and the animals. And you know that there must be something behind all of that, that it is not all just an accident. You know that there is a real heaven with a real God and real angels and you believe that, because you live by faith, and not by sight. Faith in God the Father Faith in The Holy Spirit Faith in Jesus.

Three days after Jesus was buried with a Roman guard at His tomb He rose from death He came back to life. He left the tomb. Time and time again people saw Him They ate with Him They believed Jesus had risen from death. And, yes, John had no need to seek another. He had found what he was looking for Yes, Jesus was the Messiah. And we know deep down inside, that we have found what John was looking for

Yes, Jesus Christ is the Lord,

Yes, He is the Son of God

Yes He is here with us now in our hearts.

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Amen!!!

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After three years of ministry, - miracles proclaiming God's offer of forgiveness, - there were still those in the land of Israel who rejected Jesus. They had Him arrested. They pushed a crown of thorns down on His head. They had Him whipped and then they crucified Him on a Roman cross. He had died They had buried Him.

This happened because the same religious authorities who had heard John preaching at the river could not and would not believe that God the Creator would show up on earth in human flesh and bone. When Jesus preached in His own home town of Nazareth, they tried to throw Him off a cliff. Why? Because they heard Him claim equality with Yahweh, the God of Israel, who dwelt in the Temple in Jerusalem.

Many people in this world still have not accepted Jesus. Atheists still put up their billboards. They think you have been hoodwinked by some "once upon a time story". They believe that everything is relative, sin is subjective. Yes, Satan has planted the seed of doubt in the world. We must not let it grow. We see court cases against the cross, and against the manger displays. They go to extremes to deny Jesus. (*X-Mas - - Chi Rho Iota Sigma Tau - - Christ*) We know the debate rages whether or not creationism can be placed in school text books alongside the theory of evolution or "Intelligent Design". Some scientists tell us that new discoveries are not created by "intelligent design" but grew out of matter that already had existed, but they do not and can not explain where the matter, which had already existed, came from.

They feel they have all of the answers, but perhaps they just don't know all of the questions.

There are man-made religions: Islam was formed by a blend of the Old Testament and the New Testament and other traditions. It believes in a virgin birth, but states that God would never come to this earth, nor have a son. Jesus was just a great prophet. Others prefer to blend a little Hindu "reincarnation" with Buddhism. And then, there is Mormonism which tells you that you can be the "god of your own planet in the world to come." Some choose to deny the very existence of a Creator God, calling religion a delusion.

If you are being logical. You can look up into the sky and see the stars and the planets, you can look all over, and see the beauty of God's creation all around you... the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, the plants and the animals. And you know that there must be something behind all of that, that it is not all just an accident. You know that there is a real heaven with a real God and real angels and you believe that, because you live by faith, and not by sight. Faith in God the Father Faith in The Holy Spirit Faith in Jesus.

Three days after Jesus was buried with a Roman guard at His tomb He rose from death He came back to life. He left the tomb. Time and time again people saw Him They ate with Him They believed Jesus had risen from death. And, yes, John had no need to seek another. He had found what he was looking for Yes, Jesus was the Messiah. And we know deep down inside, that we have found what John was looking for

Yes, Jesus Christ is the Lord,

Yes, He is the Son of God

Yes He is here with us now in our hearts.

Praise be to God.

Amen!!!