

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lancaster, PA
Permit No. 1324

News of His

Vol. 47: No. 9 May 7, 2008

Abbeyville Road Christian Church
551 Abbeyville Road Lancaster, PA 17603-6399
717-393-8821 FAX 717-393-8660
email: office@abbeyvilleroad.com
web site: www.abbeyvilleroad.com



Guided by His Word,
Serving in His Love

The Remedy for Doubt

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

¹⁴But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" - Matthew 3:13, 14

¹⁵John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'" - John 1:15

²⁶"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." - John 1:26, 27

³²Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." - John 1:32-34

³⁵The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. ³⁶When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" - John 1:35

* * * * *

These are all observations that John the Baptist made in his ministry of preparing the way for Jesus, the long-awaited *Messiah* of the Jewish nation. Of all the characters in the New Testament, John is the one we might deem the least likely to be crippled by doubt. His birth bordered on the miraculous, given the age of his parents. His special calling as the forerunner of the *Messiah* was a matter of Old Testament prophecy and angelic announcement.

John lived out that calling, and he did so with amazing boldness. Before Jesus ever took on the religious elites, John indicted the Sadducees and Pharisees as a "*brood of vipers*" calling them to reflect their spiritual authenticity with a repentance that bears fruit. Towns as well as the religious establishment had their own law enforcement officials (soldiers) who were notorious for extorting money from people with threats. John essentially told one such group of soldiers to knock it off, commanding

them, "*Be content with your pay.*" And, of course, he looked the tetrarch of Galilee, King Herod Antipas, squarely in the eye and called him an adulterer for having taken his brother's wife as his own.

John strikes us as a fairly secure and certain kind of a fellow. So, does it seem odd that when his confrontational style landed him in prison that he began to question everything that had defined his life and calling up to that point?

²When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples ³to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" - Matthew 11:2, 3

Sinners were still prospering just fine. Evil rulers were still on their thrones. One such evil king now seemed to hold John's fate in the palm of his hand. In the meantime, Jesus did not seem to be judging evil or vindicating the righteous faithful in Israel. This was what everyone in Israel was expecting. This was what the prophets foretold. Maybe Jesus was not Who John thought He was. But, the prophets also spoke of other features of Messiah's ministry, and Jesus recited words directly from *Isaiah* to encourage His troubled friend.

⁴Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ⁶Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." - Matthew 11:4-6

Final judgment would come. In the meantime, John was calmed by the truth of Scripture as he was made by a Friend to recognize that Jesus was indeed accomplishing the work of the One Who was to come as a Deliverer for His people. The best of men struggle with doubt, but the wisest of men know where to look for a remedy. In your doubts, turn to Christ through the vehicles of His Word and of His people.



Karl's Korner