

## DOUBT, Part II

Last week I started a series on Dealing with Doubt. At some point in our journey, all of us are going to have doubts: doubts about God or doubts about our faith. As we discovered from the last message, we must learn to consider our options. Remember what Peter said: *“Lord, to whom shall we go?”* This week I shared about John the Baptist from Matthew 11. John is in prison for being bold and doing the right thing. Now that John is in prison, it appears he is having some second thoughts. Notice what John says in **Matthew 11:2**: *“When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?”*

At some point in our lives, we are going to get moved out of our comfort zone or our comfortable environment, and we too will be like John. When we are moved from our comfort zone, things we never would have doubted or questioned before begin to plague our hearts and minds. Strong convictions are questioned. When one is no longer intensely involved in church or faith groups, there's a tendency to question if such things are real or relevant. This is where John was - "Maybe it is not what I thought it was or who I thought He was."

Not to be insensitive, but why is it that your issue is a prayer request, but my issue knocks the feet out from under me? It is because these doubts cause us to become self-centered. (*Ex: It's easy to pray for those in other places whose family members were just killed, but when it is my family, I lose my faith; when someone else is sick, we pray, but when one of our family member declines in health, we question our faith.*) John the Baptist may have heard of several people being put in prison for doing the right thing, and had perhaps prayed for them, but when he was put in prison, he needed some assurance.

Like John, when I have doubts, this is what I want. I want Jesus to change the circumstance or at least to explain to me what is going on - - and why. If I know what God's plan is, I can relax. I don't have to exercise faith. Notice Jesus' response to John. *“Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The 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.”*

Jesus did not answer John's "Are you the one?" **Jesus wanted John to focus on what Jesus was doing around him rather than being focused on himself.** When we focus on what God is doing around us, we can find assurance in Christ *in the midst of our circumstances.*