

TURN TO TEXT: JOHN 3:22-30

22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

26 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.

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29 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.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

TITLE: "Don't Doubt in the Night What God Gave You in the Light"

Why do I title the message this way?

Because here we are going to see one of the Greatest Prophets Born into the world, according to Jesus, doubted Christ in his darkest hour.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER –

- Could it be when circumstances change in our lives that we doubt God too?
- Could it be that when we are in the storm and it seems Jesus is asleep in the back of the boat, that we start to wonder if He really cares?
- Could it be that we like many others in the Bible, we believe, but maybe we ask God to help with our unbelief?

I. HE MUST INCREASE, I MUST DECREASE: Nice to say, but it literally happened to John...

– WHAT THE PROPHET ISAIAH SAID OF JOHN THE BAPTIST:

IS. 40:3 *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

– WHAT THE PROPHET MALACHI SAID OF JOHN THE BAPTIST:

Mal. 3:1 *"Behold, I send hmy messenger, and ihe will prepare the way before me. And the Lord jwhom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and kthe messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.*

– WHAT JOHNS FATHER ZACHARIAS SAID OF HIS SON:

LUKE 1:76-79 *And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. 80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.*

– WHAT JOHN THE BAPTIST SAID ABOUT HIMSELF AND OF JESUS:

JOHN 1:19-23 *And this is the otestimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, p"Who are you?" 20 qHe confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." 21 And they asked him, "What then? rAre you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you sthe Prophet?" And he answered, "No." 22 So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said, "I am tthe voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight8 the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."*

John 1:29-34 *The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who ytakes away the sin zof the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, a'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but bfor this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John cbore witness: d"I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and eit remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but fhe who sent me to baptize gwith water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."*

John 1:35 *The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, ithe Lamb of God!”*

JOHN 3:28 *Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 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.*

– **BACKGROUND UP TO JOHN DECREASING AND JESUS INCREASING:**

* John is in prison for speaking out against immorality among the leadership.

* While in prison, Jesus feeds the 5000, heals people, raised the dead, and His fame goes through out the whole of Judea and the surrounding areas.

* The disciples of John the Baptist come to visit John on Death Row...

and here is what the Greatest Prophet Born had to say after admitting Jesus was the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world, the Lord Who he was preparing the way for, the Light of the World, the Savior, the One Who Baptizes with the Spirit, the Bridegroom and the One Who is Preferred before him and everyone else... after all of his wilderness sermons and preparing the Highway for our God, the **Greatest of Prophets has the Greatest of Doubts!**

– **WHAT JOHN SAID ABOUT JESUS ON DEATH ROW:**

Luke 7:18-21 *The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, 19 calling 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?” 20 And 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?’” 21 In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight.*

APPLICATION:

– WHEN GOD DOESN'T FIT INTO OUR BOX, OUR TIMELINE OR MEET OUR EXPECTATIONS OF HOW A PROPER GOD SHOULD ACT...

– DO WE TOO, DOUBT IN THE NIGHT WHAT GOD GAVE US IN THE LIGHT?

– IT'S EASY TO DOUBT, TO HAVE FEAR AND TO BELIEVE OTHER CONTRARY VOICES THAT ARE NOT THE VOICE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

– IF JOHN DID, THOMAS DID, THE DISCIPLES WHO LIVED WITH JESUS DID, DON'T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF IF YOU DO TOO.

QUOTE: ***“EVEN THE BEST OF MEN ARE STILL MEN AT BEST.”***

– **WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT JOHN, AND WHAT HE THINKS AND SAYS ABOUT YOU AND I AS HIS CHILDREN:**

LUKE 7:22-28 *Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. 23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. 24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? 25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings’ courts. 26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. 27 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist:*

APPLICATION:

– JESUS PUBLICLY PRAISES JOHN, HE DOES DOES NOT HUMILIATE HIM.

– JESUS STILL PRACTICES WHAT HE PREACHES WITH:

“SHAME OFF YOU” not shame on you and “NEITHER DO I CONDEMN YOU”

– SOMETIMES THE LOUDEST VOICE OF CONDEMNATION COMES FROM OUR OWN INTERNAL MEGAPHONE OR “TICKER TAPE” AS JENNY CALLS IT.

– IT'S NORMAL TO DOUBT, BUT GOD WILL STILL NEVER GO BACK ON HIS PROMISES TO YOU, HE WILL NEVER STOP LOVING YOU, AND HE WILL NEVER STOP GROWING US UP BY HIS GRACE AND THROUGH HIS EVERLASTING LIFE THAT LIVES WITHIN US.

– IT IS THE GOODNESS OF GOD THAT LEADS US BACK TO GOD.

CONCLUSION:

- HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED THE LORD INTO YOUR LIFE?
- IF YOU HAVE, HAVE YOU EVER DOUBTED THE LORD IN YOUR LIFE?
- GOD IS OKAY WITH ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS... HAVE AN OPEN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD AND TALK TO HIM ABOUT IT.
- CAST ALL YOUR CARES AND CONCERNS ONTO THE LORD FOR HE CARES FOR YOU!!!
- MAYBE LIKE THE DISCIPLES BEFORE YOU PRAY LIKEWISE,
“LORD I BELIEVE, HELP MY UNBELIEF”

GRACE AND PEACE