
SERMON NOTES March 12, 2023

Today's notes also available at CCPL.life/Connect

**Matthew 11:1-6
The Greatest Doubter
Pastor Mike**

- I. Understanding _____
- a. Understanding his _____
- b. Understanding his _____
- II. The _____ and _____ of doubt
- a. When we _____ God and his plan
- b. The risk of short-sighted _____ and _____
- c. The risk of _____
- d. The way God _____
- God calls us to come and _____ with him
- III. Jesus' response to our _____
- a. He affirms our _____
(and doesn't _____)
- b. Focus on what God _____
(not what _____)
- c. See and embrace Jesus for _____
(he isn't the God we _____)
- d. We find Jesus' power in _____

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. Matthew 11 teaches us that John the Baptist experienced a crisis of faith and a period of doubt.
 - a. Have you ever experienced a crisis of faith and/or a period of doubt? What happened?
 - b. Are period of doubt and/or crises of faith normal and inevitable? Are they something that all Christians will experience at one time or another? Why or why not?
2. In Matthew 11:11, after John's disciples came to Jesus expressing John's doubt, Jesus said of John, *"among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist."* Does this surprise you that Jesus spoke so highly of John after he expressed his doubts about who Jesus was?
 - a. We often think of doubts as a form of spiritual failure and immaturity. What is the bible teaching us here through John about how God views our doubts, and how he views us when we have doubts?
 - b. Why is it important to see that God does not see our doubts as a form of failure or shame?
3. In his message Pastor Mike talked about 3 ways we can deal with our doubts. We can come to conclusions about God failing us based on what we see in the now and walk away from God, we can hide or deny our doubts because of our shame over them, or we can come to God and his people and honestly struggle through our doubts.
 - a. Can you think of times that you have dealt with your doubts in each of these ways? What was the result?
 - b. Why is it so hard to be honest with our doubts and openly come to God to struggle through them?
4. John's doubts were ultimately rooted in the fact that Jesus wasn't the Messiah he expected, and Jesus didn't do the things John wanted him to do. Do you think this is a universal experience; that we all start expecting God to be someone other than who He is?
 - a. Does everyone initially come to God expecting Him to conform to an image we have of the God we expect? If so, how is the God we expect different from the God that is?
 - b. Have you ever experienced a time when what you expected (and wanted) God to do was very different from what God actually did? If so, how did you learn to trust God when His plan was different than yours?
5. Doubts about God often grow from periods when we become so fixated on the areas in our life that we do not see God working and/or where He is not doing what we expect that we fail to see the many areas where his power and provision are clearly evident.
 - a. What are some practical ways that we can get our eyes off of our fixation on where we feel God is disappointing us, and back on the many areas that God is demonstrating his power and provision?
 - b. Do you believe that the greater cause of this problem is that we spend too much time thinking of the areas where God is not working as we would expect him to, or that we spend too little time thinking of the many areas where God is working?