

# Refocus: Overcoming Hopelessness

## Matthew 11:2-11

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**Historical Context** - Matthew recorded events from the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in order to confirm to a Jewish Audience that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the King, and to explain the Kingdom Program of God for the Present Age in light of Israel's Rejection of her King (Mark L. Bailey)

❖ **Passage Context - Parables of the King – Rejection and Revelation** – Matthew recorded the controversial rejection of Jesus and his consequent revelation of the mysteries of the Kingdom through parables in order to explain to his readers that, although the Messianic Kingdom has been delayed, its future is still certain (11:1-13:52)

**Message Statement for Today** – Refocusing on God's Word gives us Hope

#### Homiletical Outline

### I. Why we lose Focus (Hope) – Vs. 2-3

#### A. We lose Focus (Hope) because of our Circumstances (Vs. 2)

1. John was the last Old Testament Prophet whose main purpose was to prepare the way for the coming Messiah (Isa. 40:3; Matt. 3:1-6)
2. John challenged the Pharisees and Sadducees and told them to repent for their actions (Matt. 3:7-10)
3. John made sure his disciples knew he wasn't the Christ and did not get upset when they began to follow Jesus (John 3:26-30)
4. John challenged King Herod about marrying his brother's wife (Mark 6:14-28)
  - a. King Herod called John a righteous man and he enjoyed listening to John (Mark 6:20)
  - b. King Herod's Wife, Herodias didn't like John and that was why John was imprisoned (Mark 6:17-19)
  - c. Because of a vow King Herod made to Herodias' daughter, the king had John the Baptist beheaded (Mark 6:21-32)
5. John's imprisonment and death was a direct result of his purpose and obedience to God
6. When our circumstances get the best of us, we feel as if God is not doing anything (Ps. 13:1-2)

#### B. We lose Focus (Hope) because of our False Expectations (Vs. 3)

1. John asks Jesus if he was the "Expected One"

- a. **The Expected One or Coming One is a title given to the Messiah** (Ps. 40:7; 118:26)
2. Israel expected the Messiah to be a prophet like Moses and a King like David (Deut. 18:5; 2 Sam. 7:12-17)
3. Israel expected Jesus to overthrow the Roman Government and reestablish their nation on earth (Acts 1:6)
4. John told all that he was baptizing that Jesus was coming to bring judgment (Matt. 3:10-12)
5. John baptized Jesus and was an eyewitness to the Trinity (Matt. 3:13-17)
6. John already stated that Jesus was the Messiah (John 1:19-37; John 3:22-36)
7. John's imprisonment and expectations of what he thought the Messiah would do led him to ask Jesus that question.

## **II. How to regain Focus (Hope) – Vs. 3-6**

### **A. In the midst of our troubles, we must first seek God (vs. 3)**

1. Questioning God is not a wrong, it is just a matter in which we do it.
  - a. Gabriel was punished for questioning whether God has the ability to do something. He questioned God's character (Lk. 1:18-20)
  - b. Mary was not punished because she did not question God's ability or character but yet her own personal circumstances (Lk. 1:34)

### **B. We must remember God's Word (vs. 4-6)**

1. Jesus' response to John is with the word of God, not with him physically going there
2. Everything that Jesus named are things the Messiah was said to do
  - a. "The lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear" – Isa. 35:5-6
  - b. "The good news is preached to the poor" – Isa. 61:1
3. The Word of God is what stands forever – Isa. 40:8
4. The Word of God won't return to him void – Isa. 55:11

### **C. We must remember our Calling**

1. Jesus doesn't go and rescue John out of his circumstances even though John is going to be beheaded. Even though he is imprisoned, John has and still is serving his purpose
2. All who believe in Christ are called to suffer with just as Christ did (1 Peter 2:21-24)

### **III. Our Reward for Suffering – Vs. 7-11**

#### **A. Jesus's testimony of John**

1. John was not shaken but stayed committed to what he was called to do – vs. 7
2. John was not a man seeking to, nor was he, living a lavished lifestyle in a kingdom – vs. 8
3. John was a true prophet, and the one Isaiah prophesied about – vs. 9-10
4. Jesus calls John the greatest human being – vs. 11
  - a. John was filled with Holy Spirit first (Luke 1:41)
  - b. John's ministry prepared the way for the people to receive the Messiah

### **IV. Biblical Principles**

- A. Our circumstances and false expectations cause us to lose hope
- B. Focusing on God's word helps us to keep our hope
- C. Our hope is found in Jesus only, not him rescuing us from our circumstances