

HAS CHRIST FAILED YOU? // Luke 7:18-23

from the series, the Gospel of Luke

There are times when doubt may color the Christian experience. Perhaps we are intellectually satisfied in Christ and with Christianity, but we have found ourselves wanting in the experience of the Christian life. Perhaps there are times when it seems that God has forgotten us. Perhaps there are times when we find ourselves asking, like John the Baptist, whether Jesus is who He says He is, or whether we ought to look for some other solution. This week we studied Jesus' response to this question from John and concluded that even in our doubt and depression and even when it feels otherwise, God is exactly who He says He is.

A little context is important. In this passage, John the Baptist is in prison. Therefore, he was hearing about what was happening with Jesus' ministry but he was not experiencing it firsthand. Instead, John's experience was prison and he needed to know that Jesus was the real deal. If he was going to die for a cause, John wanted to be sure the cause he was dying for was indeed the right one.

Based on this passage, we can identify three keys to diffusing doubt in the Christian life:

1. Rest and Remember

- a. God is at work behind the scenes.
- b. Just because we cannot see it does not mean God is not working.
- c. Walking with Jesus requires resting and trusting that what He has done in our lives in the past is sufficient to maintain our faithfulness.

2. Listen and Learn

- a. Christ is working in our closest friends.
- b. God has given us community for a reason.
- c. There is great power in a personal testimony, and we all have one. Part of living in community is sharing that testimony with others in order to diffuse the doubt in their lives.

3. Believe and Behave

- a. Christ is working more IN us than ON us.
- b. Jesus is working more in our lives and within us than He is working through us.

There may be seasons of the Christian life when our intellectual satisfaction with Christianity outweighs our spiritual experience. However, let us be encouraged and have hope that even when it may seem that God has forgotten us, He is ever present and truly never failing.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt as though God had forgotten you? What was that like?
2. Even when we may not be able to see it, God is always working in our lives. What is God currently doing in your life? What is God teaching you?
3. We have learned the power of a personal testimony and that everyone has a testimony. What are some examples of things that God has done in your life that you could share with others to encourage them in their own faith?