

Luke 7:18-35

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[0 : 00] The disciples of John reported all these things to him, and John, 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?

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? In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight.

And he answered them, Go and tell John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them, and blessed is the one who is not offended by me.

When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John. What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in soft clothing and live in luxury are in king's courts. What then did you go out to see?

[1 : 06] A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is who, he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face who will prepare your way before you.

I tell you, among those born of women, none is greater than John. Yet, the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John.

But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. To what then shall I compare the people of this generation? And what are they like?

They are like children sitting in a marketplace and calling to one another. We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. We sang a dirge, and you did not weep. For John the Baptist had come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, He has a demon.

The Son of Man has come eating and drinking. And you say, Look at him, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Yet wisdom is justified by all her children. This is the word of the Lord.

[2 : 14] Thanks be to God. You may be seated. We're glad you're here. And I pray that God would feed us from his word.

Let's pray. Lord, we love you. Thank you for the privilege of speaking your word this morning. Lord, we are humbled by that privilege and the opportunity.

And pray that you would be glorified through it. That the change that you're in the process of working in our hearts and lives would continue. That it would go to the next stage, the next step.

Be glorified in us. Be glorified in me. I pray in Christ's name. Amen. Luke chapter 7. We've been in it.

Second week in it. Verses 1 through 17 on last week. One of the things that really strikes me about this particular text is the shift of tone from last week's text.

[3 : 29] Take a look. Particularly in verses 16 and 17. Fear sees them all. And they glorified God saying. And they glorified God saying.

A great prophet has arisen among us. And God has visited his people. Did you notice the punctuation?

In verse 16. Two exclamation points. And those exclamation points tell the story. God was at work. In and through the ministry of Jesus. God's mercy. God's mercy. Had met the misery of man.

Sickness and disease.

Were arrested. Death. Was defeated. People were awestruck. Stunned if you will. And they gave God the glory.

[4 : 31] The exclamation points of last week's text. Give way to the questions that we see in our text today. Did you notice them?

Beginning in verse 19. John 19 and 20. John sending two of his disciples to Jesus. And he sends them with a question. Are you the one who is to come? Or shall we look for another? That's not the only question mark in the text.

Look at verse 24. Verses 24 through 26. And you actually get a series of questions. As they relate to John.

Jesus. A couple of them at least are rhetorical questions. Getting them to really think. About who this man. John was. And then look at the final question.

[5 : 32] We see that in verse 31. To what then shall I compare the people of this generation. And what are they like? Exclamation points.

Have yielded. To questions. That we see. In our text. A question from John. In verses 19 and 20. Jesus asked the question.

In verses 24 through 26. And then again. Jesus asked the question. About the religious. But faithless.

People. Of his day. First we find John. On the questioning end. You remember John. Don't you? The last time we saw him.

Clearly. Is in Luke chapter 3. As a matter of fact. Can I ask you to turn there with me? Luke chapter 3. Let's look at verse 16. He's preaching in the Judean wilderness.

[6 : 34] His preaching included the words. That we find in verses 16 through 20. John is my kind of preacher.

Preachers really can take lessons. As far as how to preach from him. For his exhortation. Breaking down scripture. Application. I mean he had something for everybody.

Just about in his audience. The soldiers. The tax collectors. He. His message. Was very relevant. To those that he was speaking of. Notice what he says.

What Luke writes. John answered them all saying. I baptize you with water. But he who is mightier than I is coming. The strap. Notice the word.

Mightier than I is coming. The strap of whose sandals. I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. And with fire.

[7 : 33] Notice the message that he's giving about. The one who is coming. His one-winged fork is in his hand. To clear his threshing floor. And to gather the wheat into his barn.

But the chaff he will burn. With unquenchable fire. Look at the profile. That John has already given. In his preaching. As related to the one.

Who was coming. Look further. In verses 18 through 20. So with many other exhortations. He preached. Good news to the people. But Herod the Tetrarch.

Who had been reprov'd by him. For Herodias. His brother's wife. And for all the evil things. That Herod had done. Added this to them all. He looked at John in prison.

John's preaching. John in prison. In prison. Imagine. You're John. Let's put it in our day. 26 in California.

[8 : 34] Stateville maybe. But you're there. You're there. Because you have taken a stand. For God's word. You had preached God's word. And it has cost you.

And two of your. Two of your. Your disciples. Come to you. With a report. About a preacher. A preacher. Who is taking the land.

By storm. The report. Likely included. Some of the things. That we see. Chapter 7. 1 through 17. Restoration. Of those who are.

Near death. But resurrection. For those who had died. Huh? So. What are you thinking? You're there? Question mark.

Are you the one who is to come? Or shall we look for another? Because Jesus. As I look at it. The profile that I was preaching about. As far as the one who is to come.

[9 : 34] And the reports that I'm hearing about you. There seems to be something wrong. With this picture. Here. Huh? Huh? The question in John's mind.

What he was hearing. Was not jibing with what he was expecting. John had proclaimed that the one who would follow him. Would be mightier. More superior.

His baptism would be greater. His judgment would be severe. And thorough. That's not exactly what he was hearing. About Jesus.

Huh? Huh? But. When we look at. And I need you to turn one more place with me. Because. What we see. In verses.

16 and 17. As far as a. Juxtaposition of words. This is not the first time that we see this. In Luke's gospel. We see it.

[10:32] In Luke chapter 1. Verses 68 through 79. It is there. Through. Zacharias prophecy.

That he begins to talk about. A visitation. From God. A visitation. That included. A visitation team. Of both. John and Jesus. Jesus. And. The focus on. God's visitation. Then. Was to deliver. On the mercy.

That he had. Covenantally. Promised. To the fathers. Way back when. And God was showing up. In time space history. In order to fulfill that.

Just take a look briefly. Look at. Chapter 1. Verse 68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. Here's our word. For he has visited.

[11:28] And redeemed. His people Israel. Huh? Look at verse 78. Because the tender mercy. Of our God. Whereby the sunrise.

Shall visit us. From on high. In the coming. Of. God's visitation. Manifested himself.

Both in the ministries. Of both John. And Jesus. So. They were right. God had in fact. Visited. His people.

Huh? With mercy. And God was at work. Through mercy. In the ministry of Jesus. And John was rather perplexed.

About what he had heard. And wondered perhaps. Did I get it right? Huh? Huh? Was there another one coming? Huh? But notice Jesus. Jesus answered to John.

[12:23] In verses 21 through 23. Jesus. Answer. Back. In Luke chapter 7. Jesus answer. Gave. Assurance.

To John. Gave assurance. To this one. Who was faithful. He may have. Sort of been. A little perplexed. But Jesus. Is going to give him.

An answer. That's going to give him. Assurance. That what he was doing. Was in the will of God. He may not have been able. To fully see it. Or to clearly see it. But he is going to.

Basically. Take him to scripture. And show. That. Yeah. The mercy of God. That you see. That's highlighting my ministry. Not a ministry. Necessarily. Of judgment.

And fire. Right now. But. It is a ministry. Of mercy. As had been prophesied. In. Scripture. Huh? So.

[13:17] How did Jesus respond. To John's question. Live demonstration. Folks. That's what we see. In verse 21. Huh? In that hour. He. That's Jesus.

Heal many. People of diseases. And plagues. And evil spirits. And on many. Who were blind. He bestowed sight. Huh? Mercy. Meeting the misery.

Of man. Huh? That's the way. Jesus was functioning. That was his modus operandi. At this particular time. God's mercy. Meeting.

People. Right where they were. And did you know folks. That that is not just something. Of days gone by. The mercy of God. Meets you.

In your places of. Misery. Whether it's sickness. Or other kinds of ills. God's mercy. Is just right. For you and me.

[14:13] In and through the person. And the work. Of Jesus Christ. In. That. Very hour. Jesus showed mercy to many. Healing their bodies.

And their minds. Human misery. Of all types. Was met. With the mercy of Jesus. Oh. And in his doing this.

He's giving us. A sneak preview. Of what will become. Larger. Than life. In and through. The cross work.

But here was a visible. Visual. Tangible. Expression. Of the mercy of God. Visiting. His people.

Through the ministry of Jesus. Verse 22. It was to include. Go tell John. Huh. They were to tell.

[15:10] John. About the. Ministry of Jesus. That. Included. Cures. For those who were physically hurt. But also. Good news. For those.

For whom. Good news. Good news. Was rare. You see that. The poor. Good news. The poor. Have good news. Preached to them. Huh. Huh. The wide arms of mercy.

Included. Those who were. On the margins. Huh. On the margins. That was the poor. And others. Huh. But it included them. Scripture.

Had so much. Predicted those things. Uh. And this was a mark. Of Messiah's ministry. That we see. In places like Isaiah. Chapter 29.

And Isaiah 35. Huh. Ministry. Or mercy. That would include. The lame. Would walk. The blind. [16:03] Would see. The deaf. Would hear. And according to Isaiah 61. Uh. The poor. Would have good news. Preached. To them. What a word.

To this man. In prison. But it was instructive also. Huh. When things. Did not add up. For John. Huh. He asked a very honest. And legitimate question. Huh. Huh. When he didn't see. That Jesus was. Exactly.

Doing it. The way. That he thought. That he would do it. That he even preached. That he would do it. He asked a very honest question. Isn't that instructive. For us.

Huh. Jesus ever. Color. Outside. Of your lines. Huh. Where you don't. Think. That he's exactly. Doing it. The way that. Maybe you.

[16:56] Thought. That he would do it. Huh. This is Messiah. And he was working. Like Messiah. Would work. According to Old Testament. Scripture. And notice.

What we see. As a key verse. In verse 23. Blessed is the man. Who's not offended. In me. Huh. That doesn't stumble. Over me.

There was a word. That's directly. To John. On the one hand. But was broader. Than John. As we look on down. In the text. Huh. Do we stumble. When the Lord. Doesn't exercise.

Power. Or dominion. Or function. In the way. That we feel. That he should. When his timing. Is not calibrated. Like our timing. When he does.

For others. What he doesn't. Do. For us. When he exercises. Power. For some. And not others. Don't be offended. By Jesus.

[17:49] Huh. There is a blessedness. In not stumbling. Over him. And John's conduct. For us today. Friends. Is instructed. He did not rush.

To judgment. About Jesus. Honest inquiry. Was the order. Of the day. For him. And may it be. The same. For us. It's a legitimate. Way to approach him. Lord.

I don't understand. Lord. Is this you at work? Or is something else. That you're trying. To get me to learn. Or perhaps something else. That you're trying. To get. Me to do.

Huh. Jesus answers. To John. Was an assurance. For this faithful man. Huh. Faithful people. Can have. Legitimate questions.

Come before God. With them. And learn. From him. Huh. We see that in Psalms. Don't we. The legitimate. And this is not a lament.

[18:45] But we do hear questions. In lament. Questions from faithful people. How long. And why. You know.

Faithful people. Asking God. And guess what. Jesus. Jesus. Doesn't. Chide. John. Here. He gives him. An assurance. Even in the midst.

Of. His perplexity. If you will. Huh. Question. Number two. As we get. Into verse 24. Jesus.

Questions. As it relates. To John. Yeah. He weighs. Questions. And answers. That affirmed. John's. Role. In this. God's. Visitation.

Plan. So. On the one hand. You had. The assurance. Of the faithful. John. But as it relates. To. John. In another way. Jesus. Answer. Was an affirmation.

[19:39] Of the faithful. John. Is still on my team. Oh well. You've heard. John's disciples. Come. They brought. These questions. I've answered. But hey. You need to know. Something about John.

You need to know. Something about him. John's. Disciples. They return. With the answer. But Jesus. Began to speak. About John. Himself. Set the record. Straight.

About him. Declaring. Both. What he was not. You see that. In the text. As well as what he was. Look at there. With me. What did you go out. To the wilderness. To see. A reed. Shaken.

By the wind. Understood. Answer. Huh. Verse 24. What did you go out. To see. A man. Dressed in. Soft clothing. Behold.

Those who are dressed. In. Splendid clothing. And live in. Luxury. Are in. King's court. Huh. He didn't go out. To see a weak. Unstable. Person.

[20:34] That would be like. A reed in the wind. He was not. Well dressed. He didn't wear. The latest fashion. He was not. A compliant. Aristocrat. Huh. Those who heard.

John. John. John. Though. Friends. Were listening. To God's word. Through an uncompromising. Preacher. A prophet of God. God ordained.

God sent. A prophet like Elijah. And as you look at. John. There's some parallels. You remember. When. When Elijah had questions. When.

Jezebel was. Was hot on his tail. Huh. And God answered. Those questions. For him. Huh. In a still. Small voice.

It wasn't in a. A big. Explosive. Kind of way. But in a whisper. God answered him. Gave him. Assurance. Even.

[21 : 28] You know. Elijah thought he was. The only one left. Huh. But God assured him. Hey. Elijah. You need to know something. I've got people. Matter of fact.

I've got 7,000. Of them. Who have not bowed. The knee to Baal. Huh. John. A man whose coming. Was according to scripture. His greatness. Was unparalleled. He fulfilled. Fulfilled. A unique role. In human history. No one else.

In human history. Has had a ministry. Like his. Greatest person. Born of a woman. I mean. This is coming from. Jesus mouth. He. You. You remember John.

He's filled. With the spirit. While still in his mother's womb. But there was a caveat. To his greatness. Even those.

[22 : 22] In the kingdom. Inaugurated. By Jesus. Huh. Greater than John. Huh. Because what John. Had promised. Christ. And perhaps.

Given a foretaste of. They were able. To really taste. And see. The rule of God. In the person. And work of Christ. And of course. According to Peter.

This is that. Which was. The prophets. It prophesied about. But now. Those who are living. In this era. Are partaking. Of. Huh. What a verse. On this side.

Of. The cross. Huh. A new day. Has done. Promises. Yielded to fulfillment. Jesus. Exalted. The blessedness. Of being a part.

Of what God. Of what John. Had spoken of. The rule of God. In and through the person. And the work of Jesus. Huh. Here was an affirmation. Of the faithful.

[23 : 17] God. I mean. John. Had fulfilled. God's purposes. For him. Huh. He continues. In verses. 29. And 30. Of this. Two groups. Come into view.

In these verses. They're described. By their response. To John's ministry. Look what it says. When all the people. Had heard this. And the tax collectors.

Too. They. Declared. God. Just. Having been baptized. With the baptism. Of John. These were those.

First. She's talking about. Those who. Had received. The ministry. The ministry. Of John. Those who were baptized. Those who. Indeed. Had in essence. Said yes. To God.

Those who recognize. Their need. And God's work. In and through. John. Was validated. Through them. They received. His message. And they were baptized.

[24 : 12] Huh. And through the reception. They demonstrated. The propriety. The rightness. Of God's. Working. In and through. His servant.

John. Huh. God. Was right. God was at work. Doing his work. Validating it. Through John's ministry. But through their own lives. And their changed lives.

Was a testimony. To. The right thing. That God was doing. In and through. John's ministry. There was another group. Though.

Reception. On one hand. Verse 29. Rejection. In verse 30. But the Pharisees. And lawyers. Rejected. The purpose of God. For themselves. Not having been baptized. By him.

On the one hand. Irreligious people. Had come. And were baptized. Hearing. The word from John. And submitting. To his baptism. On the other hand.

[25 : 08] The religious people. Had not received. The ministry of John. They were blinded. To their own needs. By their own religion. And other forces. And in fact. They had turned. A deaf ear.

To God. In the process. Reception. On one. On the one hand. And vindicating. God's righteous work. Through John. Rejection. On the other.

Huh? Jesus answer. As related to John. It affirmed. John's faithfulness. God was at work. Through him.

God was doing. Wonderful things. Through him. God. Was delivering his mercy. In and through. His visitation. Through both John. And Jesus.

But then we come to the third question. In verse 31. And there we see. So you had. Assurance for the faithful. An affirmation of the faithful.

[26 : 03] But here. You've got a warning. You've got a warning. To the faithless. You see that there. To what then shall I compare. To the people of this generation.

In other words. Those that he's speaking about. In verse 30. Huh? And what are they like? Huh? While John had been faithful. Those who rejected him. Were faithless. Huh? And unresponsive. To both the ministries. Of John and Jesus. As we see in the parable. That Jesus told. Jesus challenged.

The unresponsiveness. To the visitation of God. Through his and John's ministry. And this in essence. Is what he said. And it applies to you. And me today. Faithlessness.

Is foolishness. Huh? And then he used the parable. To explain himself. He compared the faithlessness. The faithless. To unresponsive kids.

[27 : 02] On a playground. Huh? Huh? Regardless of what was spinning. On the turntable. There was no response. Huh? They wouldn't dance. To wedding music. When it was played.

They didn't weep. When the. With the playing. Of our funeral songs. Theirs was. A useless. Meaning. Meaningless. Interaction. That was their response.

To the ministries. Of John. And Jesus. Huh? They had. They had. For the wrong reasons. They were not responding. To God's visitation. In that particular day.

But there was a group. Of responsive people. Huh? In some people's minds. They would be the least responsive. The tax collectors. And sinners. They're religious of that day.

Who have heard. Of the mercy of God. In the ministry of Jesus. And they responded. We'll get a clear clip of that. In the. In the next passage. Where you see this.

[28 : 00] Marvelous story there. But. The rejection. Of John. And Jesus. Was in fact. A rejection. Of God himself. And Jesus. See. So he assesses.

The faithless. His challenge. To them. Was on the. Was though. Was to those. Who were on the brink. Of missing God. And rejecting. John. And Jesus.

Look what he says there. But John the Baptist. Has come. Eating. And drinking. In verse 33. Eating. No bread. And drinking. No wine. Would you say. He has a demon. The son of man.

Has come. Eating. And drinking. You say. Like. Look at him. A glutton. And drunkard. A friend. Of tax collectors. And sinners. Huh. Huh. Just. As the children.

Of wisdom. Declare. Her. Virtue. So. The lives. Of those. Who respond. To God's truth. Speak. Both. Of God's worth.

[28 : 53] And his wisdom. That's Jesus. Point. Here. Huh. As. In. Proverbs 31. Where. The children. Of wisdom. Rise up. And call.

Her. Blessed. Huh. The offspring. Of wisdom. Vindicator. Huh. If you are. Living out. In a wise. God honoring life.

You vindicate. The virtue. Of wisdom. Huh. It's like. When you look at. A child. That's well kept. Particularly. A little girl. As cute.

As a princess. Her hair. Is done. Just right. She has on. I mean. She has her. Girly stuff on. Little girly.

Socks. Huh. Girly. Barrettes. All colorful. Bouncing around. In her head. Huh. And. The question. That is usually asked. Who's her mother.

[29 : 49] Huh. Because. The little girl. Makes her mother. Look good. And such is the case. With wisdom. Her children. Calls.

Others. To sing. The praises. Of wisdom. Huh. They say. Oh. She's a good mother. Wisdom is a good mother. Huh. And as Jesus.

Highlighted here. Wisdom. Is justified. Vindicated. By those. Who embrace. So I would ask. Children. Of. Folly.

Faithlessness. Faithlessness. Is foolishness. Jesus and John. Were indeed. On the same team. Together. They were part. Of God's visitation team.

Both were received. With mixed reviews. Both were ignored. By religious people. But received. By the marginalized. And the outcasts. Huh.

[30 : 46] Visitation. Of God's mercy. Ended through Jesus. God. Visited his people. Through the faithful. Ministry. Of his son. And the faithful ministry.

Of his servant. Huh. The ministry of Jesus. To the physical needs. And his word ministry. Were visual aids. Of what was to come. That's what we will be. Looking at this week.

Huh. The ministry of mercy. That we see in this text. Is a prelude. To Calvary. Where mercy. There was great. And grace.

Was free. Pardon. There was multiplied. To me. There my burdened soul. Found liberty. At Calvary. Do you know anything about. God's mercy. And God's liberty. Huh. You may be here this morning. And all.

[31 : 41] Your life. Is spelled. In caps. Misery. Huh. Misery. Misery is your lot. And it's not necessarily.

A physical. Misery. It's a spiritual. Misery. You're carrying. A burden. Of sin. And guilt. Huh. Oh. But there is. Liberty. And freedom. And the one. Who. Exercise. A ministry. Of mercy. In our text. Yes. But.

Most clearly. And definitely. In his person. And work. On the cross. Mercy. There was great. And grace. Was free. And on the day.

That we recognize. As Palm Sunday. The king. Entered. Into the city. With the praises. Of the crowd. And this is what. They said. Listen. Blessed.

[32 : 38] Is the king. Here's the word. Who comes. In the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven. Glory in the highest. And according.

To verse. 41. Of that same chapter. He wept. Over the city. As he grew near. To it. He wept. In verse 44. Because they did not know.

Here's our word again. The day. Or the time. Of their visitation. Now is the accepted time. Now. Is the day of salvation.

Now is the day. Of visitation. Now is the time. To receive his mercy. It's yours. May you receive it. May we receive it.

In the name of Jesus. Let us pray. Lord we give thanks to you. For.

[33 : 35] Your. Ministry of mercy. Visualized. In your works. Messianic works. Of. Healing.

And. Causing the lame. To walk again. The blind. To see. The deaf. To hear. And even. Ray. Resurrection. From the dead.

So we praise you. And pray. Oh God. That your mercy. Would be the portion. Of each one. This morning. Under the sound. Of my voice. Thank you. Because you.

Visit your people. Through the faithful. Ministry. Of your son. And of your servants. And may. Your visitation. To your people.

Even be manifested. To all. In need. This morning. Is our prayer. In Christ's name. Amen.