

December 11, 2022

Third Sunday of Advent

The PINK candle Sunday

Mathew 11:2-11

I find this to be an odd and difficult passage. It created much doubt in my mind. Why would John send his disciples to Jesus and ask if He is the Messiah? Did John learn nothing from baptizing Jesus in the Jordan? John was the one who baptized Jesus and was a witness to all the events that unfolded that day. Take some comfort in the fact that doubt is the starting point for faith. It has to start somewhere and most often it is at doubt. This passage is also telling us that it is alright to doubt. It is a part of our human condition and the way God made us. It is there for a reason. Sometimes I think it is wiser to doubt than to be naïve. Then that is when scripture kicks in and I think about Paul's words to test everything.

So who has the doubt here? Is it John or just his disciples? After much thinking and discerning I have concluded that it is only the disciples. John had disciples everywhere. As far north as Greece and as far east as Persia. It is possible that these disciples were visiting John and never

heard or met Jesus. So they would have their doubts about Jesus's claim of being the Messiah. So to put their doubts to rest John sends his disciples to meet Jesus and to ask for themselves if Jesus is the Messiah they are waiting for. So John does send them to Jesus. They went to Jesus with John's blessing. Jesus answers their questions directly and puts their doubts to rest. Jesus does this with personal stories and accounts of what people are seeing and hearing. It seems like the natural order of things is being turned upside down with healings, resurrections, and other public ministry miracles. Or as I like to think that things are returning to the way they use to be in the garden.

Jesus is telling them that the Son of Man will turn their reality on its head. He makes this clear by inviting the crowd to reflect and think about what they see and what they expect to see. Explanations will be bent and stretched. It is a great lesson for us today also. We should reflect on what we have heard about God and Jesus and what we have come to expect from the both of Them. This is a challenge to open our minds as wide as we possibly can, because that is only a small part of what God can do.

God encourages us to reconcile what we expect to see with what we actually see. What we expect to hear and what we actually hear. As I often say, with God, expect the unexpected. Only expect to see the laws of nature to be suspended. Remember that it is alright to doubt. God will never punish us for doubting. God will fill in what is lacking

though. Just as Jesus did this morning for John's disciples. I think they got much more than they expected or bargained for.

The words of St. Paul have served me well in my career. That we should test all things. I have never been led astray by the miracles that have crossed my path. If anything they have strengthened my faith and resolve. Whether it was a bleeding cross, weeping icon or host turned into flesh. Mind you God has done miraculous things in my life that I still cannot explain. Keep an open mind to what God can do. That is what Christmas is all about. God bless you all, Pastor D