

A note from Kathy

There is a common thread that runs throughout history. That is the weakness and frailty of mankind. Jesus knows us. He gave himself as ransom for us. The truth about us is God loves us. We are of great value to him. I am praying you hear from him as you spend time in his word.

Observation

1. Nothing about Jesus' time on earth was easy. He had just finished commissioning the apostles and sent them out to preach, teach, and heal. He was back to carrying out his ministry when the disciples of John's showed up with questions from John. Others had asked these questions, but coming from John, his cousin and forerunner, was a bit more difficult. Why do you suppose John asked this now? Where was John? What was going on with him?

2. Jesus instructed them to go back with a personal testimony, to tell John what they had seen. What had they seen?

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3. As the disciples of John began to walk away, Jesus spoke to the crowd about John. Three times he asked practically the same thing. Write down the questions he posed.

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4. Jesus was not angry with John. He helped him work through his doubts. What was the glowing tribute Jesus spoke that day about John the Baptist?

5. Jesus could never please all the people. In verse 18, what do we see them saying about John the Baptist? What were they saying about Jesus?
6. The problem was not John or Jesus, but the people. Many of the teachers of the law did not want to change their self-centered, stubborn, prideful, arrogant ways. They would not humble themselves and repent, so where did that leave them?
7. Jesus responded to those who doubted in verses 1-15, then to those who criticized in 16-19, and now he responded to those who were indifferent in verses 20-24. Which three cities did he rebuke?
8. What had taken place in those cities?
9. What cities did he compare them to? What did he say the future held for those cities in verses 22 and 24? Why do you suppose that would be?
10. The last few verses of Matthew 11 are especially comforting to anyone who is struggling. Jesus extends an invitation to trust him. What does he have for those who come?
11. These verses speak of a yoke that is shared. Jesus invites us to take his yoke. Why do you suppose it is easy and his burden is light?



Application

1. I am so glad that this chapter is in God's word. I'm glad the Holy Spirit did not edit it out. John was having doubts, "Are you the one or should we be looking for another?" That was a legitimate question considering where John was and what was going on. This man who had been the forerunner of Christ, declaring "Repent!" and expecting judgment would come very soon, was not hearing about any of that. Have you ever been in a difficult circumstance that just seemed to go on and on? Did you wonder why it seemed evil was abounding and the Lord was doing nothing? Perhaps you were in a

place where you were not seeing firsthand the amazing miracles God was doing. Do you have unfulfilled expectations of what you thought would be happening by now? Well if so, you are in good company. That was where John the Baptist found himself. How are you handling it? Where are you looking for answers? If you are in God's word, he will speak to you.

2. John may have had some real struggles, but he knew where to go when he needed answers. He went to Jesus. Jesus was not thrown for a loop by John's doubts. He actually helped him see the truth by asking him a question, "What did you expect to see?" That may be the Lord's question for you today. Take a moment and think about it. Jesus was not angry or even irritated with John, nor is he with you for doubting at times. He simply helps us see that he is busy doing exactly what is needed, and his timing is always right.
3. The cities of Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum would be judged for their indifference to all that Jesus did while he was there. Many miracles happened in their cities, yet they refused to repent. Luke 12:48 says, "... to whom much was given, of him much will be required." Do you believe America will be judged for her indifference to God's goodness? We have seen so many of God's blessings and miracles throughout our nation's history, yet as a whole, we refuse to humble our hearts. Can we truly say we are, "One nation under God" anymore?
4. Today the Lord is extending his invitation to each of us.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Matthew 11: 28-30 The Message

5. Is the yoke you are wearing easy and light? If not, and you are a "Christ-follower," is there something you are "yoked" to that is not from Him?