

Sermon Notes

Insights from Luke

#22 – “The Confessions of a Doubter” – Luke 7:18-35

I. Introduction.

A. Contending with doubts.

1. Human beings often deal with doubt.
2. The most significant – Is there really life beyond the grave?

B. Today’s text focuses upon a doubter.

1. Not Thomas – John 20:24-29
2. Another key individual – J_____ t___ B_____.

II. Exposition

A. Luke 7:18-19

1. While in prison John began to doubt.
2. He sent disciples to Jesus.
3. Reasons for his doubt.
 - a. One – Personal hardship and tragedy.
 - b. Two – Misconceptions about the Messiah
 1. Ps 22, Isa. 53 – The suffering servant. Also Acts 1:6
 - c. Three – Incomplete view of the Messianic plan.
 - d. Four – Perhaps a completely wrong expectation.
 1. Note contrast with John – Luke 3:3-17. He resembled an Old Testament prophet – Mal. 4:1

B. Luke 7:21-23

1. John desired his doubt to result in strengthening of faith.
 - a. Matt. 12:38-42; 16:1-4
2. Jesus’ claims were confirmed by miraculous signs displayed among the outsiders of first century Palestinian life.
 - a. Isaiah 61:1

C. Luke 7:24-25

1. Jesus instructs.
2. The “Reed” is John. There was no vacillation in his message.

D. Luke 7:26-28

1. John as the last Old Testament prophet.
2. What made him the greatest?
 - a. Not only the last prophet, but also hands on servant.

1. Malachi 3:1

3. “He who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”
 - a. The newest and weakest Christian is greater than John. Why? We have experienced the f_____ w_____ of C_____.
 - b. What we know and experience.
 1. P_____
 2. E_____

E. Luke 7:29-30

1. The people’s response
 - a. The commoner accepted.
 - b. The religious elite rejected.

F. Luke 7:31-35

1. “This generation” – Jesus’ own day.
2. Children and the song.
 - a. “Flute” – a reference to happy times such as a wedding.
 - b. “Dirge” – a reference to a funeral.
 - c. John came with the message of the dirge, but called for repentance while Jesus came with the message of the flute – The gospel, but it was rejected.
3. Wisdom is vindicated by her children.
 - a. Matthew 11:19
 - b. Despite the hardness of men, some will be prompted to repent – II Tim. 3:15

III. Points for Reflection

- A. There is nothing wrong with Christians who experience doubt, but when doubt occurs go to Jesus.
- B. John’s doubt was partially the result of incomplete revelation.
- C. The Pharisees and many of the large crowds following Jesus were the churchgoers of the first century.
- D. The religious leaders rejected Jesus’ claim to be a friend to sinners while we must be a friend to sinners by directing them to Jesus who has the answers for their sin.