

5. We can pretty confidently predict that most Christians would not say what Jesus said to John in 11:4-6 if someone asked us what Jesus came to do. Part of the reason may be that we have the rest of the story, parts that Jesus was not yet ready to reveal to everyone. But if his answer isn't even on our radar, what blind spots might that reveal in our collective understanding of Christ's work?

6. What do you think is Jesus's primary point in 11:11-15? Don't just give your opinion; provide a studied answer. For some help in doing so, check out the notes in at least two good Study Bibles like the NIV Study Bible or the ESV Study Bible. If you don't have a study Bible, check out the free FaithLife Study Bible at bibla.com.

7. If you were teaching a class or writing a lesson that seeks to reconcile God's love with God's judgment, what are some of the main ideas you would want to share? (State your points in one sentence bullet points if you can.)

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

Responding to Jesus

"How to Keep Doubt from Distancing
You from God" (Part 2)

Matthew 11:1-15

Doubt will _____ you from or draw you nearer to God.

Let's not _____ our doubts.

We doubt God when he doesn't do what we _____ him, as God, to do.

How to Keep Doubt from Distancing You from God

1. Question your _____, not just your faith.

2. Diagnose the _____(s) of your doubt.

- Intellectual
- Experiential
- Psychological
- Volitional
- Social

3. Bring your doubts to _____.

4. _____ your faith.

The Old Testament Prophets:

- When OT prophets spoke a message from God, they were never wrong.
- When they weren't speaking a message from God they were not always right.
- Even as they spoke God's messages to the people, they didn't always fully _____ it.

Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



Matthew 3: ¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Every faithful movement of God is _____ in need of a detox.

As we take biblical truths and _____ them to our lives and to our cultural moment, toxins are inevitably introduced.

Sometimes the issues that are raising doubts about our faith have little or nothing to do with our faith but have a lot to do with _____ expressions of our faith.

If your doubts are distancing you from God, maybe you should try a faith detox before you start a faith _____ strike.

If you instinctually become defensive when people are pointing out the toxins in our expression of Christianity, you’re in danger of becoming more like Jesus’s _____ than his followers.

Resources:

- McDowell, Sean, and John Marriott. Set Adrift: Deconstructing What You Believe Without Sinking Your Faith. Zondervan.
- Swoboda, A J. After Doubt: How to Question Your Faith Without Losing It. Brazos Press.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking over your notes from this week’s sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Read Matthew 11:1-15. How might Jesus’s words to John’s disciples in 11:4-6 constitute a rebuke or correction?
3. The prophets had the heady responsibility of being a spokesperson for God. Despite their awesome privilege of speaking God’s words, why should they have remained humble?
4. We have the awesome privilege of declaring the gospel in our world. We are commissioned to tell others about Jesus and disciple them. Yet our understanding of the gospel in all its dimensions is often stunted or cloudy, just like John’s and other prophets’ were. Our understanding isn’t infallible. How can we proclaim confidently and boldly while remaining humble?