



**STUDY GUIDE**  
SERMON TOPIC:  
"Jesus is the Question"  
WEEK 1

## 1. READ

### **Pastor's Selected Scripture: Luke 7 : 18 - 31 New International Version (NIV)**

18 John's disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, 19 he sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"

20 When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

21 At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. 22 So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. 23 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

24 After John's messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? 25 If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. 26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is the one about whom it is written:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you."

28 I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

29 (All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. 30 But the Pharisees and the experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)

31 Jesus went on to say, "To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like?"

### **Further Reading: Matthew 3 :1 – 12 New International Version (NIV)**

1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." 3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:



“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.’”

4 John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. 5 People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. 6 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. 10 The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

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.”

## 2. REFLECT

[Make sure to review this week’s sermon!]





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This week our Senior Pastor Rev. Matthew L. Watley started a new sermon series entitled “Question Everything.” During this series, we will explore some of the essential questions that prominent biblical figures asked in times of uncertainty. As we currently face crisis and uncertainty in our world, this series will help us recognize that questions are central to our lives as believers.

In our lesson for week one entitled “Jesus is the Question,” Pastor Watley demonstrates that sometimes the question is more important than the answer. According to theologian Dr. Martin B. Copenhaver, the bible records that Jesus asked 307 questions, people asked him 183 questions, and he answered 3 questions. These numbers tell us that Jesus actually spent more time raising questions instead of answering them. As Pastor Watley noted, perhaps this was because:

- Jesus understood that questions require introspection, expose false assumptions and allow our opinions to be interrogated by truth.
- Jesus understood that it is through questions, not answers, that our thinking is changed, our faith is formed, and our lives are transformed.

Questions are foundational to our spiritual growth and maturity!

In addition, perhaps instead of answering questions with his words, Jesus responded to questions through his actions. In our scripture for this week (Luke 7:18-31), John the Baptist asks Jesus a question, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” Instead of answering the question with “Yes, I’m the one” or “No, try someone else,” Jesus allows his actions to speak louder than his words. Jesus simply responds by reminding them of the things he has done and the miracles they’ve witnessed.

He tells them to, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.” I am sure that when John heard this description of Jesus and when he heard about the miracles Jesus was performing, it was easier for him to trust that Jesus was the messiah.

However, this was a strange question for John to ask in the first place. John spent his life faithfully proclaiming the messiah’s coming and even recognized Jesus from inside his mother’s womb. Why would a faithful follower of Jesus need to verify his identity? Perhaps as he began to grow weary in prison, John’s circumstances caused him to question the things that he already knew. Ironically, the first thing Jesus mentions is that “the blind receive sight.” Unfortunately, it seems like John’s situation clouded his vision. He is unable to see the very person he has spent his life proclaiming and prophesying about.



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And yet, even with John's questioning, Jesus takes time to welcome, validate, and honor his inquiry. Jesus responds by detailing his actions while simultaneously encouraging John to remember what he has seen, heard, and witnessed. This is also a reminder for us, that instead of focusing on the limitations of our circumstances, how can we focus on what we have seen, heard, and witnessed the Lord do in our lives?

### **Additional Resources:**

American Bible Society's Introduction of John the Baptist  
<https://bibleresources.americanbible.org/resource/john-the-baptist>

### **3. RESPOND**

#### **Introspective Questions**

- **What is this passage of scripture saying to you?**
- **What have you seen, heard, or witnessed the Lord do in your life that reminds you of his love for you?**

#### **Discussion Questions**

- **How do you think John's imprisonment affected his confidence that Jesus was coming?**
- **The passage doesn't tell us much about John's disciples. How do you think they reacted to this correspondence between John and Jesus? How would you have reacted?**