

## I. Faith’s Collision with Circumstance (18-20)

### A. John in his decrease (18) - “The disciples of John reported all these things to him.”

**John’s former followers were now following Jesus; John had declared that he must decrease so that Jesus’ visibility could increase; John suffered for preaching against Herod’s sin; John was now imprisoned, awaiting execution; Jesus did not reverse John’s circumstances**

### B. John in his doubt (19) - “And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?””

**What can fuel our doubts? Prolonged challenges, incomplete understanding, popular misconceptions and denied expectations**

### C. John in his determination (20) - “And when the men had come to Him, they said, John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, Are You the One who is to come, or shall we look for another?””

## II. The Shepherd’s Lavish Reassurance (21-23)

### A. What Jesus does (21)

1. He gave mercy to the burdened - “In that hour He healed many people of diseases and plagues...”
2. He gave deliverance to the bound - “...He healed many people of...evil spirits...”
3. He gave vision to the blind - “...and on many who were blind He bestowed sight.”

### B. What Jesus says (22) - “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them.””

**He used others to remind John, and thus undergirded his faltering faith**

### C. What Jesus desires (23) - “And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” **A gentle rebuke wrapped in a beatitude**

## III. God’s Grace for Those Who Struggle (24-28)

### A. The strongest believers can wrestle with doubt (24-25) - “When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings’ courts.”

### B. Destiny and ministry do not prevent doubt (26-27) - “What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.”

### C. Jesus does not walk away when we doubt (28) - “I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John...”

**This declaration about John’s greatness came in the context of John’s deep struggle with doubt**