

I. John suffers while Jesus works (vv. 1-3)

- Jesus teaches in towns John cannot visit (v. 1)
- John hears the works of Christ from prison (v. 2)
- John's suffering forces his question into the open (v. 3)

II. Jesus proves the kingdom is here (vv. 4-5)

- Go report what you "hear and see"
 - The blind see.
 - The lame walk.
 - Lepers are cleansed.
 - The deaf hear.
 - The dead are raised.
 - The poor receive good news.
- The works of Jesus reveal an intrusion of the kingdom into fallen creation.

III. Why might John stumble? (v. 6)

- John already heard of Christ's works; why does Jesus report them again?
- Jesus gives a positive answer; why might it cause John to stumble?
- Jesus omits two prophecies from Isaiah:
 - Judgment against evil (Isaiah 35:4; 61:1-2).
 - Freedom for prisoners (Isaiah 61:1).
- Jesus claims He is the Coming One, but John will not be released from prison.

IV. John's death prepares the way for the cross (Matt. 14:1–12; 17:10–13)

- John confronts Herod's sin and is imprisoned (14:3–4).
- Herod executes John (14:9–10).
- John fulfills Elijah's role through preaching and suffering (17:10–13).
- John's suffering foreshadows the suffering of the Son of Man (17:12–13).

V. What do we do with John's death?

- John's lack of deliverance does not invalidate Jesus' other signs.
- In his first coming, Jesus brings judgment—but instead of executing it upon sinners, he takes it upon himself.\
- Herod held John's body, but not his hope.

VI. What we take away...

- Are you poor enough to receive? (Isa. 55:1).
- The mountain is breathtaking, but fruit grows in the valley.
- We carry Christ's death so his resurrection life may be revealed in us (2 Cor. 4:10–12)