



The Truth Worth Stumbling Upon

*Faithfully asking the right question in a
disillusioned era*



"Still Doubting"

John Granville Gregory, 1990



"The Incredulity of Saint Thomas"

Caravaggio, 1601

John 17:3

Now this is eternal life, that they may *know* You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

The Person of John the Baptist in the *Gospel of Matthew*

- 3:1-12** Preaching and baptising in the wilderness -
“Repent!”
Prophecy of One who comes after him
- 3:13-17** Baptises Jesus “to fulfill all righteousness”
- 4:12** Put into prison by Herod for rebuking him
- 9:14** His disciples confront Jesus about their lack of fasting

John the Baptist *questions* Jesus

Matthew 11:2-3

And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

What does this *reveal* about John the Baptist?

TRUE HUMANITY

Maybe John had doubts like any other? Perhaps his vision of the coming Christ and what he was hearing didn't line up for him?

DEEP HUMILITY

His whole life calling was wrapped up in the reality of Jesus being the Christ. For his predictions to be wrong would have discredited his whole ministry.

VULNERABLE BOLDNESS

He had the courage to send his disciples to ask Jesus.

What is Jesus' *response*?

MATTHEW 11:4-5

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. [Isaiah 35 / 61]

What is Jesus' *response*?

NO CONDEMNATION

He doesn't respond out of frustration and send pronounce judgment on John, rather encourages him.

LEADS HIM TO THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD

He simply affirms what scripture says about Him.

AFFIRMS JOHN'S IDENTITY TO THE MASSES

Greatest man born of a woman

More than a prophet - *Elijah that is to come according to Malachi*

What is Jesus' *response*?

MATTHEW 11:6 AMP

Blessed is he who takes no offense at Me - finds no cause for stumbling and is not hindered from seeing the Truth.

What *hinders us* from seeing the Truth?

11:16-19

Disillusionment of this generation

Neither mourning nor celebration will elicit a response
Apathy, numb, disappointed

11:21-22

Stubbornness of Chorazin and Bethsaida

Refusal to turn from their ways

11:23-24

Pride of Capernaum

Inability to acknowledge Jesus' Lordship

11:25

Hidden from the wise / learned

When approaching God the challenge is to believe like a child not be puffed up with the knowledge of our present age

11:27

Only the Son knows the Father

No access to God any other way

Listening to Jesus' call

MATTHEW 11:28-30

Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.

A comparative look at Joel 2

JOEL 2:12-14

“Now, therefore,” says the Lord,
“**Turn to Me with all your heart,**
With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.”
So rend your heart, and not your garments;
Return to the Lord your God,
For He *is* gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.

John Piper on being *filled with the Spirit*

When God draws near to a person by his Spirit, he does so to reveal Himself. He aims to be known as *God*, not as a psychic phenomenon or some indescribable fantasy.

Therefore when he pours Himself on us by His Spirit, He stirs up in us true images and conceptions of His beauty and power and mercy and truth and holiness and greatness, and He quickens our affections to respond properly to all that we see.