

## Bury the Hatchet – 1

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### Scripture:

**Matthew 11:1-18** - Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.

<sup>2</sup> And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> *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.* <sup>6</sup> **And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.**"

<sup>7</sup> As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses.<sup>9</sup> But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> For this is *he* of whom it is written:

'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,  
Who will prepare Your way before You.'

<sup>11</sup> "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup> And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup> For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. <sup>14</sup> And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup> He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

<sup>16</sup> "But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, <sup>17</sup> and saying:

'We played the flute for you,  
And you did not dance;  
We mourned to you,  
And you did not lament.'

<sup>18</sup> For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' <sup>19</sup> The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children."

## Two important facts I have learned in my Christian / Pastoral journey:

1. Offense toward God leads to the sin of unbelief!
2. We must focus on what God has done and is doing, not on what he hasn't done!

### Introduction:

- Questioning why John the Baptist was the greatest of prophets:
  - We don't have the supernatural expressions like Elijah
  - We don't have the prophetic expressions like Isaiah
  - We don't see the expressions dreams and visions like Daniel
  - We don't see the manifestations like Ezekiel
- Reasons why John was considered the greatest:
  - John ministry was effective in the time of drought [physically and spiritually]. There was over 400 years of no prophetic utterance...
  - John was the forerunner of Christ, called to prepare the way – **Malachi 3**
  - John's ministry was the climax of the Law and the Prophets
    - Jesus then said, *the least in the Kingdom of heaven are greater...* What does this mean?
  - Not a reference to those who are in heaven
  - Jesus was demonstrating Kingdom lifestyle
- As children of Israel journeyed out of Egypt, they were baptized through the Red Sea
- Before they could enter the promise land they were baptized in the Jordan
- **Matthew 3: 13 [NIV]** - John said I need to be baptized by you...
  - John was referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit
- **Matthew 3:11[NIV]**–John fore saw the *baptism in the Spirit*
- Jesus was saying that those who are *baptized in the Spirit* are greater than John the Baptist.
- John was beheaded by Herod before the Holy Spirit was given

### 1. Why did John question whether Jesus was the Messiah or not?

- There is some difficulty in what is here spoken of John. *Some have thought he was utterly ignorant of our Lord's Divine mission, and that he sent merely for his own information; but this is certainly inconsistent with his own declaration, Luke 3:15 [NIV] , etc.; John 1:15 , 26 , 33 , 3:28 , etc.*
- Others suppose he sent the message merely for the instruction of his disciples.
- A third opinion takes a middle course between the two former, and states that, though John was at first perfectly convinced that Jesus was the Christ, yet, entertaining some hopes that he would erect a secular kingdom in Judea, wished to know whether this was likely to take place speedily. It is very probable that John now began, through the length of his confinement, to entertain doubts, relative to his kingdom, which perplexed and harassed his mind.

### 2. Could it be that John was offended and almost lost his faith because Jesus did not come to his aid in prison.

- **Luke 4: 18-19 [NIV]** – Jesus ministry was to bring freedom to prisoners.
- *Offense* is the greatest cause of disease
- Maybe he was offended because he had promoted the Lord and His ministry, but now he feels that the Lord has forgotten him.