

“A Crisis of Faith”

Matthew 11:1-19

Crisis Management

“the process by which an organization deals with a disruptive and unexpected event that threatens to harm the organization or its stakeholders.”

"In such circumstances we are forced to face what we mean when we speak of faith. Do we have to believe in spite of the evidence to the contrary? Do we believe no matter what? How do we handle the deep and pressing questions our own minds bring as our expectations and reality do not match? For me, in my time in prison, I expected God to do certain things, and to do them in a sensible way and time. I expected that God would act fairly quickly and that I would sense his intervention.

My reading of Scripture, my grasp of God's promises, my trust in the reliability of God's Word, the teaching I had received, and the message I had embraced, had led me to expect certain things, and in a particular way. When this did not occur in the way I expected, or in the timing that I thought it should, I was both confused and angry.“ - Stuart McAllister

I. John's Crisis of Faith

A. John's Background

B. Beginning of His Crisis

C. His Response to His Doubts

"Crises of every kind will find us ... But these crises enter our lives not just as challenges to us to retain our balance and stability, but as invitations to stretch our hearts and minds."

-Ronald Rohlheiser

Isaiah 35:4-6

Behold, your God will come with vengeance;
The recompense of God will come,
But He will save you.”

Then the eyes of the blind will be opened
And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.
Then the lame will leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.
For waters will break forth in the wilderness
And streams in the Arabah.

Isaiah 61:1-3

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
Because the Lord has anointed me
To bring good news to the afflicted;
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to captives
And freedom to prisoners;
To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
To grant those who mourn in Zion,
Giving them a garland instead of ashes,
The oil of gladness instead of mourning,
The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting.

"I am no longer sure that this is what my father claims it to be--the Word of God. But of this I am sure. If it be the Word of God, and if I come to it with an unprejudiced and open mind, it will bring assurance to my soul of itself." - G.Campbell Morgan

"That Bible found me!"

I. John's Crisis of Faith

A. John's Background

B. Beginning of His Crisis

C. His Response to His Doubts

II. The Crowd's Crisis of Faith

A. Attitude Towards John Changed

B. Jesus Speaks Truth into their lives

1. Truth about John

2. Truth about the Kingdom of God

“And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing....” (NLT)

“From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom is pressing forward vigorously, and vigorous men are eagerly taking possession of it.”

- William Hendriksen

Luke 13:24

“Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

“What Jesus emphasizes is that one cannot sleep his way into the kingdom. On the contrary, entrance into the kingdom requires earnest endeavor, untiring energy, utmost exertion.”

- William Hendriksen

