

CHRIST THE ONE

Are you the one? Anyone ever ask you that? Are you the one who broke the cookie jar? Or, are you the one for me? Maybe you wonder if Jesus is really the Christ He claimed to be?

John the Baptizer had come to pave the way for the Christ, but as he languished in prison, he wondered if Jesus was the Christ. It was kind of "*what are you waiting for?*" question. Jesus' answer gives comfort and strength to us today too, as we wait for God's work in our lives.

ARE YOU THE ONE? - In Luke 7:18-20, the disciples of John had recounted Jesus' activities to John, who was in prison. Jesus had just raised a man from the dead. The people reported Him as a great prophet, and word spread all across Galilee and throughout Judea. John had two of his disciples go to Jesus, saying, "*Are You the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?*"

Many people ask this question, even subconsciously. John had prophesied in Luke 3:15, "*I baptize with water, but He who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am unworthy to untie. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, to clear His threshing floor and to gather wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.*" John expected great and dramatic things from Jesus.

DOES HE DELAY? - John had courageously and faithfully declared the coming of the Christ, just as God had instructed him and prophesied about him: "*I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*"

This was just as the prophet had foretold in Isaiah 40, along with "*the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and behold, the Lord God comes with might, and His arm rules for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him and His recompense before Him.*" When would all this come?

John's ministry was nearly over. Herod had put him in prison (Matthew 11). He had heard of Jesus' miracles, but what about deliverance and recompense? Many of the multitudes expected the Messiah to come and overthrow the Roman government, because of the Old Testament allusions to the conquering Christ. They wanted the winnowing fork and unquenchable fire.

WANT DELIVERANCE? - In John's distress, he was ready for the next phase of the Christ's ministry. Many people feel the same way today. Perhaps you're researching what the news media won't report, about corruption and coercion of government and commerce. When will the white hats ride to the rescue and overthrow the black hats who wreak so much havoc?

"If God's promises are true, what are we to make of the war, violence, corruption and greed that are rife in the world?" asks Colin Smith. "As we look at the church, what are we to make of the compromise, sin, confusion and complacency that are so prevalent? As I look at my own life, how am I to make sense of the ongoing battle with indwelling sin and the struggle to live a godly life?"

JESUS RESPONDS - In verses 21-23, Luke writes that in that hour Jesus healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits and blindness. And He answered John's disciples, "*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 the gospel preached to them. Blessed is the one who is not offended by Me.*" Jesus answered them in word and deed.

Jesus also showed them that all they've heard is true. He reminds them what Isaiah had said about Him, which He quoted in Luke 4:18, "*the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me, to proclaim good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*" Then Jesus said, "*today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.*" Fulfilled in Him.

YOUR RESPONSE? - Do your circumstances or expectations cause you to question Jesus? "Jesus sends John's messengers back with overwhelming empirical and Scriptural evidence that massive messianic power was flowing through Jesus," notes RK Hughes, "but no explanation why fiery judgment was withheld, or why John was not delivered from prison."

We too can remember what Scripture says, and take heart. The record points to the ability and authority of God come in the flesh, leaving no doubt that Jesus is the Promised One. Any prophecies not already fulfilled will most assuredly be, in God's perfect time. Trust Him! ☐