# Lesson 14 Matthew 11 Jesus and John the Baptist

Life in Christ: When did you feel closest to Our Lord this week?

1. After sending His Apostles on their mission, Jesus goes around Galilee (NIV translation) preaching in the Apostles towns. Why do you think he did that? Perhaps, Matthew 13:57 sheds some light on it?

Matthew 11:1 (NIV)

1 When Jesus finished giving these commands to his twelve disciples, he went away from that place to teach and to preach in their towns.

Matthew 13:57

57 But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house.”

1. A. Jesus revealed the Messianic Secret to the disciples of John the Baptist, yet, in what way was His response to their question still cryptic?

Matthew 11:4-5

4 Jesus said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you hear and see:

5 The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.

B At the same time, in what way would it be perfectly clear to a Jew of Our Lord’s day?

Isaiah 26:9

9 But your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise!

Isaiah 29:18-19

18 On that day the deaf shall hear the words of a scroll; and out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see.

19 The lowly shall again find joy in the LORD, the poorest rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 35:5-6

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall see, and the ears of the deaf be opened;

6 Then the lame shall leap like a stag, and the mute tongue sing for joy.

Isaiah 61:1

1 He has sent me to bring good news to the afflicted, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, release to the prisoners

C Do you think Jesus response would be more comforting to John the Baptist in prison, soon to be martyred, than if Jesus had simply said, “Yes, I am the Messiah?” Why or why not?

1. A What does Jesus mean by His final words to John the Baptist’s disciples?

Mathew 11:6

6 And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me

B What do these words mean for you today?

1. Jesus sings the praises of John the Baptist, claiming he is even greater than Elijah, the greatest of the prophets. Why would He say that, “the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he”?

Matthew 11:11

11 Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

1. Jesus is uncharacteristically explicit concerning the identity of John the Baptist as the promised prophet preparing the way for the Messiah. Do you think this is an explicit claim by Jesus to be the Messiah? Why or why not

14 And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, the one who is to come.

1. Jesus lays mighty woes upon the towns where He has preached and performed miraculous deeds, comparing them unfavorably to even some of the most evil, pagan towns of the Old Testament. What justifies such harsh criticisms of these towns? Consider Matthew 13:15.

Matthew 11:21-24

21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.

23 And as for you, Capernaum: ‘Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the netherworld.’ For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”

Matthew 13:15

Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.’

1. Why would Jesus be happy that His teachings are hidden from the wise, but revealed to the childlike?

Matthew 11:25

25 At that time Jesus said in reply, “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike.

Catechism 2785

2785 The free gift of adoption requires on our part continual conversion and new life. Praying to our Father should develop in us two fundamental dispositions: Second, a humble and trusting heart that enables us "to turn and become like children": for it is to "little children" that the Father is revealed.

1. How do you think the religious authorities would appreciate Jesus’ comment that only He can reveal God to the Jewish people? Consider Catechism 151 and John 8:56-59.

Matthew 11:27

27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

Catechism 151

151 For a Christian, believing in God cannot be separated from believing in the One he sent, his "beloved Son", in whom the Father is "well pleased"; God tells us to listen to him. The Lord himself said to his disciples: "Believe in God, believe also in me." We can believe in Jesus Christ because he is himself God, the Word made flesh: "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known." Because he "has seen the Father", Jesus Christ is the only one who knows him and can reveal him.

John 8:56-59

56 Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.

57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?”

58 Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM.”

59 So they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid and went out of the temple area.

1. In last week’s lesson, Jesus said Hid followers must take the cross and be willing to lose his life. How can He now say “My yoke is easy and my burden light?

Matthew 10:38-39

38 and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.

39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 11:30

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”