



Study 19: The Darkness of Doubt

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Scanning

Main Texts: Luke 7:18-35

Other Texts: Daniel 3:16-18; Hebrews 11:32-40

Group Discussion: How does the historical background to this story (7:18-35) change the way you read it?
NB. John is in dungeon, awaiting crass execution (see Mark 6:14-29)

Going Deeper

1. How does Jesus "help" John in his season of doubt and disappointment?
 - Is doubt and disappointment healthy?
2. What is Jesus' basic assessment of John's life in these verses?
 - Where does Luke seem to have his eye directly on his readers (namely, us!) in these verses?
3. Consider questions 1 and 2 again. What from your answers is personally helpful for your life? Turn theory and good ideas into something that is really useful for you.
4. Read Daniel 3:16-18. What do you think of the three Jew's response to the King? What would it look like to emulate them in your life?
5. Read Hebrews 11:32-40. What do you notice about this list of great models of faith?
6. What are some of the well-intended Christian myths that John's story deals to?
 - What do people mean when they say: "If you are faithful, God will bless you"?
 - "It pays off to be a Christian." Do you agree? Why or why not?
 - Are Christians guaranteed protection from any pain and trials that non-Christians face? Justify your answers.
7. John's great life ended with him rotting in a dungeon, then cruelly murdered. If there is no certain pay off for living a righteous life, what motivates us to godly living here and now?
 - Consider your answers for this question: are they God-centred or "me" centred? Should that matter?

Applying

8. John's life motto is found in John 3:30. What things about Christ must become greater in your life? What things about you must become less?

Jesus greater

Me less

9. Put in one sentence the lesson from this study that you want to remember for the rest of your life.