**Are You the One?**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 7:18-35

**The Big Idea**

Jesus does things and says things that often don’t fit within our expectations and can create genuine doubt and questions. Jesus has room for our doubts, and so we’re invited to wrestle with him from a posture of humility that is willing to be corrected by him.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. On Sunday, we discussed the role of doubt in the Christian life. How was doubt modeled for you in your formative years? Was room given for real doubt?

2. What from Sunday’s message was most personally impactful for you and why?

3. As mentioned on Sunday, Jesus did things and said things that “scandalized” people and left them confused and questioning. The Christian worldview continues to be a challenge for many people. What are some of the main issues that you still wrestle with or question within the Christian worldview?

4. Sunday’s message concluded with the idea of doubting poorly vs. doubting well. As you consider what was said there (see the outline below), what would a faithful response be for you at this time in your life? And is there anything you’d want to add to those comments?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. John’s Question

A. “Are you the one?” Jesus’s ministry is so different from John’s expectations, that John is having genuine doubts about Jesus’s identity as Messiah

 B. John had theological issues

1. John was expecting the Messiah to clean house and bring more judgment (see Lk 3:9, 16-17)

2. Jesus wasn’t doing that; Israel’s structures remained unchanged

C. John had personal issues

1. After faithfully following the call God on his life, John was now in prison and was wondering, if Jesus was Messiah, why he hadn’t been rescued

2. Consider the trajectory of John’s life: miraculous birth, dynamic ministry, then a waning ministry, imprisonment and ultimately death by beheading

3. After the high point of baptizing Jesus and seeing the Messiah revealed, John’s life took a deeply disappointing and unexpected trajectory

D. We often wrestle with the very same dynamics as John

1. We have theological/intellectual questions

a. Our issues with Jesus are probably quite different than John’s based on our cultural assumptions

b. Every culture views Jesus from the angle of its assumptions, so Jesus “scandalizes” every culture in different ways.

c. In John’s Old Testament prophetic context, Jesus’s lack of bringing judgment on the wicked is scandalous.

d. In our modern secularized western society, where the autonomy and freedom of the individual to live as they please is the ultimate good, we are scandalized by other things (e.g. the judgment inherent in heaven and hell, the exclusivism of Jesus’ message, Jesus’s sexual ethic, etc.)

 2. We have personal issues

a. When life doesn’t go the way we had hoped, we can become disappointed and even disillusioned with God

b. Our personal experience can very much shape our relationship with God

II. Jesus’s response

 A. Jesus is gracious with John

1. Jesus doesn’t rebuke John but rather affirms his role in God’s plan

2. Jesus realizes he is different from what was expected and he seems to have room for John’s sincere questions

B. Jesus simply points to what he’s been doing as if to say, “My ministry speaks for itself” (v. 22)

C. Jesus offers a blessing to those who are not “scandalized” by him (v. 23)

1. The Greek word is “skandalon”: it literally refers to a stumbling block; something laid in front of your path that might cause you to trip or fall or no longer continue on the path you are going.

2. Jesus says and does very unexpected things and we can be “scandalized” by that and no longer want to continue on the journey of faith with him. So he is calling people to continue on the journey, stick with him, get back up and keep going, even when he doesn’t conform to our expecations.

III. How can we doubt well on our journey with Jesus?

 A. Doubting poorly

1. Lazy doubting = sitting with generalized questions about Jesus and (rather than intentionally pursuing them), letting those cause us to slowly drift away from Jesus (like a married couple who, rather than face into some of their issues, chooses to slowly drift away and lose intimacy)

2. Doubting as a cover up = letting some intellectual questions and doubts we have be a cover for simply living however we want

3. Doubting that leaves no room for being offended/scandalized by Jesus

a. v. 31-34: There are some who simply want Jesus to dance they way they want him to dance and won’t be satisfied unless he conforms to their expectations.

b. The minute Jesus offends them, they walk away.

 B. Doubting well

1. Bringing our honest questions and doubts to Jesus but also giving him permission to correct or even offend us from time to time

2. A posture of repentance = the willingness to have your mind changed. V. 29-30: those who had submitted themselves to John’s baptism of repentance, stuck with Jesus and followed him, and those who didn’t, left him

 3. See Peter’s posture with Jesus in John 6:66-69