



5 Daily Devotionals (From September 13th Sermon)

Day 1 — When You Begin to Doubt

Key Verse:

“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” — Matthew 11:3

Reflection:

John the Baptist was one of the boldest servants of God in Scripture. He fearlessly preached repentance, called people away from sin, baptized them, and prepared the way for Jesus. He even baptized Jesus and heard the Father declare, “This is my beloved Son.”

Yet now John was sitting in prison. His circumstances had changed, and suddenly questions arose: *Was Jesus really the Messiah? Had John misunderstood? Was all of this worth it?*

If someone as faithful as John could struggle with doubt, we shouldn't be surprised when we struggle too. Suffering can cloud our perspective. Difficult circumstances can make us wonder whether God sees us, cares about us, or is still working.

But notice what John did with his doubts: **he took them to Jesus.**

Doubt doesn't have to drive us away from Christ. It can drive us toward Him. When life becomes confusing, we don't need to pretend everything is fine. We can bring our questions, fears, and struggles to Jesus.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, when doubt and fear begin to overwhelm me, help me run toward You rather than away from You. Remind me that You are faithful even when I cannot understand what You are doing. Amen.

Application:

What question or doubt are you carrying today? Bring it honestly to Jesus in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your faith.

Day 2 — Find the Lighthouse

Key Verse:

“Go and tell John what you hear and see.” — Matthew 11:4

Reflection:

Jesus didn't respond to John's questions with condemnation. He didn't say, “How could you doubt Me?” Instead, He pointed John back to something objective and certain.

Jesus told John's disciples to look at what they had **seen and heard**. The blind received sight. The lame walked. Lepers were cleansed. The deaf heard. The dead were raised. And the good news was being preached to the poor. Jesus was fulfilling the promises of Scripture concerning the Messiah.

Think about a ship traveling through thick fog. The captain may have years of experience, excellent instruments, and a strong understanding of navigation, but when visibility disappears, uncertainty can take over. The lighthouse doesn't move to accommodate the captain's feelings. It remains where it has always been.

Our lives can become foggy too. Suffering, disappointment, fear, and confusion can make us wonder whether we're still on course.

When that happens, don't make your feelings the final authority. **Let God's Word be the champion of what's true.**

Your circumstances may change. Your emotions may change. God's promises do not.

Jesus remains the lighthouse. His Word remains true. His promises remain sure.

Prayer:

Father, when the circumstances of my life become confusing, keep me anchored to Your Word. Help me trust what You have promised rather than what my emotions tell me. Amen.

Application:

Today, spend a few minutes reading Matthew 11:2–6. Let Jesus' words—not your circumstances—remind you who He is.

Day 3 — Faith Looks Back

Key Verse:

“He will come again to judge the living and the dead.” — Apostles’ Creed

Reflection:

John the Baptist lived before Jesus’ death and resurrection. He knew Jesus was the promised Messiah, but he had not yet seen the cross or the empty tomb. John was still waiting for promises that had not yet been fulfilled.

We live on the other side of Easter.

We don’t have to wonder whether Jesus actually defeated sin, death, and the devil. We look back at what God has already done. Jesus went to the cross for sinners. He died in our place. He rose from the grave. His resurrection changed everything.

That gives us confidence when we face the promises that are still ahead.

Jesus has promised that He will come again. We haven’t seen that day yet. We are still waiting. But God’s faithfulness in the past gives us confidence for the future.

Faith isn’t pretending that life is easy. Faith remembers what God has already done and trusts Him with what He has promised to do.

When life feels uncertain, look backward before you look forward. Remember the cross. Remember the empty tomb. Remember your Baptism. Remember God’s promises.

The God who kept His promise to send His Son will keep His promise to bring His children home.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your death and resurrection. When I struggle to trust what lies ahead, remind me of everything You have already accomplished for me. Strengthen my faith to trust Your promises until You come again. Amen.

Application:

When you’re overwhelmed today, pause and say: **“Jesus has already won the victory. I can trust Him with what comes next.”**

Day 4 — Humble Enough to Hear

Key Verse:

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” — Matthew 11:15

Reflection:

Jesus described two very different responses to His message.

John had questions. He didn't understand what Jesus was doing, so he went to Jesus and asked. Jesus answered him with truth and compassion.

The Pharisees were different. They had already decided what they believed. John was too strange. Jesus ate with the wrong people. Nothing seemed to satisfy them. No matter what Jesus said or did, they found a reason to reject Him.

There's a difference between **honest doubt** and **willful unbelief**.

Honest doubt says, *“Jesus, I don't understand. Help me understand.”*

Willful unbelief says, *“I've already decided I won't believe, no matter what You say.”*

God's Word calls us to humility. We don't come to Jesus because we have everything figured out. We come because we need Him.

That's why church is such a gift. We come as sinners who need forgiveness. We come carrying burdens we cannot fix. We come to hear God's Word, to be reminded of His grace, and to receive the strength He gives through Christ.

The question isn't whether we have every answer.

The question is whether we have ears willing to hear.

Prayer:

Lord, keep my heart humble and my ears open to Your Word. Forgive me when pride causes me to resist You. Give me a repentant heart that receives Your forgiveness and trusts Your truth. Amen.

Application:

Ask yourself: **“Am I coming to God's Word ready to listen, or have I already decided what I want it to say?”**

Day 5 — Come to Jesus and Rest

Key Verse:

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” — Matthew 11:28

Reflection:

Jesus ends this section of Matthew 11 with one of the most beautiful invitations in Scripture.

Come to Me.

Not “fix yourself first.”

Not “carry the burden a little longer.”

Not “prove that you're worthy.”

Come. Life can be brutally hard. We carry guilt from the past, worries about the future, struggles in our marriages and families, financial burdens, physical suffering, and fears we don't know how to resolve.

Jesus doesn't promise that following Him will eliminate every difficulty. Instead, He promises something better: **He will be with us in the midst of them.**

We come to Him to receive what we cannot give ourselves— forgiveness, peace, strength, hope, and rest for our souls.

That's why we need God's Word again and again. That's why we gather with God's people. We need to be reminded that God has not abandoned us.

The Christian life isn't about carrying everything by ourselves.

It is about trusting the One who carries us.

Jesus says, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” His invitation is still open today.

Come to Jesus. Bring Him your weariness. Bring Him your doubts. Bring Him your sin. Bring Him your fears.

And rest in His promise.

Prayer:

Jesus, I am tired and I need You. Thank You for inviting me to come to You with every burden I carry. Forgive my sins, strengthen my faith, calm my fears, and give rest to my soul. Help me trust You today and every day. Amen.

Application:

Take a quiet moment today and consciously give one burden to Jesus. Pray: **“Jesus, this is too heavy for me. I trust You with it.”**

WHEN LIFE GETS FOGGY

Small Group Discussion Guide | Matthew 11:1–30

Big Idea: When doubt, suffering, and confusion make life feel foggy, we don't have to trust our feelings or figure everything out on our own. We can run to Jesus, who draws us back to His unchanging Word, His promises, and His grace.

OPENING QUESTION:

When life gets difficult or confusing, what is your natural response—try to fix it, withdraw, talk to someone, worry, pray, or something else?

READ

Matthew 11:1–30

1. DOUBT DOESN'T MEAN WE HAVE TO RUN FROM JESUS

John the Baptist had boldly proclaimed God's Word and personally witnessed Jesus' baptism. Yet while sitting in prison, John asked, **“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”**

Jesus did not shame John. He pointed him back to the evidence of God's promises: the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor hear the Gospel.

When our lives become difficult, our feelings can become unreliable. Suffering can make us wonder whether God sees us or cares. Jesus' answer is not, “Try harder to believe.” He draws us back to what is objectively true—His Word and His promises.

Supporting Scriptures: Isaiah 35:4–6; Isaiah 61:1; Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:16–17

Discuss:

- What circumstances tend to make you doubt God's presence or goodness?
- Why is it important to distinguish between our feelings and what God has promised?
- How can God's Word function like a “lighthouse” when life becomes foggy?

2. REPENTANCE OPENS OUR EARS TO GOD'S GRACE

John's message was one of repentance and forgiveness. Jesus later confronts the cities that witnessed His mighty works but refused to repent.

There is a difference between **honest doubt** and **willful unbelief**. Honest doubt brings questions to Jesus. Willful unbelief hardens the heart and refuses to listen regardless of the evidence.

The proper response to God's Law is not defensiveness but repentance. And the answer to repentance is the Gospel: forgiveness through Christ.

Supporting Scriptures: Psalm 51:17; Mark 1:15; 1 John 1:8–9; Acts 3:19

Discuss:

- What is the difference between bringing a question to Jesus and closing ourselves off from Jesus?
- Why can repentance actually be a source of freedom rather than shame?
- Where might God be calling you to listen, repent, and trust Him?

3. JESUS GIVES REST TO THE WEARY

Jesus ends this section with one of His most comforting invitations:

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
—Matthew 11:28

We don't come to Jesus primarily because we have everything together. We come because we **need Him**. He gives forgiveness for our past, strength for today, and hope for eternity.

His “yoke” is not a demand that we carry life by ourselves. It is the gracious invitation to follow Him, trust His Word, and receive what He gives.

Supporting Scriptures: Psalm 46:1–3; Isaiah 40:28–31; John 6:37; 1 Peter 5:7

Discuss:

- What burdens are you carrying that you need to bring to Jesus?
- What does it practically look like to “come to Jesus” during a difficult week?
- How does remembering Christ's death and resurrection change the way we face today's struggles?
- How can this group help one another keep our eyes on Jesus when life becomes foggy?

TAKEAWAY

When life gets foggy, don't make your feelings the champion of what is true. Make God's Word the champion.

This week, when anxiety, doubt, guilt, or suffering begins to overwhelm you, pause and ask:

“What has Jesus promised me?”

Then return to His Word, His cross, His resurrection, and His promise:

“Come to me... and I will give you rest.”

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we confess that there are times when suffering, fear, and confusion cause us to doubt Your promises. Forgive us when we trust our feelings more than Your Word. Turn our hearts back to You. Remind us that You have conquered sin, death, and the devil through Your death and resurrection. Give us faith to trust Your promises, strength to endure our struggles, and peace when life becomes difficult. Help us bring our burdens to You and rest in Your grace. Keep us faithful until the day You bring us home. Amen.