



September 6, 2026

“What Did You Go Out To See?”

Luke 7:18–35

Messengers from John the Baptist

18 The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, 19 calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” 20 And when the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’” 21 In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. 22 And he answered them, “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 good news preached to them. 23 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

24 When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 25 What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. 26 What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,

who will prepare your way before you.’

28 I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” 29 (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, 30 but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

31 “To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, “‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.’ 33 For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ 34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ 35 Yet wisdom is justified by all her children.”

- We must know the Old Testament to understand the New Testament
- Israel had been waiting for the Messiah for generations. After the exile, they returned to the land, rebuilt the temple, but they continued living under foreign rule. By the time Jesus arrives, Israel is under Roman occupation, and Herod Antipas is ruling Galilee.
- John the Baptist publicly confronts Herod over his relationship with Herodias, his brother's wife, and Herod throws John into prison in Machaerus.
- And that's where our story begins.
- Previously in **Luke 7:11-17**, Jesus had raised a man from the dead in Nain. Scripture tells us that the report of this miracle spread throughout all of Judea and all the surrounding country. Reports would eventually reach John.



- John, the man who announced the coming Messiah, is now sitting in prison wondering, **“Jesus, are You really the One?”**
- **Why? Jesus wasn’t what John expected.**
- **Part 1 (Luke 7:18-23)** Jesus speaks to John’s disciples
- **Part 2 (Luke 7:24-30)** Jesus speaks to the crowd
- **Part 3 (Luke 7:31-35)** Jesus speaks to this generation

Read **Luke 7:18-35**

Part 1 **(Luke 7:18-23)** Jesus speaks to John’s disciples

- **Luke 7:18-20** John's disciples
 - The 2 disciples here are significant for accurate evidence.
 - **Deuteronomy 19:15, 1 Timothy 5:19, Hebrews 10:28**
- John is the messenger in the wilderness prophesied in **Isaiah 40:3** and **Malachi 3:1**. The forerunner of Jesus!
 - → What happened? Why is he doubting all of a sudden?
 - John expected the Messiah to bring about divine judgement and dismantle the oppressive political powers. Instead, all John hears about in prison is that He's healing people.
 - John expresses doubt because Jesus was not what John expected.
- Jesus responds by showing the disciples of John His power
 - The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news preached to them.
 - What is the purpose of miracles? To point to Jesus!
 - Jesus is stating very clearly: the Kingdom is here. This is stated in **Isaiah 61:1** → the good news to the poor.

Read **Isaiah 61:1**

- **Luke 7:23→ Blessed are those who are not offended by Jesus. In other words, blessed are those who want to be conformed to Christ's image, NOT make Him in our image.**

Part 2 (Luke 7:24-30) Jesus speaks to the crowd

→ Jesus asks this question three times. Why did they go into the wilderness?

→ To see something insignificant? **NO!**

After nearly 400 years...they heard there was a prophet!

- Early 1st century Jewish writer Josephus states that John was a good moral man that amassed a huge following. His following was so large and his followers were so loyal that many leaders feared a massive political upheaval.

John was more than a prophet.

- God's kingdom was announced by John.
- Through Jesus' coming, it was inaugurated.
- John fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi 3:1 and Jesus quotes this prophecy directly in **7:26**
- **Jesus is making it clear the He is the Messiah**

Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. **Malachi 3:1**

- Jesus says that John was the greatest person ever born. Yet the one who is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than John. John stood at the doorway of the Kingdom, he announced its arrival and pointed people to its King.
- Through Jesus, we have been brought into the Kingdom that John was announcing.
- Through the Holy Spirit, we now participate in that Kingdom.

Jesus' point: God's kingdom > This world

If you are in Christ Jesus:

You have been inaugurated into a **New Kingdom**.

→ This world is not your **home**.

→ It's your **mission**.

- They rejected God's purpose because they couldn't let go of their own. They had their own expectations of what God should do, and they weren't willing to surrender their authority to Him.

Part 3 (Luke 7:31-35) Jesus speaks to this generation

The Parable of the Marketplace:

Jesus speaks a parable that the people of this generation are like children sitting in a marketplace.

What does this mean? We are all sitting with our own expectations of who God is supposed to be and what He is supposed to do.

John and Jesus both proclaimed the Kingdom.

John: repentance portrayed through judgement and sorrow (*fasting*)

Jesus: repentance portrayed through compassion and joy (*wedding feast*)

Both are valid expressions of different aspects of God's kingdom.

Main Point: Hearts that are distracted by their own agenda will always find a reason to reject God, regardless of how He comes.

It's only through wisdom that we can see God's Kingdom for what it truly is.

"Wisdom is justified by all her children" – Look at how much God's Kingdom has grown. Look at how many lives have been transformed by Jesus.

Application:

- What did you go out to see? Why are you following Jesus? Why are you interested in following Jesus?
- You heard that there is a King that has the power to heal and the power to save. His name is Jesus!
- The issue is not the Gospel, the issue is our expectations!
- John wasn't wrong to have questions. He took his questions directly to Jesus.

Church, don't lose sight of Jesus amidst your unmet expectations. Don't forget what He has done in your life. He doesn't cast you out for doubting Him, He points you to what He's done...the greatest miracle of all being His death and resurrection!

If you find yourself in a season of doubt, because Jesus isn't meeting your expectations, do exactly what John did. Bring your doubts to Jesus!

- Go to His Word
- Go to His church

- Go to the prayer closet **(Matthew 6:6)**

So, what did you go out to see?

Did you go out to see a Jesus that would meet all of your expectations? Or did you go out to see a King that is greater than all of your expectations?