



Wayne's Words

Rev. Wayne Walters



Wrestling with Doubt as Part of Faith: John 11.2-11

What place is there for doubt in a person of faith?

As we read the psalms, we see they are full of people wrestling with God in times of adversity and when no answer appears after long periods of waiting and hoping.

In the same way, we sometimes wonder if we were deluding ourselves, succumbing to wishful thinking or hoping against hope for what is too good to be true.

Yet there are so many promises in the Bible that prayers made in faith, with perseverance and in agreement with God's word and others, will be answered! I am sure we can all relate times when answers seemed to have come—even amazingly. Yet over the long-haul other matters seem unyielding. And when reversals occur, were we deceived in the first place? It can all seem too hard.

John the Baptist had an incredible ministry with thousands flocking to him from all over Israel. He had even witnessed the Spirit come upon Jesus at his baptism. But now in the darkness and lonely dread of Herod's prison cell, John has second thoughts. Was Jesus really the One, or should we expect another?

Jesus' answer is to point to the miracles that are the fruit of his ministry, echoing the promise of Isaiah 35, a passage that had not previously featured as Messianic. Jesus' answer calls John to reconsider the Scripture and his expectations of a national liberator Messiah. It was a call to trust God, though things were taking a different course from that which John anticipated.

Romans 15:4 reminds us: 'For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.'

One such scripture is from the prophet Habakkuk (3:17-18) who questioned God about choosing the evil Babylonians to punish his people: 'Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vine, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stall, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour.'

This is a decision of faith, even though heavy with discouragement and doubt.

May God continue to uphold you through your most testing times.

God bless you, *Wayne*

