

# The Colossal Cousin — John

*Matthew 11:2-19*

## I. Checking on his salvation. Vss. 2-3

- A. It is good for anyone, to be sure, to know the correct Messiah immediately preceding death.
- B. Some of John's thoughts: "Why aren't you destroying the wicked?; When are you coming for me?"
- C. They therefore ask, *Are you the coming One?*
  - 1. **John 1:20** And he confessed, and did not deny, and he confessed, "I am not the Christ."
  - 2. John sent this question for his own satisfaction or for the satisfaction of others of his disciples.
  - 3. John's doubt might arise from his own present circumstances.
  - 4. John asks for an ax to be laid at the tree while Jesus asks to water the tree - seems contradictory?  
**Matthew 3:10-11** "And the ax is already laid at the root of the trees..." (NASB)  
**Luke 13:6-9** "... Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; and if it bears fruit next year, [fine;] but if not, cut it down." (NASB)

## II. Convincing him that He is the Savior. Vss. 4-6

- A. He points them to what they heard and saw, which they must tell John, since they were eyewitnesses
  - 1. *What you see* of the power of Christ's miracles, report to John personally.  
**Luke 7:21** At that very time He cured many [people] of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He granted sight to many [who were] blind. (NASB)
  - 2. The miracles are evidenced prophetically, by many witnesses, and by His unworldly ministry.
    - a. "No religion, regardless of its pretended origin and miraculous proofs, can call itself divine if it makes a man mean, inhuman, or indifferent to the weak." Harold Fowler
- B. He pronounces a blessing (beatitude) on those that were not offended in Him, especially John. Vs. 6.

## III. Commending the champion. Vss. 7-11

- A. John preached *in the wilderness*, and there people flocked in crowds to him. Vss. 7-8
- B. They went out to him to see him; rather to feed their eyes with the unusual appearance of his person.
- C. He was a firm, resolute man, and not *a reed shaken with the wind*; you have been so in your thoughts of him, but *he* was not so.
- D. He was a *self-denying* man, and *mortified* to this world. "Was he a man *dressed in soft clothing?*"
- E. His greatest commendation of all was his office and ministry. Vss. 9-11
  - 1. He was *a prophet*, yes, and *more than a prophet*. Vs. 9
  - 2. He was the same that was predicted to be Christ's forerunner. Vs. 10
  - 3. The great commendation of John the Baptist was, that God owned his ministry. **John 1:33**  
**John 1:33** ... but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me...  
**John 1:6** There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. (NASB)  
**Matthew 21:25** "The baptism of John was from what [source,] from heaven or from men?"...
  - 4. The least in the kingdom is greater than John. Why? Vs. 11
    - a. He lived in the era of preparation; we live in an era of realization.
    - b. He was a friend of the Bridegroom; we are the Bride.
    - c. He lived under the Law that shadowed; we live under grace that reveals.

#### IV. Cautioning entrance into the kingdom. Vs. 12

- A. In a good sense, only violent men could gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven or possess it. The kingdom is sought by a burning zeal.  
**Luke 16:16** "The Law and the Prophets [were proclaimed] until John; since then the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. (NASB)  
**Luke 13:24** "Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. (NASB)
- B. In a bad sense, the kingdom suffers (undesirable) violence contrary to the will or desires of the King  
**John 6:14-15** ...they said, "This is of a truth the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. (NASB)  
**John 12:12-13** On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and [began] to cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel." (NASB)

#### V. Comparing John as Elijah. Vs. 14

- Malachi 4:5** "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. (NASB)  
**Luke 1:17** "And it is he who will go [as a forerunner] before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (NASB) Cf. Matt. 17:10-13

#### VI. Contrasting personalities who spread the Good News. Vss. 16-19

- A. The unconverted are foolish and stubborn as children; mindless and playful as children. Vss.16-17
- B. On the one hand, John came *mourning to them, neither eating nor drinking*.
- C. On the other hand, *the Son of man came eating and drinking, and so he piped unto them*.
- D. Both John and Jesus were utterly rejected by the very people they came for. Though they were different personalities, indeed their message was identical, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
- E. The various preachers which God takes for the conversion of sinners, are with many fruitless and ineffectual.
- F. Because individuals do not receive the Good News, they do all the hurt they can to others, by raising and propagating prejudices against the word, and the faithful preachers of it. Vss. 18-19
1. As for John the Baptist, they say, *He has a demon*.
  2. As for Jesus Christ, they say, *He is a drunk and a glutton*.
- G. There is a remnant which do prove the wise counsel of God in selecting the various teachers and preachers of His word. **Luke 7:35** "Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children." (NASB)