

A portrait of Pastor Mike Holloway, a Black man with glasses and a goatee, wearing a black suit and white shirt, with his hands clasped in prayer.

— WHEN THE — **KINGDOM** DOESN'T FEEL LIKE **THE KINGDOM**

John the Baptist has a Question....

LUKE 7:17-23

Pastor Mike Holloway



WALKING ON WATER
— BIBLE CHURCH —

Luke 7:17-23

¹⁷ And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

¹⁸ Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things.

¹⁹ And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

Luke 7:17-23

²⁰ When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’ ”

²¹ And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²² Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind see, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *the* poor have the gospel preached to them.

Luke 7:17-23

²³ And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me.”

CENTRAL TRUTH

- Jesus' works identify Him as the promised Messiah.
- The Kingdom has entered history in Christ.
- The Kingdom's presence does not mean the immediate absence of hardship.

THE BIG IDEA

- Don't interpret God through the pain of your prison.
- Interpret your prison through what God has revealed about Himself In Scripture.

John Knows Jesus

John announced Jesus.

John baptized Jesus.

John saw the Spirit descend.

John declared: “Behold the Lamb of God...”

JOHN'S PRISON

- John was imprisoned for faithfully confronting Herod's sin.
- Faithfulness does not guarantee comfortable circumstances.
- Being Obedient does not exempt us from trouble
- Being in a difficult place does not necessarily mean you are outside the will of God.

Jesus Is Working

Jesus is healing people.

Jesus is delivering people.

Jesus is restoring people.

Jesus has raised a widow's dead son.

And yet John's prison door remains closed.

Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things.

JOHN'S QUESTION

- “Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?”
— Luke 7:19
- Trials can challenge our expectations without requiring us to abandon faith.
- Take your questions to Jesus—not away from Him.

WHEN EXPECTATIONS ARE TESTED

- John expected Messiah's judgment; Herod was still ruling.
- God had not broken His promise—John's understanding of the timing was incomplete.
- Do not hold God responsible for promises He never made.

JESUS GIVES EVIDENCE

- Jesus lets John's messengers watch His works.
- Then He says: "Tell John what things ye have seen and heard."
- His actions are His messianic credentials.

ISAIAH 35 — THE SAVING ARRIVAL OF GOD

- Blind eyes opened.
- Deaf ears unstopped.
- The lame leap.
- “Your God will come... He will come and save you.” —
Isaiah 35:4–6

ISAIAH 29 & 42 — RESTORATION

- Isaiah 29:18–19: the deaf hear and the blind see.
- Isaiah 42:7: God's Servant opens blind eyes.
- Jesus' ministry fulfills the prophetic portrait of restoration.

ISAIAH 61 — GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR

- “The LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings...”
— Isaiah 61:1
- Luke 4: Jesus announces the program.
- Luke 7: Jesus demonstrates the program.

THE DEAD ARE RAISED

- Luke 7:11–17: Jesus has just raised the widow's son.
- Resurrection is a preview of the coming age.
- Every resurrection miracle declares: Death's days are numbered.

THE MIRACLES ARE KINGDOM SIGNS

- Healing is Kingdom evidence.
- Deliverance is Kingdom evidence.
- Resurrection is Kingdom evidence.
- The gospel reaching the poor is Kingdom evidence.

THE KINGDOM HAS BROKEN IN

- “The kingdom of God is come upon you.” — Luke 11:20
- Jesus is not merely displaying power.
- God’s promised reign is breaking into the present age through Christ.

BUT JOHN IS STILL IN PRISON

- Jesus is healing others—but John remains confined.
- Jesus is delivering others—but John is not delivered.
- What do you do when you know God can change it, but He doesn't?

PAIN CAN BECOME A LENS

- “Nobody called me” can become “Nobody cares.”
- “I felt alone” describes an experience; “Nobody cares” judges hearts.
- Pain is real—but pain is not infallible.

DON'T LET YOUR PRISON PREACH

- Discouragement says: “God doesn’t care.” “Nobody Cares”
- Isolation says: “Cut everybody off.”
- Faith says: Let God’s Word interpret your circumstances.

PREACH TO YOURSELF

- Psalm 42: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”
- Then: “Hope thou in God.”
- Make sure God’s Word gets the final word over your feelings.

DON'T TURN AGAINST GOD'S PEOPLE

- Pain can tempt us to withdraw from fellowship.
- Hebrews 10:24–25 calls suffering believers toward one another.
- When hurting, we need Christ, His Word, and His people.

DON'T MAKE PERMANENT DECISIONS IN TEMPORARY PAIN

- Do not let a painful season produce permanent spiritual damage.
- Bring major decisions under Scripture, prayer, wisdom, and godly counsel.
- Pain is a poor counselor when it becomes the only voice.

DON'T BE OFFENDED IN JESUS

- “Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.”
— Luke 7:23
- Questions are not the same as accusations.
- Do not stumble because Jesus does not act according to your timetable.

TRIALS CAN DEVELOP FAITH

- James 1: testing produces endurance and maturity.
- Romans 5: suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope.
- Ask: “Lord, what are You producing in me through this?”

FINAL WORD

- Don't let disappointment become offense.
- Don't let hurt become bitterness.
- Don't let loneliness become isolation.
- The closed door does not mean the King is not reigning.
- Trust Jesus even while the door is still closed.