

## Study Questions for Matthew 11:1-6 and 16-24

### 1. Why do you think John the Baptist sends messengers to ask Jesus if He is “the Coming One”?

**Reference:** Matthew 11:2–3; Matthew 3:11–12

John’s question comes from a place of faith under strain, not faith abandoned. He had proclaimed the coming judgment and separation of the righteous and wicked (Matthew 3:12), yet now he sits imprisoned while Jesus’ ministry emphasizes healing and mercy. The contrast between expectation and lived reality creates dissonance. Rather than withdrawing or growing bitter, John sends his questions directly to Jesus, modeling honest faith that seeks clarification instead of conclusions.

**Everyday application:** Faithful people can still wrestle with doubt, especially when circumstances don’t match expectations.

### 2. How does Jesus respond to John’s question, and why is His response significant?

**Reference:** Matthew 11:4–5; Isaiah 35:5–6; Isaiah 61:1

Jesus responds by pointing to tangible signs that echo prophetic promises. He frames His identity through fulfilled Scripture rather than self-assertion. Healing the blind, restoring mobility, cleansing lepers, **raising the dead** and preaching to the poor align directly with Isaiah’s vision of God’s restoring work (Isaiah 35:5–6; 61:1). Jesus invites John to interpret his situation through the lens of God’s unfolding redemption rather than immediate rescue.

**Everyday application:** When we struggle with doubt, it can help to look for where God is already at work rather than waiting for dramatic signs.

### 3. What does Jesus mean when He says, “Blessed is he who is not offended because of Me”?

**Reference:** Matthew 11:6; Isaiah 8:14

Jesus acknowledges that unmet expectations can become stumbling blocks. The Greek sense of “offended” implies being tripped or ensnared. Jesus knows His way will confuse those expecting swift judgment or political change. The blessing is for those who remain trusting when God’s work unfolds differently than anticipated, recognizing that delay does not equal absence.

**Everyday application:** Disappointment can become an obstacle to faith if we insist God must work on our terms.

### 4. Why does Jesus compare “this generation” to children in the marketplace?

**Reference:** Matthew 11:16–17; Proverbs 29:1

Jesus uses this image to describe a spirit of refusal. Children in the illustration are not grieving or celebrating—they are critiquing. No matter what invitation is offered, they withhold response. This exposes a deeper resistance: a desire to stay uncommitted while remaining critical. Repeated refusal hardens the heart over time (Proverbs 29:1).

**Everyday application:** A hardened heart can dismiss truth regardless of how it’s presented.

## **5. What do the reactions to John the Baptist and Jesus reveal about human expectations?**

**Reference:** Matthew 11:18–19; Luke 7:33–35

The criticisms of John and Jesus contradict each other, revealing that the issue was not their message or methods, but people’s unwillingness to be confronted. By rejecting both austerity and grace, the generation shows a deeper resistance to repentance itself. Wisdom, Jesus notes, is ultimately proven right by its outcomes, not its appearance (Luke 7:35).

**Everyday application:** We can miss what God is doing if we focus more on style than substance.

## **6. Why does Jesus pronounce woes on cities where many of His miracles were done?**

**Reference:** Matthew 11:20–22; Luke 12:47–48

The woes reflect grief as much as judgment. These cities had seen undeniable evidence of God’s power yet experienced no lasting change. Miracles were meant to awaken repentance and humility, not curiosity or entitlement. Jesus emphasizes that privilege without response leads to deeper accountability (Luke 12:48).

**Everyday application:** Familiarity with spiritual truth doesn’t guarantee transformation—response matters.

## **7. What does Jesus mean when He says Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom would have repented?**

**Reference:** Matthew 11:21–24; Ezekiel 16:49–50

Jesus uses shocking comparisons to expose complacency. These cities symbolized moral failure, yet Jesus suggests that exposure to divine revelation matters more than reputation. The statement underscores that repentance is a response to light received, not moral history alone. Ignoring clear revelation hardens the heart more than ignorance ever could.

**Everyday application:** It’s not just what we know, but what we do with what we know that matters.

## **8. What overall warning and encouragement do these passages offer to modern readers?**

**Reference:** Matthew 11:6, 20; Hebrews 3:15

Together, these passages affirm that honest questioning is welcomed, but persistent resistance carries consequences. Jesus distinguishes between doubt that seeks understanding and refusal that avoids change. The invitation remains open, but not indefinitely. The repeated call is to respond while hearts remain tender (Hebrews 3:15).

**Everyday application:** Today is an opportunity to respond—delayed obedience can quietly become disobedience.