



---

# LEAPING WITH JOY: FROM DOUBT TO CHRIST'S ADVENT

---

Sermon | Matthew 11:2-15 | Advent 03



**DECEMBER 13, 2025**

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
89, Mountainview Rd. S. Georgetown ON

## **Leaping with Joy: from Doubt to Christ's Advent!**

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

This morning's sermon is drawn from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

---

Let me ask you a question to begin with.

How many times has Scripture left you surprised, confused, or even in doubt?

You see, many, many people who followed Jesus eventually turned away. They could not accept His words, especially as He declared, "*Today, this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing,*" (Luke 4:21) confirming that He is the One anointed to bring salvation.

Just imagine: God-in-flesh, Jesus Himself, had sown His Word—yet many rejected Him in unbelief.

And many, when their faith grew weak, turned away.

Today, in our Gospel reading, we hear that even John the Baptist—who once boldly confessed Jesus as the Lamb of God—questioned if Jesus was the One to come.

He sent his disciples to ask Jesus, *“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”* (Matthew 11:3)

Dear friends, if even John the Baptist struggled—who was by no means a common man, whose birth was foretold by an angel—we should not be surprised when we too wrestle with the words of the Holy Scripture.

If you recall from last Saturday’s Gospel reading, John the Baptist announced Jesus’ coming as the mighty One who would come in judgement. He confessed that he was not worthy even to carry Jesus’ sandals.

He declared that while he baptized with water, Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.

And in the Gospel of Apostle John, we hear John the Baptist's testimony at the Jordan River: "*Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.*" (John 1:29)

But now, in today's text from Matthew's Gospel, we are left perplexed, as we see John surprised.

The once so bold a preacher, who spoke with certainty, now suddenly was rendered confused, surprised, and in doubt.

Why does this happen?

I do not mean to ask you this, since you know the answer well. We as Lutherans confess that it is *sin* that *envenoms* our hearts with confusion and doubt.

- John the Baptist's question reveals the fallen state of creation, broken because of one man's sin.  
(Romans 5—Adam's sin)
- It also reflects his *gruelling* isolation in prison, cut-off from Christ and from his fellow believers.

And John was not the first to face such paradox. In finding a mismatch between what he preached himself and what he experienced. The power of evil remains strong.

Moses too went through this struggle. He was called to lead God's people out of Egypt, to proclaim the Lord's mighty deliverance. Yet how often did he find himself overwhelmed by the very people he was sent to shepherd?

He preached God's promises, but what he experienced was grumbling, rebellion, and his own weariness.

Elijah, too, faced this paradox. After his bold victory over the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, he fled into the wilderness, terrified and exhausted.

There, under a broom tree, he prayed, "*It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.*" (1 Kings 19:4).

The very prophet who once proclaimed the Lord's power in fire from heaven, yet now he was crushed by fear and loneliness. His faith was envenomed by despair, and he longed for death rather than life.

And now I would ask you:

- When was the last time *you* felt that our Lord had forsaken *you*?
- When did you find yourself *buried alone* under the worries of this world?

- For me, it is worrying about my mother who lives far away. And my daughter who is learning to live on her own in her early twenties.
- For you, perhaps it has been a long night thinking about your parents' illness, when the pain will not relent.
- Or perhaps it has been the daily weight of ever-increasing responsibilities—work, family, and other things that press down so heavily that you wonder if God has forgotten you.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, John the Baptist also felt alone in his struggle. He also bore the burdens of this world pressing heavily upon him.

- Yet he knew *to whom* he must turn. He directed his questions straight to *Jesus*, the only One who could answer.
- Just as Moses, who when overwhelmed by the people's complaints, cried out to the Lord that the burden was too heavy for him, pleading that he could not carry them alone. (Numbers 11)
- And Elijah did likewise, running into the wilderness to cry out to the Lord and beseech His help. (1 Kings 19)

We must also run to our Lord!

With all earnestness, we must lay our questions at Jesus' feet. In every circumstance, we must implore Him.

When John the Baptist was in doubt, he laid his questions before Jesus. And Jesus told his disciples to go and report to him what they had *seen* and *heard*.

When John would have received their report:

- His faith would have *regained strength* in hearing Jesus' words.
- His eyes would have been *opened* to see clearly that Jesus is the One who was to come, as the blind received their sight.
- His ears would have *heard* the proclamation that Jesus makes the deaf hear.
- John would have *leapt with joy* **again** finding that Jesus makes the lame walk.
- And John would have found comfort even in his death knowing that Jesus brings eternal life.

John's waiting had ended.

He looked forward to Jesus' coming in the flesh to bring in the kingdom of God for all on earth.

The news of the Christ's Advent in his ears would have filled him with exceeding joy.

And today, when *we* seek answers to our questions that stir doubt and confusion in our own hearts, the great forerunner of our Lord turns our hearts and minds to Jesus.

John the Baptist's question leads us to the divine answer that **Jesus is Lord**, and John prepares us to be ready for Jesus' Advent, when He returns in His glory.

Having heard this, and filled with joy, we look upon the Advent Wreath, where the third, pink candle shines brightly, signifying the joy that the season of Advent brings to us all.

Dear friends of Immanuel, now you also leap with joy for Jesus comes to you in your ears and your mouth.

The Word of God keeps you and me in our frailties,  
sustains us in our waiting, and restores us with  
forgiveness that we may receive our Lord *faithfully* under  
bread and wine.

Today, we rejoice as our Saviour is near to us now,  
though hidden under His Sacrament.

We are joyful because Jesus has fulfilled His promise of  
coming to His people as their Saviour.

It fills us with joy to remember that His death and  
resurrection make us His own forever.

And we share our joy together in His promise that He is  
coming soon.

May the Lord preserve us in our fellowship, that the joy of  
being together in the same faith may bring us to the day  
when we will be together in the presence of our risen

Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Now may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Him. Amen.

Vijay Samuel