

Would We Have Believed?

(John 20:29)

- Introduction:
1. Have you ever wondered if you would have believed God's spokesmen in the first century if you had lived then?
 2. Would it have been easier to believe if we could have seen and heard them first hand, rather than reading about them in a book?
 3. Most of us might say that it would be easier to believe, if we could have heard and seen men like John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, and Jesus.
 4. But is that really true? This lesson is intended to suggest that how we receive people today is a strong indication as to whether we would have received such men as John, Peter, Paul, and Jesus.

I. Would We Have Believed & Obeyed John The Baptist?

- A. Facts about John.
1. He did his preaching in the wilderness, forcing people to come out to him if they wanted to hear him (Matthew 3:1-2).
 2. He dressed himself in camel's hair, wore a leather girdle, and ate locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:4).
 3. He called religious people who came to hear him preach, a brood of vipers (Matthew 3:7).
- B. I doubt if we would have received John if we...
1. ...Balk at having to travel some distance to study God's word (Mt. 12:42).
 2. ...Tend to judge people by their clothing (1 Sam. 16:7; James 2:1-4).
 3. ...Get upset when a preacher points out our faults (Mt. 23:13-15).

II. Would We Have Believed & Obeyed The Apostle Peter?

- A. Facts about Peter.
1. Peter lacked a formal education, and it showed (Acts 4:13).
 2. Peter also denied Jesus three times (Matthew 26:69-75).
- B. I doubt if we would have received Peter if we...
1. ...Expect a man to be formerly educated before we will listen to him (1 Corinthians 1:18-29).
 2. ...If we are unwilling to give others who fail us, especially more than once, another chance (Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 17:3-4).

III. Would We Have Believed & Obeyed The Apostle Paul?

- A. Facts about Paul.
1. He had been a blasphemer and a persecutor of the church (1 Timothy 1:13).
 2. He was not a fluent speaker (1 Corinthians 2:3-4).
 3. He had a physical appearance that was described as "weak" (2 Cor. 10:10).
- B. I doubt if we would have received Paul if we...
1. ...Hold a person's pre-Christian life against him (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).
 2. ...Won't listen to a preacher whose sermon presentation is not "polished" (Romans 16:17-18).
 3. ...Tend to judge people by their physical appearance (1 Samuel 16:7).

- Conclusion:
1. Would we have believed?
 2. If we're unwilling to believe and obey them today, we probably wouldn't have believed or obeyed them then.