



# REFLECTIONS

September 15, 2013

**so that your faith might not rest on men's  
wisdom, but on God's power.**

*1 Corinthians 2:5*

## Keeping the Faith

One must wonder what was running through John's mind. He was in prison and likely he was in prison for life. He may not have known that he was also living on Death Row. When he reflected on his situation he must have wondered, "How can it be? What is God doing? Has my life been in vain? What have I done to deserve this? Why me?"

John the Baptist once played an important role. God brought him into the world to play it and God had prepared him for it by sending him into the desert to get his act together. His act was to bring attention to the sinfulness of the world and to call people to repent. But the main event for his life was to introduce the Savior, and while doing it John was blessed with the privilege of baptizing Jesus at the coming out party. Was his reward to be a life sentence in prison? "Did I do something wrong?" he might have wondered. So he sent an entourage of followers to seek the answers from Jesus. Indeed, he sent them out to find out if he had introduced the wrong man into the world.

We have all experienced a time when we asked similar questions. Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do bad things happen to me? Sometimes the answer lies in the way it prepared one for the next assignment. Sometimes the answer is found in an example set by one's response to the painful circumstance. Sometimes the answer is never revealed. But Jesus directed John's disciples to a larger picture than John's plight:

*"Go back and report to John what you see and hear: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor."* (Matthew 11:4-5) But then Jesus placed the exclamation point on his answer to John's question.

*"Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."* (Matthew 11:6) The answer Jesus sent to John asked him to look beyond his own circumstances, and to keep the faith. God always sees a bigger picture than our own situations, though we are a part of it all. We are called to bring glory to God by introducing the Savior to those whose lives we cross. But there is also the role of keeping the faith.

*"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see,"* (Hebrews 11:1) the writer of Hebrews explains. There is no assurance that through faith we can do all things, but that *God* can do all things. And there is no promise that good things will happen when faith is strong, but that *"in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."* (Romans 8:28)

And those are the answers Jesus sent to John the Baptist.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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