

Tipping Point #1: Are you offended by Jesus? (v.1-6)

1. John was in prison for taking a stand for traditional marriage (Matt. 14:1-12). He had rebuked and exposed King Herod's adulterous marriage to his half-brother's wife. What is your reaction when you hear of a scandalous relationship that involves infidelity? Are you still shocked or has the culture eroded your view of the sanctity of marriage? Do you believe marriage is obsolete? Are you willing to speak (and live) in favor of traditional marriage even if you are persecuted for it?
2. Apparently John was still unconvinced that Jesus was the Messiah. His circumstances weren't helping his confidence. He must have thought, "Jesus keeps talking about His kingdom but if He is a king why doesn't He do something about King Herod who is making my life so miserable here in prison?" What circumstances in your life are causing doubts about the authority of Jesus?
3. In response to John's doubts, Jesus said, "Blessed is the one who is not offended by me" (v. 6). Have you ever been offended by how Jesus was conducting His business? Do you get offended at the pace at which Jesus moves? Are you offended that Jesus has not changed your circumstances? Have your doubts caused you to lose the blessing of knowing Jesus has it all under control?

Tipping Point #2: Are you shaken by doubt? (v.7-11)

4. Jesus identified John as a great man because he was was not shaken or soft (v. 7-11). Would Jesus use those terms to describe you? What shakes your confidence in God's Word? Does it encourage you that someone as great as John had doubts about Jesus?
5. Jesus said those of us who are least in the kingdom are greater than John. The reason is we know how the story ends. We know Jesus was victorious over sin, death, and hell. How does continually reminding yourself of these gospel truths reinforce faith? (Rom. 10:8-17)

Tipping Point #3: Are you taking Heaven by storm? (v.12-19)

6. The kingdom of God is simply the progressive rule and reign of King Jesus over all creation including my heart. The kingdom does not advance in my life or my world without conscious effort on my part. To violently take the kingdom of heaven "by force" involves an intentional, relentless, enduring pursuit of God in the face of opposing forces. Are you advancing in the kingdom by intentionally storming the kingdom of heaven?
 - a. Does "violent" characterize your pursuit of God in prayer and His Word?
 - b. Does "violent" characterize your battle with the enemies of the world, the flesh, and the devil? Are you winning?
 - c. Does "violent" describe your worship?

Additional Scripture

- Matthew 14:1-12
- Luke 16:16
- Luke 13:24
- Malachi 4:5-6
- John 6:60-66
- 2 Peter 3:16
- Romans 10:8-21