SERMON NOTES & LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

REAL. THE MOST FULFILLING FOCUS. Mat 11:7-15, Curt Brunk, 4.11.10

What made John the Baptist, the greatest person who ever lived prior to Christ, Mat 11:11?

- More miracles? No
- Most important message – ushering in Lord? Would make him greatest prophet, but not greatest person
- Ascetic (denying self): wilderness, locusts, burlap clothes? God provides homes, food, clothing
- What was message? Repent – turn from current direction to God's better life
  - Message & Life totally aligned…which is to say, life lived totally for others
  - Not bent by every wind, nor pampered, instead strong, sure, uncorrupted, Mat 11:7-8
  - Prophet preparing us for Lord, Mat 11:9-11
- Adversity strengthens us, makes us able to comfort
- First Christians got life for others: Acts 5:13, 2:43-47

But least in Kingdom of God greater than John, Mat 11:11?! Why?

- New Creations / New Nature / Godly desires in us
- Created and led by Holy Spirit, Lk 1:15
  - If follow Spirit leads to Life, Rom 8:5-14
  - Devotionals feed spirit, dial in His frequency
- Makes you able to advance Kingdom, despite opposition, Mat 11:12
- This has always been God's plan, Mat 11:13-15

Let's wake up the noble impulse/image inside

- Christian walk found in feet, not seat, Rom 10:14-15
- Let's join God in what He's doing – bringing others by serving them

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- then answer this question: If instead of meeting for church one Sunday we went to the people living around the church to show them that we genuinely care and are here to serve them, what could we do to most effectively demonstrate that?

NEXT WEEK: Real.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What about John the Baptizer is outstanding to you? What do you make of the Malachi 3: 1 prophesy (read also Matt 11: 9- 11) about him? Take a moment to sketch what an individual with his character & calling would look like today in our context? Why does Jesus eulogize him so grandly?
2. Curt mentioned that John and Jesus were alike in that they were extremely oriented toward others. Most of us seem to know that this should be our orientation - maybe even have heroes who seem to live that way -- so what is the difficulty in becoming that way? Describe the practical tensions and challenges here.
3. How does the new reality to which we are called - seen in Jesus, and modeled in the early chapters of Acts - get "dumbed down"? What role does the "flesh" play? What role do the values of American suburbia play? How could we support each other toward living the "real thing"?
4. What has God said to you this week in the sermon? Who is one person you could take this a bit deeper with? In conversation? In action?

TODAY'S OPPORTUNITY: (Remember to watch for God to move this week and tell us your testimony!)

I will pray for _____ to come to Jesus