

# Wrexham Methodist Circuit – Advent Reflections 2025

## Week three – Are you the one?



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**Bible readings: Isaiah 35: 1 – 10 & Matthew 11: 2 – 11**

### **Reflection**

John the Baptist, now in prison, asks one of his disciples to check out whether Jesus really is the Messiah, or should he expect someone else?

John, who once boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Lamb of God, now wrestles with doubt. He had expected the Messiah to bring judgment and deliverance, but from where he was things looked different, with Jesus healing the sick, raising the dead, preaching good news to the poor.

Jesus answers not with arguments, but with evidence: lives transformed, hope restored, grace poured out. His response is gentle but firm - yes, I am the one, but maybe not quite the one you expected.

This is the essential paradox of the Messiah we are shown in Jesus: he is the expected one who will not conform to our expectations. He is the one who has come, and yet he points away from himself the moment he arrives. He does not respond directly in part because he refuses to succumb to the idolatry of easy answers. And it is perhaps in this refusal—in Jesus’ rejection of the deceptive simplicities of our lesser gods—that we begin to know that he is the Son of God. For only Truth would be content to let the results speak for themselves.

Jesus’ response is a call to action. Any who follow Jesus are called to embody the good news as Jesus did, sharing it through actions with those who are most vulnerable. More than offering words and platitudes, people of God are called to **embody** the good news. It is a call to care for and reintegrate those cast out or overlooked by communities: the forgotten in prisons and shelters and hospitals, groups of people who are increasingly ‘othered’ because of the colour of their skin. It asks us to consider how our actions answer the question “Are you the one...?”

How can we better become the ones who embody the good news, challenging societal injustices? How do we empower our communities to collectively continue Jesus’ ministry, bringing about liberation and glimpsing the kingdom of God? How are **we** the one?

## Questions around the Bible passages

- Think back to someone who was influential in your own decision to follow Jesus. Was it their words alone that struck a chord or something about the person themselves? Why should John, of all people, have struggled with doubt about Jesus' identity?
- How can we respond to people's doubts (including our own) during Advent with faith and honesty?
- Where do you see signs of God's kingdom breaking into our world right now?
- Where and how does your church community demonstrate the inbreaking of God's kingdom into our local communities? What more could we do?

## Questions from 'Gifted' – The Methodist Church's 2025 Advent and Christmas materials

### 1. When faith feels hard

- John had doubts, even though he was the one who first pointed to Jesus. Have you ever felt unsure about your faith or what God is doing? What helps you hold on to hope in difficult times?

### 2. Jesus and good news

- Jesus focuses on healing and lifting people up. What does that tell you about what really matters to him?
- How can we follow that example in how we speak or act?

### 3. Good news for people in need

- What do you think 'good news' sounds like to someone who feels left out or is struggling right now? Is there something simple we can do this week to be part of that good news?

### 4. You are a gift

- Jesus' words to John gave him hope. Have you ever received a word of encouragement or support that really lifted you? What's one way you might offer a gift of hope to someone else this week?

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, when doubts rise and hope feels distant, remind us of the signs of Your kingdom breaking in.

Open our eyes to see healing, restoration, and good news around us, and strengthen our hearts to trust that You are the One.

As we wait in this Advent season, fill us with patience, courage, and joy, so that we may walk in faith and point others to Your light. **Amen**