

A Good Baptist Sermon in a Presbyterian Church

Luke 3:1-18, Isaiah 40:1-5

Third Sunday of Advent

December 16, 2018

■ Christmas is coming. Are you ready? We do lots to prepare.

1. John the Baptist prepared people for the coming of Christ.

Luke 3:4a-b ***As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord,’”***

■ How do we prepare for the coming of the Lord?

2. John said to prepare level ground.

Luke 3:4-5 ***As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. ⁵ Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth.***

■ Isaiah meant this literally. Road from Babylon (Bagdad) to Israel.

■ John meant it spiritually.

■ What are some of the valleys in your life?

- Addiction? Habit?
- Failure?
- Rejection?
- Disappointment?
- Doubt?
- Hurt?

■ What are some of the mountains?

- Pride?
- Stubbornness?
- Ambition?
- Anger?

- Grudges?
- The rough and crooked places.
 - Secrets?
 - Lies?
 - Deceptions?
 - Business practices?

■ How do we prepare level ground?

3. John said to prepare with repentance.

Luke 3:3 ***He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.***

■ Jesus also preached repentance.

Mark 1:14-15 ***After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”***

■ Repentance is good news.

4. Repentance means to change one's mind.

■ Metanoia = change of mind like metamorphosis = change of shape.

II Corinthians 5:16 ***So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.***

■ Not just change one's opinion.

I Corinthians 2:16 ***for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.***

5. Repentance means to change one's behavior.

Luke 3:7-9 ***7 John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell***

you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. 9 The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

6. Repentance is a gift from God.

Luke 3:16 ***John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.***

John 16:8 ***When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong (ESV convict ἐλέγξει) about sin and righteousness and judgment.***

Acts 11:18 ***When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.”***

- **Maybe you're feeling conviction now. That's not a “guilt trip.” It's good.**
- **The Holy Spirit is convicting you. God is giving you a gift.**
- **If the Holy Spirit is *not* convicting you right now, ask Him for that gift!**

7. Christ is coming again.

Hebrews 9:28 ***so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.***

I John 3:2-3 ***Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,^[a] we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.***

- **Gospel**
- **But there will also be judgement.**

Acts 17:31 ***For he has set a day when he will judge the***

world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

Romans 14:10 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.

See also II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

I Thessalonians 5:23 May the God who gives us peace make you holy in every way, and keep your whole being - spirit, soul and body - free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- We prepare for Christ’s coming by leveling the ground.
- We prepare for Christ’s coming with repentance.
- Christ is coming. Are you ready?