

The Word Prepares the Way

Promise: the Word works continual repentance and faith in our hearts

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Malachi 3:1-7b; Psalm 66:1-11; Philippians 1:2-11; [Luke 3:1-14](#)
(Second Sunday in Advent, 12/5/21)

He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. — v. 3

Lead In – John the Baptist was the forerunner for the first advent of our Lord. He was the messenger prophesied in Malachi 3 that prepares the way of the Lord. Without diminishing the importance of the vessel, let's be frank about it. It is the Word of the Lord borne by the prophet that does the work of preparation. John is commendable because he was elected, and because he faithfully bore God's Word. This morning we will take a close look at this word...

I. This Is No "Once Upon A Time"

II. The Word Of the Lord Came to John

III. An Outward Rite of Repentance For Forgiveness

IV. Preparing The Way To Fallen Human Hearts

V. Even Vipers Will Flee the Fires of Judgment

VI. Repentance Starts With Regret, But It Is More

VII. The Transformation of Common Life, Vocations

Parting Shot – John the Baptist is a transitional person. Unlike all the great prophets of the Old Testament before him, John was the messenger who acted the part of the forerunner, we might say today "the warmup act". He bore a message and introduced the rite of baptism. That message, and that rite, now become a sacrament, is still the way we are being prepared for the final advent of Christ at the end of the age. Everything we just reviewed needs to be received and acted upon in our lives. For those of us already baptized into Jesus death, it is a call to continue to live out the implications of our baptism.

The Four Gospel Accounts – Although not written like modern histories or biographies, nonetheless, they contain reliable historical and biographical information.

Jn 20:31 But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

In 2 Ki 5 it was not until Naaman dipped himself 7 times in the Jordan as instructed by Elisha that he was healed of leprosy.

Is 55:11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

2Pe 3:10-11 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness

Are you sorry for what you did, or are you merely sorry that you got caught? It can start there, but it cannot stay there!

Luke 3:1-14 ESV

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

⁷He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" ¹¹And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

Ep 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
It means that our sinful self... drowned through...

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