

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

SERMON NOTES

Week 4 December 22, 2024

“Witnesses, Testifying to the Light”

John 1:6-9, 14-18; Luke 7:22

I. Introduction

- A. This close to Christmas we can find ourselves torn between exceeding joy or _____, sometimes even eager to see the holiday season pass.
- B. In this fourth week of Advent, we light the candle of _____ which is not the color pink but purple; Joy is illustrated in pink.
- C. Amid his teaching and baptizing of people who repented, John saw his cousin, Jesus, and proclaimed: “Look! The _____ of _____ who takes away the sins of the world.” (John 1:29).

II. Know the “Why”

- A. _____ happen to every person and John the Baptist was no exception.
- B. John was arrested for criticizing this prominent leader in the 1st century AD: _____, a tetrarch.
- C. Even when faced with death, John held fast to his _____ which was to prepare the way of the Lord.

III. Testify to the Light That Has Come, is Here, and Will Come Again

- A. John’s calling since the _____ of his birth by the angel was to the prepare the way for the Messiah
- B. The Gospel writer John very poetically sets the stage for the Good News of Jesus Christ. In this opening, it was made very clear that John the Baptist was not the _____.
- C. Our charge is to testify that Christ our Eternal Light that has _____, is _____, and will _____.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *December 23-28, 2024*

INTRODUCTION

As we conclude this sermon series, John the Baptist's message continues to inspire us. These final days before Christmas can often be hectic. Between last-minute shopping, cooking and baking, house cleaning, traveling, the kids finishing school and more, there is often never a shortage of things to do. Yet, amid the rush, the Christmas story reminds us to that we are Christ's witnesses. Let us prepare ourselves and invite others to join in the celebration of Christ's first coming even as we continually prepare for his Second Coming.

Monday: Luke 3:4-6

From our favorite restaurant's slogans to our church's mission statement, core messages are those that can be boiled down to a singular idea. John the Baptist's ministry was about preparing the way for the Messiah. All he did along the banks of the Jordan River was to pave the way for Jesus. When reflecting on your own life, how you spend your time, what you value, and what you do with your time, what is the core message you're broadcasting?

Tuesday: Luke 2:1-15

It is Christmas Eve. As we gather to celebrate the First Christmas, I invite you to read Luke's account of Christ's birth. Take in all the details. Imagine yourself as a shepherd hearing the "good news for all people" from the angel. What part of the Christmas account resonates the most with you in this season of your life?

Wednesday: Luke 2:19

One of my (Pastor Rick's) favorite aspects is the inclusion of this verse amid the birth of our Lord. Amid the angelic host's singing, shepherds' visit and more, a quite reflective moment like this - especially from Mary who just delivered baby Jesus - is an important reminder for us too. It is Christmas Day. What are you treasuring today? Take a quiet moment to praise God for this.

Thursday: "Amazing Grace" UMH#378

In this week's sermon, we looked at this well-known hymn. "Amazing Grace" celebrates the conversion of a sinner to a saint. It is a story for you and me. Take time to read through all the verses (they can be found at <https://www.hymnsite.com/lyrics/umh378.sht>). What verse most speaks to you at this time in your life? Why do you feel that is?

Friday: Malachi 3:10

In this exchange between God and His people, God challenges the people to bring the full tithe. It is one of the few times in Scripture where the Lord invites us to challenge and see God's faithfulness. Reflect upon your life and how God has been faithful to you.

MOVING FORWARD

Our Advent journey has led us here to the great celebration of Christmas. As we continue our witness for the Lord, may this time of worship, prayer, and singing deepen your faith. May your further study into the message of John the Baptist and the Good News of Jesus Christ remain with you all year long. Amen.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) stress B) Love C) Lamb [of] God. IIA) Hardships, B) Herod, C) purpose. IIIA) annunciation, B) light, C) come/here/come again.