

PREPARING THE WAY FOR JESUS

Matt. 3:1-12

1. The Lord wants to use us to help prepare hearts to receive Jesus. Matt. 3:1-3; 9:36-38; John 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 3:7-9a

wilderness = eremos = lonesome, waste; solitary, desolate

repent = metaneo = to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (moral feel compunction); to change one's mind or purpose (direction)

2. Wherever God calls us to share the gospel, He provides what we need there. Matt. 3:4; Luke 12:11-12; Acts 2:4; 4:29-31; Phil. 4:11-13, 19; Prov. 30:8b-9

3. The Lord empowers our message and causes the results. Matt. 3:5-6, 13; Rom. 6:3-11; 2 Cor. 3:5-6; Zech. 4:6; 1 Cor. 12:4-7

baptized = baptizo = to dip, as cloth into dye; to wet, be fully whelmed, to be identified with

adequacy = hikanotes = ability, sufficiency

4. We must look for fruit as proof of salvation. Matt. 3:7-9; 7:13-21; 10:16; Jas. 2:17-26; 1 John 3:6; Gal. 5:19-25

shrewd = phronimos = thoughtful, cautious, practically wise, sensible

innocent = akeraios = unmixed, pure

5. We must be ever aware that the unsaved go to judgment and eternal separation from Jesus. Matt. 3:10; 13:49-50; 2 Pe. 3:9; Rev. 20:15; Mark 9:43-44; 1 Tim. 1:15

perish = apollumi = to destroy fully (reflexive to perish, or lose)

6. Our witnessing should always be about Jesus and not about ourselves. Matt. 3:11a; 1 Cor. 1:29, 31; Isa. 42:8; Phil. 2:10-11; 1 Pe. 3:15

sanctify = hagiazo = to set apart as holy, to venerate

hope = elpis = a confident expectation

7. We should be living under the transformational power and leadership of the Holy Spirit in order to be true witnesses for Jesus. Matt. 3:11b; John 3:5-8; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:16; 6:8; Col. 1:27

glory = doxa = glory (as very apparent); to manifest, give an estimation of

8. Jesus will return to judge. We must allow Him to make use of us in the time available. Matt. 3:12; 24:46; Rev. 20:11-15; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 5:15-16

REFLECTION AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. *Is preparing the way for Jesus a part of my daily focus? How might the Lord of the harvest be calling me to work alongside Him?*
2. *Will I trust God to sustain me and provide what I need as I make preparing hearts for Him a priority in my life? Will I talk with Him about my needs and trust Him to provide?*
3. *Will I release responsibility for the effects of my kingdom work to God? Will I obey God and leave the results to Him?*
4. *Will I rely on the Holy Spirit to help me discern the fruit in others' lives, that I might recognize those who do not yet know Jesus? Will I pray for and be ready to reach out to those the Spirit points out to me?*
5. *Will I seek to get involved in saving others from hell?*
6. *Do I humbly serve the Lord as He calls me to help prepare hearts for Him? Does the Lord receive the glory from my service, or do I?*
7. *Am I allowing the Holy Spirit to transform me into a clearer image of Jesus for the lost to see? Am I walking by the Spirit and sowing to the Spirit so others can see Jesus in me?*
8. *Will I be about the Lord's business, preparing hearts to receive Him, knowing that judgment is coming? Will I make the most of my time because time is short?*