



Sermon

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Print

Theme

Preparing our hearts for Christ's coming.

Object

A sign that says "Under Construction" or a toy truck or road grader.

Scripture

A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain." Isaiah 40:3-4 (NIV) Also, Mark 1:2-3

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Does your family have any travel plans during the Christmas holidays? Do any of you ever go to visit out-of-town family or friends? We did when I was a little boy.

Some of my fondest childhood memories of the Christmas holidays were times when we went to visit my grandmother. I don't know how many times we made that trip to my grandmother's house, but there was always some part of the highway that was being repaired. There were signs that said, "Slow Down -- Construction Ahead" and we would see road graders, gravel trucks, and a lot of men working on the highway. I always thought to myself, "What a nice highway this will be when it is finished and there is no more construction." That was many years ago and I still travel that highway from time to time. Guess what? They are still working on it! You see, by the time they finish working on one part of the highway, there is another place that needs to be repaired! Even some part they have repaired before may need to be repaired again. They will never finish working on it.

The childhood memory of those holiday trips to grandmother's house reminds me of the story of the first Christmas. The Bible tells us that God sent a man named John to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. John told the people to make a highway in the desert for their God. He told them to make the crooked ways straight and to make the rough places smooth. John wasn't really talking about building a highway upon which Jesus could travel. He was really talking about the hearts of the people. He was calling people to prepare their hearts to receive Jesus so that he could walk among them and live with them.

During this special season of the year when we celebrate Jesus' birth and look forward to the day when he will come again, you and I need to make sure that we are ready. We need to look into our hearts and ask God to make our crooked ways straight and smooth out the rough places. Oh, I know, we have done it before, but it is just like that highway to grandmother's house, the job is never finished. Every day we do things that we shouldn't do and we need to ask God to forgive us and to make our hearts clean.

Dear Father, prepare our hearts for Jesus' return. Make our crooked ways straight and our rough places smooth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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