

**“BEING PREPARED: PREPARE FOR THE CHRISTMAS GIFT”**  
**Pastor Jason Scheler**

<sup>1</sup>In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, <sup>2</sup>“Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.” <sup>3</sup>The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said,

“He is a voice shouting in the wilderness,  
‘Prepare the way for the LORD’s coming!  
Clear the road for him!’”

<sup>4</sup>John’s clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. <sup>6</sup>And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize, he denounced them. “You brood of snakes!” he exclaimed. “Who warned you to flee God’s coming wrath? <sup>8</sup>Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. <sup>9</sup>Don’t just say to each other, ‘We’re safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.’ That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. <sup>10</sup>Even now the ax of God’s judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup>“I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. <sup>12</sup>He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.” (Matthew 3:1-12)

**1. JOHN’S MISSION: TO PREACH REPENTANCE IN THE WILDERNESS (v1-2)**

**2. JOHN’S PURPOSE: PREPARE PEOPLE FOR THE GIFT OF JESUS (v3)**

**3. REPENTANCE IS THE ONLY BIBLICAL WAY TO DEAL WITH SIN.**

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17)

Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, (2 Timothy 2:25 NIV)

Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. (Revelations 3:19)

**4. WHAT SIN IS IN THE WAY OF THE GIFT OF KING JESUS?**

**5. WARNING: HYPOCRISY IS NOT REPENTANCE (v6-12)**

And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,  
“This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; (Mark 7:6)

You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (Matthew 12:34)

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. (Galatians 6:7)

I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. (Revelations 3:15-16)

Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. (Colossians 2:23)

**6. GODLY REPENTANCE INVOLVES GOOD FRUIT OF HUMILITY**

**MEMORY VERSE**

“God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”  
(James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5, Proverbs 3:34)

He must increase, but I *must* decrease. (John 3:30)

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

**7. GOD’S FIRE IS COMING, WHICH ONE WILL IT BE FOR YOU? (v11-12)**

**GOING DEEPER**

1. What unbiblical ways do we deal with sin?
2. What does repentance mean to you?
3. What people in the Bible demonstrate humility? How does their life encourage you?
4. What sin is God showing you that you need to repent for?