

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN

MATTHEW 3

Text:

Introduction:

1. HIS CALL

(Matthew 3:2) And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

A. Came from God

(Malachi 3:1) Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

(Isaiah 40:3) The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

B. To prepare the way

C. John came to prepare the way for Jesus

D. Some of the things John had to move to prepare the way for Jesus

1. Prejudice & Tradition

2. Hardness of Heart

3. Self-righteousness

(Romans 10:1-2) Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. {2} For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

E. Here you see God's need for human instrumentality

1. Salvation is of the Lord. God uses people to preach and prepare hearts for the Spirit

2. God is always ready to give the farmer a crop but he must prepare the ground

2. JOHN'S CRY

(Matthew 3:3) For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

A. John did not come singing but CRYING

B. John's message was not words committed to memory but LIVING TRUTHS blazing in the soul and dripping from his tongue like coals of fire

C. John cried:

1. In rebuke -- "Generation of vipers"

2. In warning -- "Flee the wrath to come"

3. In earnest -- "Bring forth fruity meet for repentance"

D. First preacher in the New Testament that appeared crying because of sin and corruption

(Ezra 9:4) Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.

(Matthew 5:3-4) Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. {4} Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

3. HIS CONGREGATION

(Matthew 3:4-6) And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. {5} Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, {6} And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

A. They didn't go to see a fine church for he was in the wilderness.

B. Not to have a supper, He was having locusts

C. Not to admire his personality and physical appearance. He had camel's-hair clothes

D. They went to see and hear a man FILLED WITH THE POWER OF GOD.