

Prepare the Way of the Lord

If you have ever seen the 1970 musical *Godspell*, you probably remember the opening. It is simple, powerful, and memorable. The house lights dim, and the audience goes silent, anticipating the show to open with a robust all-cast musical number. That is not what happens. A shofar horn breaks the silence, playing several monotone notes. Then, a lone off-stage voice sings the line, “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord.” There is no musical accompaniment – just a powerful a cappella voice. You look around for the actor, but the voice seems to come from both nowhere and everywhere. The solo voice repeats the same words five more times. You begin to realize you are hearing a “voice crying in the wilderness.” Then, suddenly the entire cast bursts on stage, jubilantly singing the same seven words: “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.” The lyrics become etched in the audience’s mind. We get it. Jesus is coming.



Yes, Jesus is coming. As we enter the season of Advent, the biblical message is all about preparation for the coming of the Lord. The celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ is just four weeks away. We prepare for the celebration by shopping, cooking, sending Christmas cards, decorations, and Christmas parties in modern-day times. The busyness of Christmas preparations can distract us from the more important biblical message: *why* Jesus came to live among us. In simple terms, He came to save the world. More specifically, He came to save you and me.

We had an inspiring Advent sermon at our church last week. The sermon awakened me to a deeper and future-pointed meaning of Christmas in today’s world. While the miraculous virgin birth confirmed that Jesus is the Son of God, it is short-sighted to stop there. God sent Jesus to save the world. It is as important today as it was 2,000 years ago. We don’t need to wait until Easter to acknowledge that purpose. The “aha moment” of the Advent sermon reminds us that Jesus would come again, this time in judgment and reward. We need to be ready for that. Christmas is not just a celebration of “Christmas past,” but with a present and future meaning. Our preparation for His coming is that we need to change our ways. We need to turn away from a sinful world and towards Him. We need a change in heart. This comes through repentance of our sins so that we can be right with God before Jesus comes again. That change of heart starts now, not on Easter. We will be rewarded with eternal life for the changes we make in our lives. Let the Advent season be a conscious effort to prepare for when He comes again. Let this Christmas be more than a time of celebration but a commitment to our Lord.

Suppose all we do is celebrate His birth with Christmas goodies, cards, and gifts. In that case, we are not preparing ourselves for His coming again. Christmas, Easter, and other holidays and events of the church year all work together to point to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. The real question is, did His teachings, life, and resurrection put us on a path to be changed people? Seek changes in your life as you Prepare the Way of the Lord. Jesus is coming. Again. We need to be ready.

The Bible Says *The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our [God](#) (Isaiah 40:3 and Luke 3:4).*

Prayer: Dear Lord, Heavenly Father. As we prepare for Christmas, let this be a time of commitment to amend our ways, and seek to be more like Jesus. Let us celebrate not only His birth, but the salvation He offers to those who seek and receive His forgiveness. Our reward is eternal life in Heaven. Amen.

The concept of this devotion is from a sermon by Pastor Elliott Lutz, at Fountain of Life Lutheran Church, November 25, 2021.