

THRIVING AMIDST CHRISTMAS CRAZINESS

"Learning from John the Baptist...You were Created for Today"

I. God's Providential Plan

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. Malachi 3:1 (KJB)

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3 (ESV)

II. Accepted Our God-Given Uniqueness

- John's Unique **Story** – Luke 1:13-16 *sel* (KJV, NASB)
- The Unique, Very Special **Time** in History of the World – John 1:6 (NIV)
- John's Unique **Look & Lifestyle** – Matthew 3:1, 4 (NLT)
- Unique **Voice/Mission** – John 1:29-31 (NIV)
- John Had a Very Unique **Calling** – John 1:33 (NLT)
- John's Very Unique **Upbringing**

III. Preparing the Way

Preaching Repentance

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matthew 3:1-2 (KJB)

- Religious Power Brokers – Matthew 3:7-10 (NLT)
- Herod Antipas – Matthew 14:3-11 *sel* (NLT)

Baptizing People

This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. Mark 1:4-5 (NLT)

Humbly Pointed to Jesus

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. Matthew 3:11 (NLT)

- Decreasing – John 3:26-30 *sel* (NLT)