



“Prepare The Way Of The Lord”

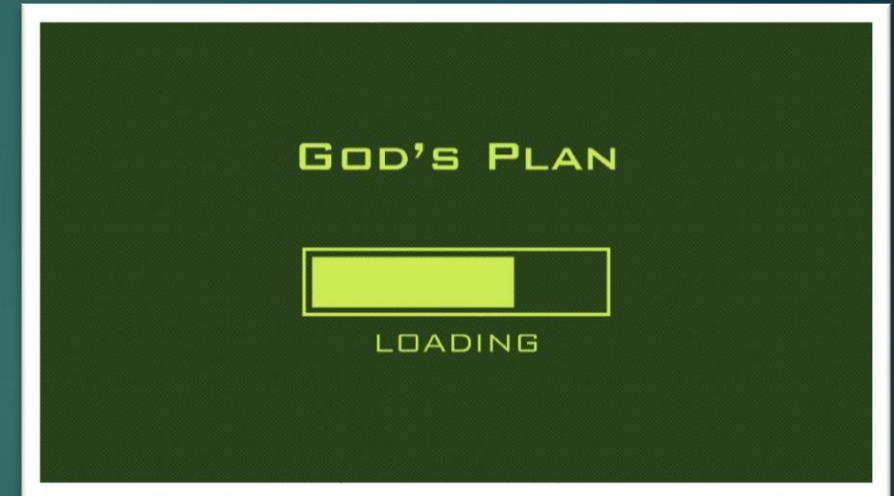
MAKING ROOM FOR GOD

God's Plan

As we begin a new year, we can be sure that God has a plan and that His plan is unfolding.

▶ **Jeremiah 29:11**

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.



Are You Ready?

The question we need to ask ourselves is NOT if God has a plan but rather, "***Am I ready for God's plan?***"



Before God Acts...

Throughout Scripture, God mobilized His people to get ready just before He acted.

He told Abraham to prepare a sacrifice and meet Him at the mountain. (Gn. 22)

He told Moses to prepare a tabernacle where He would meet with His people. (Ex.25)



Before God Acts...

To Joshua, He instructed Him to prepare the people before He delivered Jericho and the promised land into their hands.

▶ Joshua 3:5

⁵ Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.”

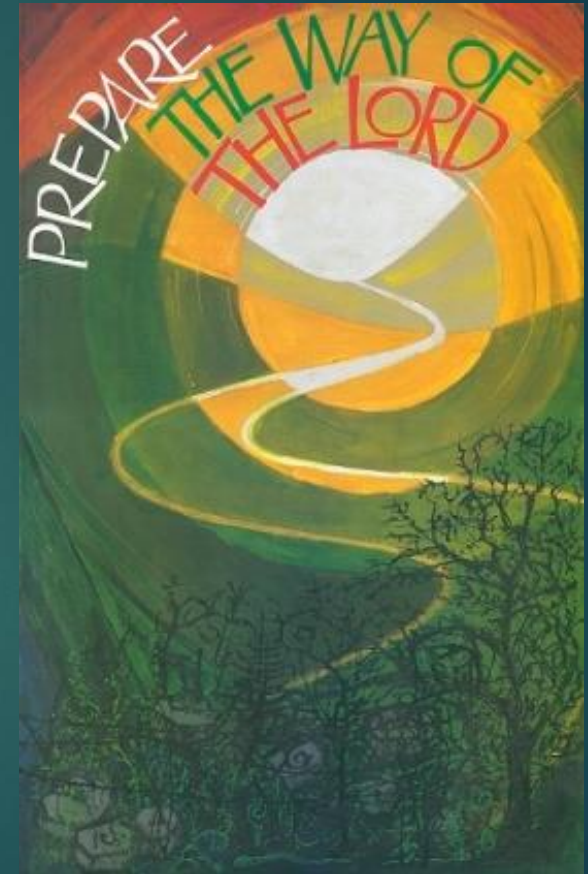


Before God Acts...

And before sending Jesus the Messiah to the world, He said he would send a messenger reminding us to prepare ourselves.

▶ **Isaiah 40:3-5**

³ A voice cries: “In the wilderness
prepare the way of the LORD...



Prepare The Way

▶ Isaiah 40:3-5

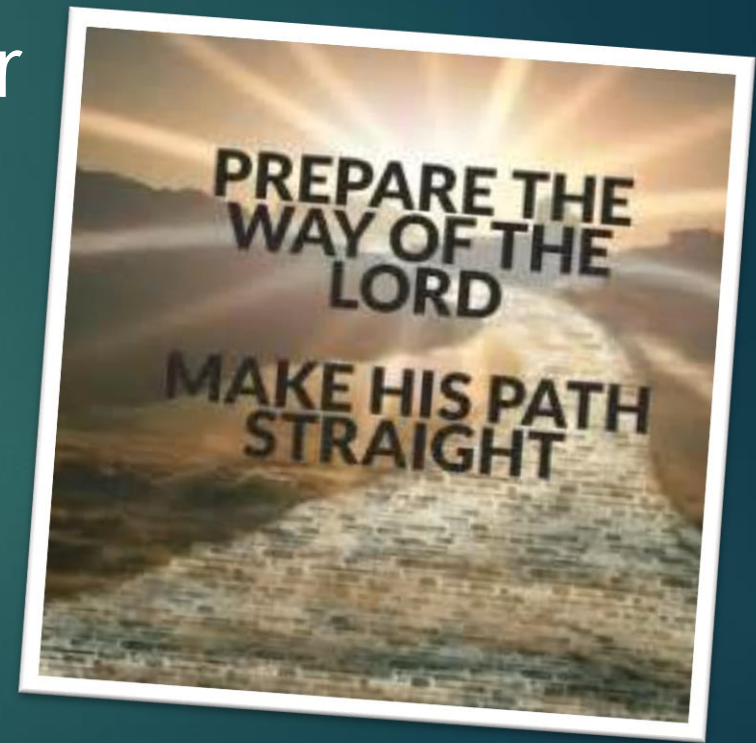
³ A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; **make straight in the desert a highway for our God.** ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Prepare The Way

In **Isaiah 40:3-5** God is saying, in the place of difficult access and unfavorable conditions, make a path for my coming, “⁵ and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

In other words, “*Give me the quickest path to get to you!*”



Prepare The Way

Then, as Jesus was ready to begin His ministry...

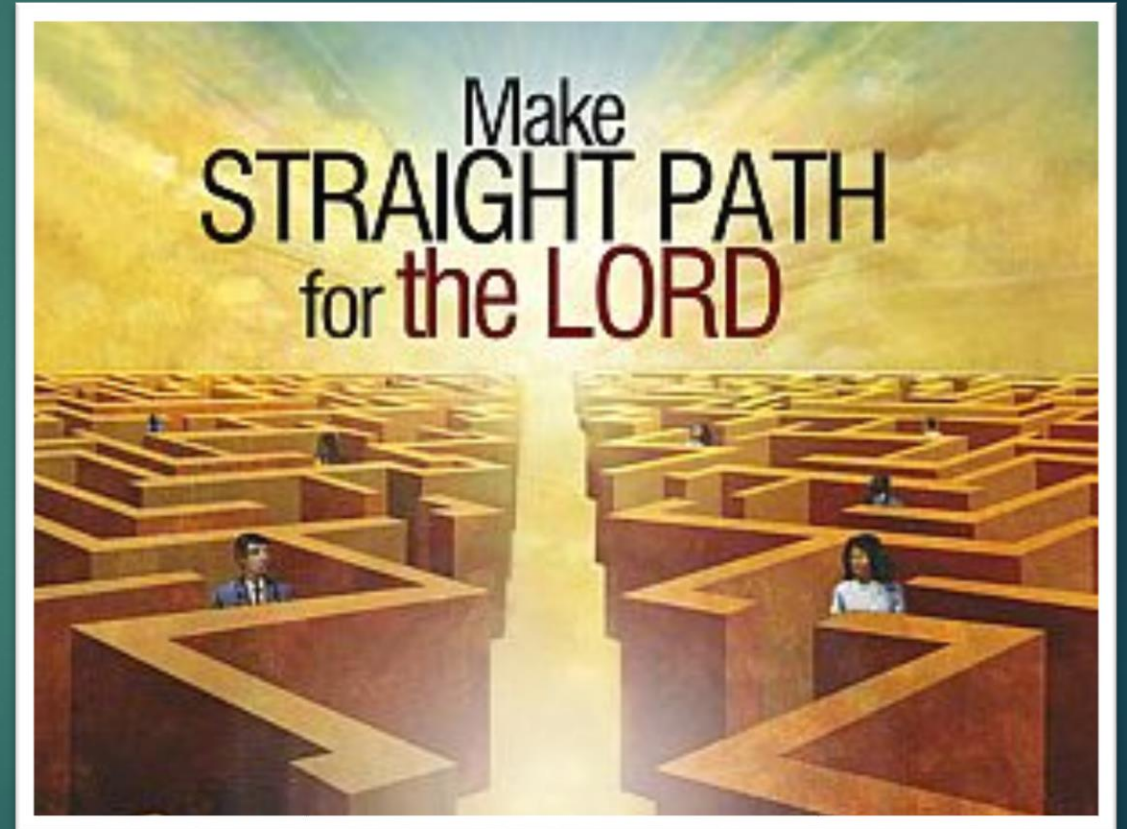
▶ Luke 3:1-6

² ...the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: **‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’**”

A Straight Path

In a world full of confusion and lives that can feel like a labyrinth, God says...

Build a straight path from Me to you and I will show up where you are!



There Is Work To Be Done

- ▶ **Luke 3:5-6 (CEV)**
5 Fill up every valley and level every mountain and hill. Straighten the crooked paths and smooth out the rough roads. 6 Then everyone will see the saving power of God.'''



Making Things Right

In **Luke 3:3-6**, God is reminding us to prepare for His coming by making things right to the extent that we can.

We are to look for opportunities and, when possible, create opportunities to fix what is shattered, mend what is broken, and correct what is wrong.



It Will Take Too Long

Of course it will!

*You can't level a mountain
or fill a valley overnight! But
**if you never start, you will
never finish!***



It's Too Hard

Of course it is hard!

We are talking about leveling a mountain and filling a valley!

Yet God always provides the strength to accomplish what He assigns. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit." (Zechariah 4:6)



Mountains and Valleys

In a mountain there is too much dirt.
In a valley there is not enough.
Likewise, mountains and valleys in
our lives may indicate imbalances
(excess and lack) in our lives.



- *Too much care for material, not enough for spiritual.*
- *Too much money on nonessentials, not enough for bills.*
- *Too much attention to public life, not enough on private.*

Checklist

- ▶ Is there an outstanding bill I need to pay off?
- ▶ Is there a person I need to forgive?
- ▶ Is there a skill I need to develop?
- ▶ Is there a person I need to apologize to?
- ▶ Is there a habit I need to change?
- ▶ Is my tithe current?
- ▶ Do my friends and family know I love them?
- ▶ Is there a book I need to read?
- ▶ Is there a leaky faucet I need to fix?



What Can I Do Today?

There are things in life I cannot fix or change. God does not expect me to!

There are things in life I can fix or change. God says, "If you address these, I will meet you where you are."

