

PREPARING THE WAY (Part 1)

We are taking the time to ‘fleshing out’ our 2026 Focus. As you know, our Focus for 2026 is —“**POSITIONED FOR GOD’S PURPOSE.**”

Our focus this year is based largely on a dream that is set within the context of a wedding. In this dream the men of HMC were primarily responsible for planning the wedding.

Now, prophetically speaking ‘weddings’ often represent the *coming of the Lord*. Thus, ‘planning a wedding’ can be equivalent to *preparing for the Lord’s coming*. This is what I want to talk to you about—“**PREPARING THE WAY**” of the Lord.

When we read the Bible, we see this idea of “PREPARING THE WAY” of the Lord echoed throughout the Old Testament.

Isaiah 40:3

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.

Malachi 3:1

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.

When we get to the New Testament, however, we see men *literally* preparing the way for Christ!

Luke 9:51–52

⁵¹ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, ⁵² And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

These “messengers” who sent ahead of Christ were most likely making *physical* preparations for Him (i.e. making sure there was sufficient lodging, food, etc). Later, Jesus would send others, not to make things ready physically, but to make things ready *spiritually*!

Luke 10:1

¹ After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

Therefore, the 70 weren't being sent to make travel plans. They were being sent on a different mission—to prepare men for the good news of Jesus Christ. There were several *other* things that were unique about this mission...

- i. The men that were *chosen* weren't chosen in the typical way. They were chosen by God (Christ), and not by men.
- ii. They weren't *sent* in the typical way. They were sent out “two by two,” and not individually.
- iii. They weren't your typical *messengers*. They weren't “common” men, and not apostles or ordained elders.
- iv. Finally, they weren't sent to the typical *places*. They were sent to homes, and not to “marketplaces” or synagogues.

Luke 10:5

⁵ And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

This last detail (i.e. that they were sent to *homes*) reveals to us that revival doesn't begin in public spaces. It begins in the HOME!

Malachi 4:5–6

⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: ⁶ And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, And the heart of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Apparently, the messenger(s) that God will send are tasked, not with turning the hearts of shepherds back to their flock, but with turning the hearts of fathers back to their children!

Incidentally, the FINAL words of the Old Testament reveal that unless the home is restored, the curse will remain in the earth!

Malachi 4:6

⁶ And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, And the heart of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

I want you to notice how the ‘preparation’ mentioned in [Malachi 3:1](#) is described in [Malachi 4:6](#). It's described as “turning the hearts of men”. This tells us that ONE way we prepare the way is through...

REPENTANCE

Luke 3:3–4

³ And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Before a person can receive Christ, certain adjustments must be made. The Bible calls these adjustments *repentance*. Repentance is about changing the way you think about sin.

Luke 5:31–32

³¹ And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. ³² I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Notice how sinners coming to repent are described as those who are *sick*. Therefore, in one sense repentance is about being “sick” (or grieved) over sin. Yet, repentance is MORE than being grieved over sin. It ALSO reveals itself in our behavior!

2 Corinthians 7:10–11

¹⁰ For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. ¹¹ For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

One way to distinguish *godly* sorrow (true repentance) from the sorrow of this world, is by the change in a person’s behavior. In other words, true repentance isn’t simply seen by how sorry you feel. It can ALSO be seen by what you do in response to that sorrow! For example...

- i. Are you ‘careful’ (eager) to do what is right, or are you still *slow* to obey?
- ii. Are you trying to ‘clear’ yourself of blame, or are you trying to pretend it never happened?
- iii. Do you have ‘indignation’ for your sin, or are you content to live with it?
- iv. Do you have a ‘fear’ of God, or do you still lack reverence and respect?
- v. Are you ready to take ‘revenge’ on the flesh, or are you content to ‘live and let live’?

We can also prepare the way of the Lord through...

RECONCILIATION

Luke 19:5–6, 8–9

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. 6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. 8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. 9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

First, notice how salvation is something that happens to one's HOUSE!

Second, when Zacchaeus learned Jesus was 'coming' to his home, he called for the poor and those he had stolen from and he 'reconciled' (settled disputes) with them! Thus, we demonstrate our "preparation" by reconciling with others.

In fact, this is a textbook example of what we read in [Luke 3](#).

Luke 3:8, 10–11

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? 11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Sometimes the best way to prepare yourself (and your house) for Christ's return is to encourage reconciliation. Anyone who is not trying to settle their debts with men, isn't serious about settling their debt with God!