

Advance to the Manger — Day 18

Advance in Repentance

John 8:12 TPT

"John went preaching and baptizing throughout the Jordan Valley. He persuaded people to turn away from their sins and turn to God for the freedom of forgiveness, fulfilling what was written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: "Listen! You will hear a thunderous voice in the lonely wilderness telling you to wake up and get your heart ready for the coming of the Lord Yahweh. Make straight every twisted thing in your lives. Bring into the light every dark way. Make right every wrong. Remove injustice. Every heart of pride will humbly bow before him. Every deception will be exposed and replaced by the truth to prepare everyone everywhere to see the Life of God!"

Introduction:

A Season of Repentance

- Scripture: Luke 3:3-6
- Explore John the Baptist's call to repentance.
- Use the Christmas season for personal reflection and repentance.

As we prepare our hearts to journey towards the manger this Christmas season, it is essential to reflect on the message of repentance proclaimed by John the Baptist. In Luke 3:3-6, we see John calling the people to repentance in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Today, let us explore the significance of repentance in advancing to the manger and experiencing the transformative power of Jesus' birth.

Heart Reflection

1. The Call to Repentance:

John the Baptist's message was clear and compelling: repentance. Repentance involves turning away from sin and turning towards God. It is a change of heart and mind that leads to a transformed life. Just as John called the people to prepare the way for the Lord, we too are called to examine our hearts and repent of any sinful attitudes or actions that hinder us from fully experiencing the joy and purpose of Jesus' birth. Repentance paves the way for God's salvation to enter our lives.

2. Preparing the Way:

John used the imagery of making straight paths, filling valleys, and leveling mountains to illustrate the need for preparation. In a spiritual sense, this means removing any obstacles or hindrances that prevent us from fully embracing the message of Christmas. It involves humbling ourselves before God, acknowledging our need for His forgiveness, and seeking His guidance to align our lives with His will. As we advance to the manger, let us prepare the way for Jesus by repenting and making room for Him in our hearts.

3. God's Salvation:

The purpose of repentance is not simply to dwell on our sins but to experience the transformative power of God's salvation. Through Jesus' birth, God's salvation was made available to all. Repentance opens the door for us to receive God's forgiveness, grace, and eternal life. It is through repentance and faith in Jesus that we can truly encounter the depth of

God's love and experience the joy of His salvation. As we advance to the manger, let us embrace the gift of salvation that Jesus offers through His birth.

Call To Action

- **Reflect and Repent:**
 - Take time to reflect on your life and identify areas where repentance is needed.
 - Confess your sins to God and ask for His forgiveness.
 - Seek His guidance and strength to turn away from sin.
 - Live in obedience to His Word.

- **Make Room for Jesus:**
 - Just as John called the people to make straight paths, create space in your heart and life for Jesus.
 - Remove any distractions or idols that hinder your relationship with Him.
 - Cultivate a daily habit of prayer, reading the Bible, and seeking His presence.

- **Share the Message:**
 - As you experience the transformative power of repentance in your own life, share the message of repentance and forgiveness with others.
 - Be a voice calling in the wilderness, pointing people to Jesus and the hope of salvation that He brings.

Take A Way

Repentance is a vital step in advancing to the manger and experiencing the transformative power of Jesus' birth. Let us heed the call to repentance, preparing the way for the Lord in our hearts and lives. As we repent, we make room for Jesus to enter and bring forgiveness, grace, and salvation. May the message of repentance resonate in our lives and inspire us to share the hope of God's salvation with others. As we journey towards the manger, may repentance be the guiding light that leads us to a deeper encounter with the Savior.

Prayer:

Oh Lord,
thank You for the message of repentance and the opportunity to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. Help us to humbly acknowledge our sins, turn away from them, and embrace Your forgiveness. Prepare the way in our hearts, making them ready to receive the gift of Your salvation. Empower us to share the message of repentance and lead others to the manger where they can find hope, forgiveness, and new life. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.