

**Prepare The Way
Return to Nazareth
12/28/19
Newport News Campus**

Opening

-meme giveaway

Introduction

-Matthew 3:1-3

-Jesus is our King, traveling from Heaven to be with us, to rescue us, to save us! And John the Baptist is reminding us that the work of preparing our hearts for His arrival is no small task!

(he compares it to mountains, valleys, crooked and rough roads...changing the geography of the heart!)

-Matthew 3:2 is how we Prepare The Way...

- Repent of your sins... (14th)
- Turn to God... (tonight)
- The Kingdom of Heaven is near... (21st)

-The 3 remarkable journeys...

- **Escape to Egypt - repent of your sins**
- **The Maigi - the Kingdom of Heaven is near**
- **Return to Nazareth - turn to God**

Introduction

-The holiness of God demands justice...in God's economy death is the currency of forgiveness. Grace is not the act of ignoring sin but rather allowing a substitutionary death to bear its consequence.

-substitutionary death

- **Genesis 3:21**
- **(Exodus 12:5-7, 12-14)**
- **(Leviticus 4:22-26)**

-John 1:29-30

-Matthew 2:19-23 (explain again Egypt, Israel and now Jesus making the return possible)

-It's Jesus' death and resurrection that makes it possible for you and I to live out, in reality, what this journey to Nazareth illustrates prophetically.

-(do some recap, connecting last two weeks to preparing the way) **heaven now...**

-So Fred, what does turning to God look like?

6 Commands (Praxis Book)

-John 14:15

-Just as death is the currency of forgiveness, commonality is the currency of intimacy in God's family. (Jesus' call to obedience is the means to an end: alignment)

-Jesus' 6 Commands

- **Follow Jesus -- John 1:43 (devotion to Jesus)**
- **Love God -- Matthew 22:37 (intimacy with God)**
- **Love People -- John 13:34 (care for others)**

- **Be Perfect -- Matthew 5:48 (courage to change)**
- **Go Everywhere -- 28:19 (diligence in mission)**
- **Receive Power -- Acts 1:8 (equipped by the HS)**

-These 6 Commands are the bearings of life, the coordinates, the ultimate measure of whether or not you are on the journey from Egypt to Israel. Are you turning to God? Are you preparing the way? (ALIGNMENT)

12 Pathways

-Jeremiah 6:16

-Let me show you a list...

Scripture	Prayer	Fasting	Worship
Relationship	Reaching	Gathering	Accountability
Service	Rest	Generosity	Stewardship

If you give your life to these 12 Pathways, obedience to the 6 Commands is unavoidable!

-Ruggerios, Fasseels, Nicholsons...

-(participation) – great product innovations you remember?

- who remembers the advent of the Binaca Blast?
- debuted in the 70's
- relaunch in the 80's
- how about some teenager volunteers?

-The means of Pathways may continue to innovate but at their very essence, these ancient pursuits are timeless!

-Are you preparing the way?

24 Virtues

-(read quote and verse form Praxis booklet)

-The 5 Great Growth Lists

- **Matthew 5:3-10**
- **Romans 12:9-21**
- **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**
- **Galatians 5:22-23**
- **2 Peter 1:5-7**

-(read list from booklet)

-Remember, you cannot have intimacy without commonality.

-And Jesus' hope is that the same oneness we find with God will also be found with one another! CHARACTER IS THE COMMONALITY WITH CRAVE!

-The Bible calls us to harmony with one another because God expects us to experience intimacy in community through commonality of character. Unfortunately, too many Christians today are more concerned with being right in dispute instead of being righteous in relationship.

-Are you preparing the way?

Band

-Matthew 3:1-3

-Jesus is our King, traveling from Heaven to be with us, to rescue us, to save us! And John the Baptist is reminding us that the work of preparing our hearts for His arrival is no small task!

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Close

-Matthew 5:13-16...prepare the way and make a way!!!!