

CALM & BRIGHT SERIES – ‘GETTING READY’ – ADVENT 2



For me, John the Baptist is one of the most interesting and curious characters we meet in the revealing of God’s one plan in the Bible. From strictly orthodox temple parents (Luke 1:5-6), filled from birth by the Holy Spirit, and yet he is very much in rebellion against orthodoxy and conformity, but also the epitome of humility (John 3: 27-30). We have no detail of his actual calling; we learn of it from what he has to say. *This is a challenge to us. Would it be clear from all we say about Advent/Christmas that we are followers of Jesus? How deliberate are we about using Christian*

emphasis and phrasing in everyday conversation?

Read Luke 3: 1-6 For most of us, the period before Christmas can seem overloaded by preparations of one kind or another, card writing, present choosing and buying, food buying and preparations, decorations, church services, etc, etc. I am reminded of the notice in Fabian’s office – ‘keep the main thing the main thing’. *Can you honestly say that all this busyness does not interrupt and reduce your daily ‘time with God’?* In fact, a strong case can be made that the Advent season should call us to make more time, make more spiritual preparations in celebration of the coming of our saviour, Emmanuel, God with us. *What additional spiritual preparations are you making?*

John the Baptist, quoting from Isaiah, cautions the crowds that preparations are a ‘must do’ if they wish to be ready to receive their Messiah. *Can this have parallels with Jesus’ second coming? If we knew for certain that Jesus’ second coming was next week, what preparation would you need to make? Would those preparations take precedence over everything else?*

Certainly, God’s words through Isaiah and John, call God’s people into action. A time to reflect about the priorities in their lives; are they/us ready to meet Jesus. Perhaps, *what unfinished/unresolved/unforgiven issue or relationship needs addressing? Time to stop ‘kicking the can down the road’.* Of course, God knows that valleys will not be filled in, or mountains made low, without his help, and He is only too pleased to meet with us to help in these tasks, but they are our tasks, for us to initiate, both individually and corporately (as family, as church, as community).

Read Psalm 75 Praise without ceasing is how this psalm ends, and it is where we should start our Advent preparations. Almighty God is coming, in person, to be with us! How can we not continually sing his praises?

Prayer *Jesus, sometimes I make myself the centre of the story, but this Christmas season I deliberately take the posture of John. Help me be someone who helps others prepare to meet with you. Give me the power, the words and the courage to point someone towards you this week. Amen* (taken from Lectio 365)