

Prepare the Way | Week 3 - Kingdom

Big Idea

To prepare the way for King Jesus, we must prioritize his Kingdom.

Scripture

Matthew 3:1-3, Matthew 6:33 & 9-10, John 6:38-39, and Colossians 3:1-5

Points to Keep In Mind

1. At the time that John the Baptist declared that the kingdom of heaven was near, the region was under Roman occupation, and many Jews were anticipating the arrival of a messiah who would liberate them from foreign rule and restore Israel's independence. They often viewed the kingdom of heaven as a political and earthly kingdom, believing it would bring justice and freedom from oppression. However, John's message was not focused on political revolt. He called people to repentance, suggesting that the kingdom he spoke of was more spiritual than political, with a focus on inner change and the establishment of God's rule in people's hearts and lives, rather than a physical kingdom. John was announcing that an entirely new way to live was opening up before them, a shift with God's kingdom breaking through to earth, through the person of Jesus! This parallels our world today all too well, especially with the approaching elections.
2. The prayer that Jesus gives us in Matthew 6:9-10 can help transform our hearts to align with God's kingdom. It's this kind of prayer that reminds us what we truly desire. As followers of Jesus, we want to prioritize his Kingdom and his righteousness, just as Matthew 6:33 directs us to do. Praying Matthew 6:10 every day can help us remember that and carry this out in our actions.
3. Jesus' statement in John 6:38-39 shows that even though he was half divine, his life and actions were entirely focused on doing God's will. How much more should ours as we are mere humans?! This underscores the importance of selflessness and obedience. For us as Christ-followers, this means that true discipleship involves aligning our lives with God's will, often requiring personal sacrifice and surrender. It also encourages us to seek God's guidance in our decisions and daily actions, being open to making adjustments in our lives to better reflect God's priorities and His Kingdom. It's a daily decision.
4. Colossians 3:1-5 reflects the idea that through our spiritual union with Christ's death and resurrection, we experience a shift in our identity, purpose, and priorities. When it says we "died", this represents our old self characterized by our sinful nature and separation from God that has been crucified with Christ. We are no longer defined by our past sins or worldly standards. Instead, our new identity is found in Christ which is reflected in our thoughts, actions, and attitudes.

Additional Questions and Resources

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1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? communitychristian.org/baptism
4. What have you been learning from the Community Daily? communitychristian.org/daily
5. If someone is seeking professional counseling, you can always refer them to our resource page: communitychristian.org/support
6. Find out more about having a YOU+ conversation by visiting communitychristian.org/you/