

John the Baptist: Prepare the Way!
Unusual Suspects, Pt. 8
John 1:19-39

Sunday, July 20, 2025

Malachi 3:1, “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

Luke 1:14, “He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, **15** for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. **16** He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. **17** And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Matthew 3:1, In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea **2** and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Matthew 3:4, John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. **5** People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. **6** Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:13, Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. **14** But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” **15** Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. **16** As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. **17** And a voice

from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Mark 6:18, For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.”

How Did John the Baptist Prepare the Way?

1. John Knew Who He Was NOT

John 1:19, Now this was John’s testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. **20** He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, “I am not the Messiah.” **21** They asked him, “Then who are you? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.”

2 Corinthians 4:5, For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.

2. John Knew Who He WAS

John 1:22, Finally they said, “Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” **23** John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’” **24** Now the Pharisees who had been sent **25** questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

Isaiah 40:3, A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”

3. John Pointed Others to Jesus-Not HIMSELF

John 1:26, “I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. **27** He is the one who

comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.” **28** This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing. **29** The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”

John 3:30, “He must become greater; I must become less.”

4. John Led Others to Follow JESUS

John 1:35, The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!” **37** When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. **38** Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?” They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?” **39** “Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

1 Corinthians 11:1, Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.