

Forerunner: *prepare the way of the Lord*

Preparing Yourself for Hope

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Matthew 11:2-15

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Introduction: When someone special is coming for a visit, you get ready. That might mean getting ahead on your homework or cleaning up your place or cooking some good food. You prepare. All the biographies of Jesus tell us that before the Christ child was born, God sent a quirky forerunner to help us prepare. What would it mean for you to prepare for the coming Savior? Worth having a look at that forerunner and his unsettling refrain: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord"?

Review: What needs did you bring before God this week? Did you hear any unexpected answers?

Read: Matthew 11:2-15

Prayer: Holy God, show us what you want to tell us about yourself and about ourselves as we study your word. Amen.

Discussion:

1. What is John the Baptist's question? Why might he have this question? For what is John hoping?
2. What is Jesus' answer to John? Why is this answer better than a simple 'Yes'? How does this answer line up with what John already knows? (See Isaiah 35:3-10; Isaiah 61:1-3; Psalm 146:5-9)
3. What questions do you have about Jesus? Who are you asking? Has God ever given you an answer that was specifically suited to you? How did that give you hope?
4. What does Jesus say about John the Baptist? Why is this important? (See Malachi 3:1 and 4:5)

Application: Think about the questions you have for God. Do you have specific answers that you are expecting? Look to see if God is giving you an unexpected answer.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you that you want us to know you. Help us to remember what you have shown us both now and in the past. Amen