

December 4, 2022

Second Sunday of Advent

Mathew 3:1-22

Earlier we listened to the prophetic words of Isaiah. He is the one prophet that speaks clearly about the coming of the Messiah. Also Jesus quotes him the most in His ministry! As if to confirm what was said in the past. What is it that we are looking at when we read Isaiah? We are watching the natural order as we know it being turned upside down. God is saying, I am God and I do not have to follow the natural order of things. I am beyond the nature and the supernatural. I am the author of all creation. The natural order as we know and understand it will be certainly upset when a virgin gives birth and remains a virgin afterward!

What can we do to prepare for the coming of the Messiah? Right off the top I think starting with oneself is the first place to begin. Turn our hearts and minds back to God. One can do this by looking deeply within ourselves and analyze our past actions and thoughts. Examine our conscience as they would say. Is there anything that I need to

atone for? Is there anyone I hurt or offended that requires me to ask for forgiveness. Repentance is a huge shift in our thinking. It requires putting our egos aside and humbly looking at ourselves. This process is one that we should be constantly using during the rest of the year.

Back to the scripture at hand. John is shocked to see Pharisees and Sadducees in the line to be baptized. He questions their intentions to be baptised. Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Did someone tell you about what is coming or did God reveal it to you? Either way bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not rely on anyone else for your salvation other than yourself. Abraham cannot save you now. Your salvation is your responsibility now. Things are truly getting real on the banks of the Jordan. John's baptism is to inspire you to look deeply into yourself. To seek repentance for the things you have done or omitted to do. John is saying that this is how you can prepare yourself for the One who is coming after John. It was good advice then and it still is today.

We should constantly be examining our lives as I mentioned earlier. It is a difficult practice that reaps great spiritual benefits. You do not have to be brutal with yourself just very honest. This does change how we think, act and behave. Actually it aligns our life more with the teachings of Our Lord.

Our Lord was all about building community and including everyone in that plan. Seeking forgiveness re-establishes healthy relationships that may have been broken. It creates harmony with in the Christian community. So that people and the community may continue to grow in a healthy manner. Repentance and forgiveness is very important.

This is why there is a small confession before every service we do on Sunday. This is to put relationships back in their proper places. It is a powerful part of the service that often times gets glossed over. It re-establishes our relationship with God and one another. Stop and think seriously about what is actually happening next time we do it.