



PART 2: PREPARE THE WAY

Sermon Notes

Text: Isaiah 40:3-5

Intro:

The Jewish people were sent into exile in Babylon - a time referred to as "The Exile"

"The essential meaning of exile is that we are where we don't want to be" ~Eugene Peterson

New Testament authors apply the idea of exile to describe the state of life as a Christian in this world (See 2 Peter 2:11)

Christians are not at home in the world, nor should we feel at home.

As exiles, we must honour the land that we are in, while living under the reign of the land where we are from.

Isaiah's Prophecy

Isaiah speaks to the Jewish people in exile: Isaiah 40:3-5

God was on his way to rescue them from exile!

It's not up to us to find our way to God; God is coming to us. He is coming to rescue us from our exile.

Prepare the Way

Matthew 3:1-3 - John the baptist is the voice Isaiah spoke about.

Are you prepared for God to come and do the work on your life that he wants to do?

There are some things in our lives that hinder us from experiencing the presence and blessing of God:

1. Replace fear and pride with faith and love

Fear and pride never get us close to Jesus

2. Confess your sin

Walk in the light with Jesus (1 John 1)

3. Offer forgiveness

"Unforgiveness is like drinking deadly poison and hoping the other person dies."

Conclusion

Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. What is the worst Christmas present you've ever received? The best? What's on your list this year?
2. What stood out to you about Sunday's sermon? What was interesting? Confusing? Weird? Thought provoking?

Study & Discussion:

1. Read 1 Peter 2:11-17. The Jewish people experienced exile in Babylon, but New Testament authors apply the concept of exile to the state of life as a Christian in this world. Consider what life would be like if you were a Canadian citizen living in a foreign country, but still trying to maintain your Canadian way of life. Knowing that you're a citizen of heaven trying to maintain your heavenly way of life in Canada, how does that change the way you view Canada?
 - How does your heavenly citizenship affect the way you view and engage in politics? Ethical debates? Canadian customs? Holiday celebrations (Christmas, Halloween, etc).
2. Have you considered that there may be things in your life that hinder you from experiencing the presence and blessing of God? Pastor Dave listed 3 culprits: Fear & pride, unconfessed sin, unforgiveness. What would you add to the list?
3. Read 1 John 1:5-10. What stands out to you? What does this say about confessing our sins? Why is it so important? Do you struggle with it? Other than God, do you have anyone in your life to whom you can confess your sins? Why do you think it's important to confess your sins to a person, not just God?

Application:

1. What do you need to do to "prepare the way" for God this Christmas? What barriers are in the way of you experiencing his presence and blessing? How will you deal with them?

Prayer:

Requests

-
-
-
-