

Saturday 7th March



John the Baptist

I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me.

[Malachi 3:1a]

In one of our fellowship groups we have been looking at the Bible through the experience of the Bible characters who lived them. During Lent, I thought it would be interesting to look at the Lenten journey through those accompanying Jesus on his journey to crucifixion.

One of those who is part of the journey to the cross is Jesus's cousin John the Baptist, a prophet and the prophesied forerunner of Jesus. John taught repentance, forgiveness, and returning to God's way. He also spoke often of the one who was coming after him, one who was greater, who would save people.

John pointed people to Jesus and tried to prepare them for what was to come. He was humble, recognising his place as lower than Jesus. John told people about Jesus, gathering his own disciples then sending them to Jesus. He was persecuted, imprisoned and eventually beheaded for his faith.

Lent is a good time to remember John the Baptist, to remind ourselves of his message to us to get ready, be prepared, to turn back to God. He also reminds us to tell others about Jesus, to bring them to faith, even if they then move on and share their faith elsewhere. We don't share Jesus with others in order to get more people in church, but so that they know God's love.

A challenge for this week in Lent is to tell others about Jesus, about his love for the world, about how he understands us because God became human. Don't worry about getting people into church, just tell them about how much God loves them.

*God of John the Baptist,
we thank you that you sent your son to save us.
We thank you for John the Baptist
who you sent to guide us back towards you.
As we enter the season of Lent,
give us the strength to share the good news with others
that they may come to know your love for them.
Amen*