

Just Christmas ~ Prepare the Way

December 4 & 5, 2010

Prepare the way for the Lord's coming! Clear the road for Him! The valleys will be filled, and the mountains and hills made level. The curves will be straightened, and the rough places made smooth. And then all people will see the salvation sent from God.

Luke chapter 3 verses 4 - 6 (782)

The valleys will be filled

- This refers to Jesus coming & comforting the oppressed, the suffering, the hungry, the marginalized, the out-casts
- ***The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, for He has anointed Me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come.***
Luke chapter 4 verses 18 & 19 (784)
- Because Jesus lived this out, He was referred to (*in a very condescending way*) as a "friend of sinners"
- ***The Lord your God is the God of gods and Lord of lords. He is the great God, the mighty and awesome God, who shows no partiality and cannot be bribed. He ensures that orphans and widows receive justice. He shows love to the foreigners living among you and gives them food and clothing. So you, too, must show love to foreigners, for you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt.***

Deuteronomy chapter 10 verses 17 - 19 (148)

The mountains & hills made level

- This is a warning to those who choose to live (*literally or figuratively*) high above those in the valley of suffering & need
- Refers to the comfortable, the rich, those with ample opportunity, the well connected, those with access to power, education, healthcare, those accepted by society
- ***"You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?"***
Luke chapter 12 verse 20 (795)
- ***God opposes the proud but favors the humble.*** *James chapter 4 verse 5 (932)*
- Pride can be shown in my actions, attitude, speech, what I laugh at, what I feed my mind

The curves (*crooked parts*) will be straightened - ***Jesus said, "If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities."*** *Luke chapter 16 verse 10 (798)*

The rough places made smooth - ***Jesus said, "Let Me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart...."*** *Matthew chapter 11 verse 29 (742)*

Next weekend: *Make an Impact!* (*Luke 1:26-28*) with a Christmas Carol sing-a-long

This study is based on a study by the same name first taught at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, IL. Bill Hybels is the Sr. Pastor of this dynamic church that God is using to challenge churches around the world, including Bethel. Willow Creek is where the Leadership Summit originates from each August. You can visit Willow Creek at www.WillowCreek.org