

SERMON NOTES Sunday 10 December

sunnysidechurch

Advent 2: Pointing to Jesus

Bible passage: Isaiah 40.1-11; Mark 1.1-8

Introduction

- We can only truly understand the story if know the Old and New Testament
- Opening of Mark's gospel begins with words which both a title and summary; they set the story in its context

Sense of expectation in Mark 1

1. Prophecies: promise of the Messiah in the prophets coming true and give signs that the time has come (return of prophecy and arrival of a herald)
2. Location: wilderness and the River Jordan important parts of the story of God's rescue of his people.
3. Holy Spirit: be part of the arrival of the Messiah (e.g. Joel which quoted on day of Pentecost)

Getting Ready

- Message of repentance: turning away from sin and back towards Jesus
- Preparing for arrival of glory of God (presence of God); tells us that Messiah not just a man but God himself

Conclusion

- John the Baptist message of repentance: in which areas of our lives do we need to turn back to God?
- John the Baptist points to Jesus: who might we point to Jesus this Christmas?

Some questions for discussion

1. How does reading the Old and New Testaments increase our understanding of God's great story?
2. Read Mark 1.1-8. What do you notice?
3. How does the opening of Mark's gospel compare with the openings of the other gospels? What do you think this tells us about the good news of Jesus?
4. Read Isaiah 40.1-11. In what ways does this deepen your understanding of how the story of Jesus is good news?
5. Read Luke 1.5-25 and 1.67-80. How do these prophecies come true in Mark 1.1-8?
6. John the Baptist preached a message of repentance: what areas of your life do you need to turn back to Jesus in?
7. John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus: who might you point to Jesus this Christmas time? What might this look like?
8. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these passages? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them. (Luke 1.68)
Why not spend some time thanking God's faithfulness to his promise to send his Messiah and pray for those you could point to Jesus?

Revd Rebecca Fardell