

A Weekly Word

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Readings for the week of Dec. 8/24:

Malachi 3:1-4

Luke 1:68-79

Philippians 1:3-11

Luke 3:1-6

During Advent, we prepare our hearts to receive God the Son, Jesus Christ, into our hearts and lives, and to celebrate the glorious occasion of His birth. He left His place in heaven to come to earth as a baby, be crucified to make atonement for the sins of the world, resurrected from the dead (by the power of the Holy Spirit), and has now ascended to heaven to sit in His rightful place, at the right hand of God, our heavenly Father.

Luke 3: 2b-6 can enthuse us, if we truly grasp the promise of God. Those verses say, *"the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"*

God, the Father, sent John the Baptist to *"'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight..."* in preparation for Jesus Christ. So that, *"all flesh shall see the salvation of God,"* which comes through our willingness to receive Him into our lives, as our Lord and Saviour.

As we prepare for Christmas this year, may we not lose focus on our reason for celebrating that day, and what it really means.

Matthew 1:18-23 enlightens us to the truth about God the Son (Jesus), in the words, *"Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to*

be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the second person of the Holy Trinity, the angel spoke to Joseph, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, Jesus was incarnated to dwell amongst us for a time, & He spoke through the prophet Isaiah.

These are just a few things that God has done. He is always with us, and He is able to do much more in the future, in and through us. All we have to do is trust Him.

Ephesians 3:20-21 says, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Blessed be the Holy Trinity; God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit. He is always with us. We are never alone. Through the Holy Spirit's enabling, we are able to do immeasurably more than we can do in our ability.

Philippians 1:6 says, "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

The best is yet to come!