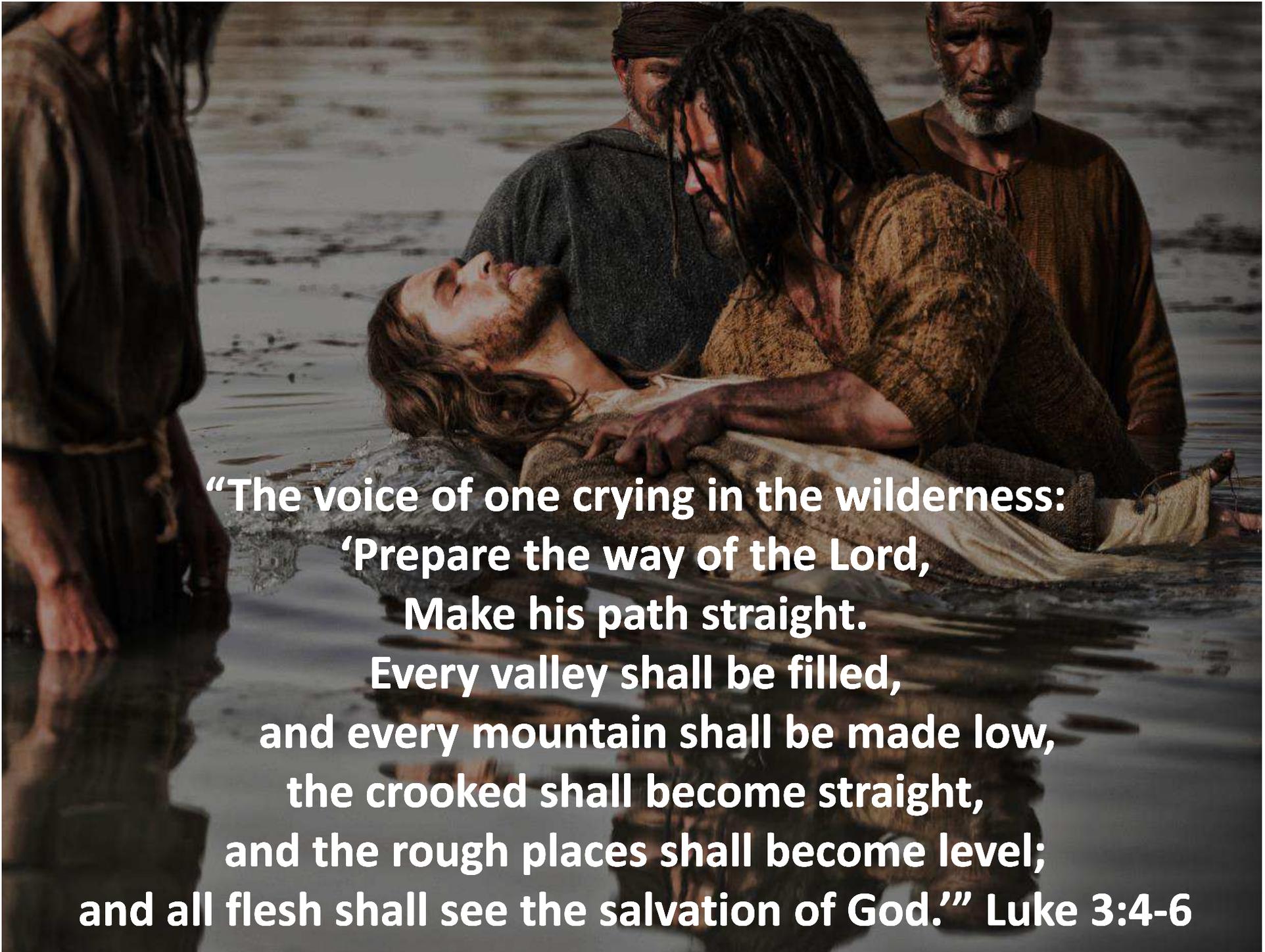




Sermon Series





**“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
Make his path straight.**

**Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain shall be made low,
the crooked shall become straight,
and the rough places shall become level;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Luke 3:4-6**

**Full Valleys? - Flat Mountains?
Straight Curves? - Level Bumps?**

John the herald of Jesus was an enigma, just like the Kingdom and King he was foreshadowing.

**John's message was a both mystifying & extremist
Calling all those with ears to a Kingdom Paradigm Shift**

**A radical shakeup - A new order
Old ways shattered beyond recognition
Transformation - Revolution**

PARADOX – illustrates the Kingdom of God

**Upturned, upended, reversed,
Kingdom values runs against the cultural grain**

Inverted - Upside Down Kingdom

**Zechariah and Elizabeth?
John the Baptist?
Mary and Joseph?
Shepherds and Magi?
Bethlehem, Nazareth and a stable?**

**All contradictions/misfits/alternatives to the
patterns of the prevailing order of the World and
what one would “expect” with the arrival of a King**

Inclusiveness instead of exclusiveness

**Right
Side
Up**



UPSIDE

DOWN

KINGDOM



The Upside Down Kingdom

Force replaced with Suffering

Law replaced with Grace

Violence replaced with Love

Hatred replaced with Forgiveness

Greed replaced with Generosity

Performance replaced with Unmerited favour

Position replaced with Posture

Curses replaced with Blessings

Exclusiveness replaced with inclusiveness

When I know emptiness, that I know God's fullness

When I know death, then I experience real Life

When I know how weak I am, I know true Strength

When I trust like a little child, that I am spiritually mature

When I am bound to You, then I know true Freedom

When I am broken, I know Restoration

When I can't carry on, He carries me on
When I see who I really am, You reveal who You really are
When I am in darkness, that I find Light
When I am decreased, He is increased
Only when I give up, does He take over
When I know real rest, that I am working
When I realise how poor I am, I am becoming wealthy
When I am misunderstood, I understand Him more
When I am rejected, I am really accepted
When I am tested, You become my Testimony
When I see how wrong I am, I discover how Right You are
When I know I am lost, then I am found
When I lose my mind, that I gain Your mind
When I consider myself last, are You really First
When I have nothing, that You become Everything
When I can do nothing, I see You can do anything

**DO NOT be conformed
to the pattern of this world**

**You have heard it said,
But I say to YOU!**

**This Kingdom we live
should threaten the status quo!**

ALTERNATIVE SUBCULTURE

To become a leader, be a servant!

Jesus always reframed success in terms of servanthood

Servanthood is deplored by the World as failure

Jesus = Bowl, Cross and a Tomb

There are no little people in the Kingdom of God - It is flat lined

If there is any sense of "hierarchy" we should take the posture of Jesus and be more concerned about the plight of those at the bottom, than about advancing our own position

Titles are harmful in the KOG - Terms like Reverend or Senior Pastor perpetuate status differences unbecoming of an inverted model

We must resist the temptation to compare ourselves to others or reduce success to performance, position or power. When we live in obedience to God, it doesn't matter how big our platform is. We will be content to change the world one person at a time.

Mat 20:27-28whoever wants to be great, must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be the willing slave of all like the Son of Man; He did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give up his life as a ransom for many.“

Mat 23:11The greatest among you will be your servant

Low is High

For God deliberately chose what in the world is foolish to put the wise to shame, and what the world calls weak to put the strong to shame. And God also deliberately chose what in the world is lowborn *and* insignificant and branded *and* treated with contempt, even the things that are nothing, that He might depose *and* bring to nothing the things that are. 1 Corinthians 1:26-28

To get back at your enemy, love them!

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:38-48

Forgiveness lies at the very heart of Gods Kingdom

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Matthew 18: 21-22

God has forgiven us, therefore we must forgive others!

This inversion to forgive proves our conversion

Grudges

Bitterness

Animosity

Resentment

To become rich, give everything away!

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21

**Spending our lives in the pursuit of material gain
is not owning an eternal Kingdom perspective**

The love of money is the root of all evil!

**Jesus was very outspoken about greed and how the
attitude of our heart is changed by materialism.**

If then you have died with Christ to material ways of looking at things *and* have escaped from the world's crude *and* elemental notions *and* teachings of externalism, why do you live as if you still belong to the world? Why do you submit to rules *and* regulations?

Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not even touch, Colossians 2:20

To become rich, give everything away!

Dear brothers, how can you claim that you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, if you show favouritism to rich people and look down on poor people? If a man comes into your church dressed in expensive clothes and with valuable gold rings on his fingers, and at the same moment another man comes in who is poor and dressed in threadbare clothes, and you make a lot of fuss over the rich man and give him the best seat in the house and say to the poor man, “You can stand over there if you like or else sit on the floor”!

Judging a man by his wealth shows that you are guided by wrong motives. Listen to me, dear brothers: God has chosen poor people to be rich in faith, and the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs, for that is the gift God has promised to all those who love him.

The world gives value to a person on the basis of his position or possessions - A Kingdom evaluation is based on radically different criteria

Image
Materialism
Identity

**What would God
have you
invert
in your life
TODAY**