



It's Christmas, or Is It

*While Jesus was living in the Galilean hills, John, called “the Baptizer,” was preaching in the desert country of Judea. His message was simple and austere, like his desert surroundings: “Change your life. God’s kingdom is here.” John and his message were authorized by Isaiah’s prophecy:....*

*Thunder in the desert! Prepare for God's arrival! Make the road smooth and straight! John dressed in a camel-hair habit tied at the waist by a leather strap. He lived on a diet of locusts and wild field honey. People poured out of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordanian countryside to hear and see him in action...*

*There at the Jordan River those who came to confess their sins were baptized into a changed life. When John realized that a lot of Pharisees and Sadducees were showing up for a baptismal experience because it was becoming the popular thing to do, he exploded: "Brood of snakes! What do you think you're doing slithering down here to the river?..."*

**Do you think a little water on your snakeskins is going to make any difference? It's your life that must change, not your skin! And don't think you can pull rank by claiming Abraham as father. Being a descendant of Abraham is neither here nor there. Descendants of Abraham are a dime a dozen...**

**What counts is your life. Is it green and blossoming? Because if it's deadwood, it goes on the fire.”**

**Matthew 3:1-10 The Message**

# Word #1: Prepare

*“Prepare for GOD’s arrival! Make the road straight and smooth, a highway fit for our God. Fill in the valleys, level off the hills, smooth out the ruts, clear out the rocks. Then GOD’s bright glory will shine and everyone will see it. Yes! Just as God has said.”*

*Isaiah 40:3 The Message*

*“The way of the righteous is smooth: O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.”*

*Isaiah 26:7*



## **Word #2: Confess**

***“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9***

**“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”**

**James 5:16**

# Word #3: Repent

**“I tell you that in the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.” Luke 15:7**

# Word #4: Produce

Love, joy, peace, patience,  
kindness, goodness, gentleness,  
faithfulness, and self-control

**Accepting Jesus Means  
Firing the Committee in Our  
Heart**