

Prepare the Way  
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Our Savior, Momenca

*And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."*

*(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. John 1:19-28*

It comes as no surprise that some Jews were ready to crown John as Messiah while casting aspersions on Messiah Himself, Jesus Christ. Jesus comes in low estate. His parents aren't on the society pages of any Jerusalem newspaper, let alone any Nazareth newspaper. There's no special place for the Son of God to be born. He must take his place in a lowly feeding trough amid the animals and visiting shepherds. Once Jesus begins preaching, others wonder who He is and from where He comes. Even Nathanael, one of His disciples, asked "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Something good has come from Nazareth. He comes to set the prisoners free from the power of Satan. He comes as our brother to dwell among us as the perfect offering, the spotless substitute offered up for the sin of the world. The way of Jesus, the way of salvation, must be straight. So John is the one who prepares the way for Jesus. He's the one who runs before the Christ, pointing his finger at the Savior of the nations and showing us in whom we find life.

The witness of John the Baptist continues in the Church today. There's a plaque that says, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." That's a reminder to every pastor and teacher what they are given to do. They are given to say with John the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

Thanks be to God that neither John the Baptist or your pastor or teacher isn't the Christ. There is only one Christ: the God who becomes man to save you from your sins.