

## STRONG WORDS, SERIOUS LOVE

### *An Advent Message*

**Luke 3:7-18**

*“John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?’”*  
Luke 3:7 (NIV)

### PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE COMING OF JESUS:

#### 1. DON'T EXPECT OTHERS TO MAKE YOU

##### RIGHT WITH GOD

*“Don't just say, ‘We're safe – we're the descendants of Abraham.’ That proves nothing. God can change these stones here into children of Abraham.”* John 3:8b (NLT)

*“... The child will not be punished for the parent's sins, and the parent will not be punished for the child's sins. Righteous people will be rewarded for their own goodness, and wicked people will be punished for their own wickedness.”* Ezekiel 18:20 (NLT)

#### 2. TURN TO GOD YOURSELF

*“... The word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”*  
Luke 3:2-3 (NIV)

#### 3. SHOW BY THE WAY YOU LIVE

##### THAT YOU'VE TURNED TO GOD

*“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”* Luke 3:8a (NIV)

*“Prove by the way you live that you have really turned from your sins and turned to God.”* Luke 3:8a (NLT)

#### A. SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE TO

##### MEET OTHERS' NEEDS

*“The crowd asked, ‘What should we do?’ John replied, ‘If you have two coats, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry.’”* Luke 3:10-11 (NLT)

#### B. SHOW YOUR HONESTY

*“Even corrupt tax collectors came to be baptized and asked, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ ‘Show your honesty,’ he replied. ‘Make sure you collect no more taxes than the Roman government requires you to.’”* Luke 3:12-13 (NLT)

#### C. BE CONTENT

*“‘What should we do?’” asked some soldiers. John replied, ‘Don't extort money, and don't accuse people of things you know they didn't do. And be content with your pay.’”* Luke 3:14 (NLT)

#### 4. TEAM UP WITH GOD TO DEVELOP

##### HIS CHARACTER QUALITIES IN YOU

*“John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.”* Luke 3:18 (NLT)

*“Let everyone see that you are considerate [exercise forbearance, self-control] in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.”*  
Philippians 4:5 (NLT)