

**Introduction**

All four gospels - John the Baptist

**I. Notice the Timing**

1. Prophecy -  
    Malachi 3:5-6  
    Elijah is coming
2. An angel to Zacharias - Luke 1:17  
    -note "angel"  
    -Luke 1:17  
    The Angels message  
    Go before Him  
    In the spirit of Elias
3. This is he - Jesus about John  
    Matthew 11:7-11  
    -note this is Jesus' testimony about John the Baptist

**II. Who is John?**

1. Jesus' forerunner  
    -before the king  
    -an advance team - Billy Graham
2. Early in the ministry of John  
    "Behold the lamb" - John 1:29
3. Both - John and Jesus  
    -"repent"  
    -Jesus at Mark 1:15  
    -John at Matthew 3:2  
    Jesus sends disciples - repent  
    Great commission  
    Peter's messages (Acts)  
    Paul's messages (Acts  
    !!). this idea (Repent) has disappeared  
    John/ Jesus knew we need to repent
4. Both - baptize (John 3:22)  
    -their ministries teach and practice it
5. So, they overlap  
    John is there first  
    Jesus is there
6. He must increase- I must decrease (John 3:23-30)  
    John fades  
    Jesus ascends  
    And... John's disciples begin to follow Jesus  
    His job, his message... get ready

**III. Are You Ready?**

1. Christmas is next Sunday
2. Are you ready?
  - A. Winter - plants in to get ready
    - vehicles winterized
    - long-sleeve shirts
  - B. Christmas - food run, last minute gifts, wrapped it all
  - C. Jesus - he brings he is
    - Forgiveness - can wash away
    - Love - true love
    - Joy - true Joy of life
    - Life - what life is all about
  - D. Just like the Christmas even - at Christmas
    - music without Jesus
    - food/ feast without Jesus
    - family without Jesus
    - decorations without Jesus
    - gifts without the gift
    - Take away these would you still have Christmas?
    - These have substituted for Jesus
  - E. He brings real life