



Dig Deeper Study Guide

Stroudsburg United Methodist Church - December 9, 2012

Sermon

*"How Long Do We
Have to Wait?"*

Matthew 3:1-6

by Bob Shank

Things I want to remember
about this sermon...

Monday 12/10/12

Isaiah 40:3

These are the words of Isaiah. They were spoken sometime between 715 B.C. - 686 B.C. In other words, a long time before the arrival of John the Baptist. Isaiah is speaking to the people of Judah a word of hope during the critical time when they were being attacked and destroyed by Assyria. We all need words of hope, but sometimes we have to wait a while for this hope to be realized.

Tuesday 12/11/12

Isaiah 40:4

In a topsy-turvy world, the hope of any stability is more than welcome. Think of those who live in chaos day after day, who wonder which end is up. Many of us take stability for granted, but go without it for just a little while and you will not take it for granted anymore! Isaiah's world definitely needed some stability and our world does, too! When your valleys are lifted up and your mountains are brought low, life is much more manageable. Do you ever hope for stability in your life? The people in Isaiah's day did.

Wednesday 12/12/12

Isaiah 40:5

This is the heart of Isaiah's prophecy and word of hope. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Even in the midst of turmoil and destruction and death, God is still present; we just don't recognize or see it. Many who suffered in the concentration camps of Germany in WWII wondered where God was in their time of turmoil, just as the people of Isaiah's day did the same. But the hopeful word of Isaiah is that God's glory will be revealed. You can count on it!



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Things to do this week in response to the sermon...

Are you good at waiting?

What do you do when you have to wait a long, long time for something?

Do you believe God's promises always come true? Are you patient enough to wait for them?

Thursday 12/13/12
Matthew 3:1-2

Do you remember John the Baptist? He wore strange clothes and lived in the wilderness. He preached repentance and urgency. According to him there was no time to waste so you better listen and get yourself right with God! John's method and appearance scared some people and was threatening to others. He was a voice crying in the wilderness to those who lived in his time. Would you have listened to John's message of warning and repentance?

Friday 12/14/12
Matthew 3:3

Do these words sound familiar? They should. They are the words found in Isaiah 40. You see, it took many, many years for Isaiah's prophecy to be realized and the prophecy was realized not until the days of John the Baptist. That was a terribly long time of waiting! Are you patient when you have to wait? Did you ever have to wait a terribly long time for something? How did you endure that period of waiting? No one in Isaiah's day saw the prophecy realized; only the generations long after them saw it. Why do we sometimes have to wait so long?

Saturday 12/15/12
Matthew 3:4-6

Here we have a brief description of John the Baptist, the clothes he wore, and the food he ate. Yuck! Wild honey sounds appetizing but locusts?! We read here that all the people of Judea went out to hear John preach. Does this ring a bell from Isaiah's prophecy: "... And all flesh shall see it together." This was Judah's time when God's prophecy and word of hope was being realized and it was all through the coming Messiah. Yes, they had to wait a terribly long time, but the resulting prophecy was more than they could ever have hoped for in their lives and in the lives of their forefathers and foremothers!