

## Ready or not

John the Baptists story is told in all four Gospels: Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 1; John 1 and he is mentioned in the book of Acts 1:5; Acts 10:37; Acts 11:16; Acts 13:24-25.

John had two main tasks in life:

- He fulfilled an Elijah-like role by calling the nation to repentance – and in keeping with that, he baptised people as a sign of their repentance.
- He also came to identify and announce the Messiah.

His message was very simple:

- Repent from your evil ways and turn back to God.
- Be baptized as a sign of your repentance.
- Make sure your lives produce the fruit that comes from a life lived in relationship with God.
- Be prepared for the judgment that will come.

John the Baptist laid the groundwork for Jesus' ministry by turning people's hearts back to God, declaring the need for repentance and a transformation of the heart and identifying Jesus as the Saviour.

He called the people of his day to make God the focus of their lives, not just an add on. He challenged them all to consider what God required of them.

And he calls to us today – with the same message.

*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Matthew 3: 2; 11-12*

Indeed, ready or not, our Saviour is coming ...  
Are you ready to meet him?