

## 2nd Week of Advent – Year A

The Christmas season is a time of giving gifts.

Imagine that sometime in the next week a friend comes to your home or office and knocks on the door. You open the door and they're standing there with a package in their hands.

What's the first thing you say? "For me"? - of course it's for you!  
So we take it and put it on a table "should I open it?" Of course!

But that's the key. For until we open a gift it remains nothing but potential.  
Until we open it, it retains an infinity of promise, but only promise.

John came to prepare the way for Jesus - the Prince of Peace.

He came and offered a gift of God - a gift that enables us to meet God more fully - **The gift of repentance.**

It's up to us to accept it and celebrate the joy of reconciliation.

J the B says "give evidence you want to reform"  
And we say ---

- Calvin and Hobbes, Calvin says to Hobbes, "I feel bad that I called Susie names and hurt her feelings. I'm sorry I did it". Hobbs says "Maybe you should apologize to her,"  
Calvin ponders this for a moment and then replies, "I keep hoping there's a less obvious solution."

God usually gives us an obvious solution – so John comes to us

“Preparing the way of the Lord” focusing on Repentance

Repentance is something we live out - each day, by trying to do what God urges us to do in the quiet depths of our heart.

Notice what John tells people to do.  
He doesn't say, get a camel leather wardrobe like mine.  
He doesn't say, switch your diet for mine.  
He doesn't say, grow a beard like mine.  
He says, repent - please God in the work you do each and every day. *Day by Day*

- Redemption is something God does – Repentance is something we do
- Jesus came to redeem us, to restore our relationship with the Father
- In repentance, we accept that gift of redemption and turn away from our sin
- Through Jesus that same Spirit that Isaiah waited for will be poured out
- Reconciliation, repentance, and Salvation are possible for everyone – no matter what
- Isaiah prophecies about the fruit of the messiah:  
Wisdom, Understanding, Council, Might, Knowledge, Fear of the Lord

In scripture – Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge are related

They are progressive – one leading to the other

Example in marriage (wisdom, understanding, knowledge)

- We are called to that very intimate relationship in Knowledge of God
- **For the earth shall be filled with Knowledge of the Lord, as the water covers the sea**
- This is our expectation in Advent
- As Jesus comes He brings with Him KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, an intimate, personal knowledge for each and every one of us – and repentance is the key to opening up that gift