

Matthew 3: 1 – 12

'Pointing to Jesus'

Introduction ...

Who has heard of the phrase: **'It's rude to point?'**

A question for this morning ...

Can you think of any occasions when it's actually ok to point?

When It's not rude to point? (*We had time to chat together*)

Answers given: *Directions, seeing something in the distance, spotting the person that you're looking for etc.*

John the Baptist ...

In today's Gospel, we heard part of the story of John the Baptist ... and **'the one who is coming after me ...'**

Earlier in the Gospel reading, looking from our culture ... it's almost as if John is taking part in an episode or series of **'I'm a celebrity ... get me out of here'** ... living in the desert, wearing clothing of camels' hair ... eating locusts and wild honey ... but John would not have been content to have the 'celebrity label.

His whole life was about preparing the way for someone else. In other words: **'It's not me, it's him'** – Jesus.

By quoting words from Isaiah, Matthew writes that John is the one who embodies

The voice crying out in the wilderness Prepare the way of the Lord ...

John the Baptist is himself a **signpost** pointing to Jesus (*linking back to our opening questions*)

So another question – or a couple of related questions: **Looking back, can you think of people who pointed you to Jesus ... how did they do this? And, can you think of any times when you have pointed someone else to Jesus?** (*time to chat together again ... Revd Judy told us a time when she was in Vet School and how she pointed a student in his career guidance, because he had asked her a question that led into her pointing her answer to the Christian life quite naturally*)

Conclusion ...

I invite us to take **two** actions from this morning:

In the future – if someone points you to Jesus – reminds you about Faith, encourages you to prayer ... let's remember to thank them ... I don't think that John the Baptist had an easy life ... and the same might be true of whoever is your signpost to Jesus.

And the second is to ask God to show you when and how you can be a signpost to Jesus:

It's not me ... it's him.

It's not about me ... it's in thankfulness to Jesus ...

... or however your circumstances allow you to witness in this way.

Amen.