

BE READY

FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD

December 5, 2009

In the early 1960's, my closest cousin had a catch phrase to describe things he really liked. He would say "it" was "ready" If it was a girl, he would say "she's ready"; if it was a car, he would say "that's ready". I'm not sure I ever understood what he really meant by the phrase, but I interpreted it as what would later be called "cool" or, even later, "rad". I don't know what the current phrase might be that would mean the same.

One adage that I have always understood to be attributed to Dwight D. Eisenhower is "Planning is essential; plans are useless". This makes a lot of sense to me. If you don't have a plan, you never know what is NOT being done. But, if you let the plan run your life, you quit thinking and adjusting to fit changes that are required to the original plan.

The Bible has a lot to say about being "ready".

Matthew 24:

- 44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
 - Repeated in Luke 12.40

The Strong's word for ready is number 2092 and means "prepared".

HOW MANY WAYS DOES THE BIBLE INSTRUCT US TO BE "READY"?

1. "GET READY" TO SERVE

2 Samuel 15:

- 15 And the king's servants said to the king, "We are your servants, ready to do whatever my lord the king commands."
 - The gift of many people is to serve others.
 - Jesus told His disciples that by serving others, we are serving Him.
 - In order to serve others, we need to know our gifts and how to use them.

2. "GET READY" TO GIVE GIFTS

2 Samuel 18:

- 22 And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, "But whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite." So Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, since you have no news ready?"
 - Speaking of our gifts, we need to know what they are before we run off to use them.
 - Zadok was willing to give news to David, but he was not prepared.
 - How many times do we have good intentions, but we act before we plan?

3. "GET READY" TO WORSHIP

Daniel 3:

- 15 "Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"
 - You are here today because you planned to worship with us.
 - You had to have gas in your car.
 - You had to get yourself ready.
 - Many of you planned what to bring for fellowship.

BE READY
FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
December 5, 2009

4. “GET READY” TO WRITE

Ezra 7:

- 6 this Ezra came up from Babylon; and he was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given. The king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.
 - Ezra had been given the gift of writing – not a wide skill in those days
 - He honed the gift and used it to God’s glory

Psalms 45:

- 1 My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.
 - David also was a skilled writer
 - His writings were prolific – the Psalms give us many uplifting exhortations.

5. “GET READY” TO BE MERCIFUL

Psalms 86:

- 5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.
 - Just as God is ready and willing to forgive us, if we repent and obey His commandments, we need to be ready and willing to forgive those who maltreat us.
 - The model prayer tells us to ask His forgiveness according to how we forgive others.
 - **Matthew 6:**
 - 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.
 -
 - 14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
 - 15 "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

6. “GET READY” TO BUILD A HOUSE

1 Chronicles 28:

- 2 Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people: I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it.
- 3 "But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood.'
 - David’s plan was to build the first permanent temple.
 - That was also God’s original plan.
 - God gave specific direction as to how the temple to David.
 - In the following verses, David delivered those plans to Solomon.
 - That was God’s “backup plan”.

7. “GET READY” FOR A TRIP

2 Kings 9:

BE READY
FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
December 5, 2009

- 21 Then Joram said, "Make ready." And his chariot was made ready. Then Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot; and they went out to meet Jehu, and met him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite.
 - It most likely took a considerable amount of work to get ready for a trip.
 - Chariots needed to be hooked up to the horses.
 - Having prepared horses for rides in the past, we know they do not always cooperate.
 - Today, if we plan to travel by air, bus or train, we need to have tickets.
 - If we plan to travel by car, we need gas – and to make sure the car is ready.
 - We also need to plan what to take with us.

8. "GET READY" TO HEAR / LISTEN / LEARN

Ecclesiastes 5:

- 1 Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near (*be ready*) to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil.

2 Corinthians 8:

- 18 And we have sent with him the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches,
- 19 and not only that, but who was also chosen by the churches to travel with us with this gift, which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and to show your ready mind,
 - When you turn on your TV or radio to listen to a spiritual message, you have planned to listen to it.
 - When you attend church services, you are prepared to listen (most of the time☺)
 - Your state of mind determines how you will listen and learn.

9. "GET READY" TO SPEAK / PREACH / TEACH

Romans 1:

- 15 So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

1 Timothy 6:

- 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,
 - This Bible Study did not write itself.
 - Whenever a teacher or preacher gives a sermon or leads a Bible Study, they are admonished to spend time preparing the lesson.
 - "Tell them what you plan to tell them, tell them, then remind them what you told them."

10. "GET READY" FOR A MEAL

Genesis 18:

- 6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes."

1 Samuel 25:

- 18 Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys.
 - Remember, they did not have the modern conveniences that we have today.
 - Preparing a meal could take days instead of a few moments in the microwave.

BE READY
FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
December 5, 2009

11. "GET READY" FOR WAR

Luke 14:

- 31 "Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?"
- 32 "Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace."
 - No one can go to war without being ready.
 - The United States is in several wars throughout the world.
 - We need to be ready for the last great war – with Satan, our true enemy

11. "GET READY" FOR A MAJOR EVENT

Matthew 25:

- 1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.
- 2 "Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.
- 3 "Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,
- 4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
- 5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.
- 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'
- 7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.
- 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'
- 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'
- 10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.
- 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'
 - We put a lot of time and effort into planning a wedding.
 - They also did so in the times of Jesus.
 - Nita and I attended the opening of the Allen Event Center with Reba McIntire performing.
 - The time and effort put into that event was evident.
 - The sound system was ready.
 - The ticket takers were ready.
 - The ushers were ready.

12. "GET READY" TO DIE

Hebrews 9:

- 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
- 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Psalms 88:

- 15 I have been afflicted and ready to die from my youth; I suffer Your terrors; I am distraught.
 - We very often describe those who say they are ready to die as having "given up"
 - That is not the context of the Bible.
 - We need to be ready to die – it will happen.

BE READY
FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
December 5, 2009

CONTEXT

Luke 12:

- 35 "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning;
- 36 "and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.
- 37 "Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.
- 38 "And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.
- 39 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.
- 40 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."
- 41 ¶ Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?"
- 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?"
- 43 "Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.
- 44 "Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.
- 45 "But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk,
- 46 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.
- 47 "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.
- 48 "But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.
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- 54 Then He also said to the multitudes, "Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is.
- 55 "And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is.
- 56 "Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?"

Matthew 24:

- 1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.
- 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
- 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
- 4 ¶ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.
- 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.
- 6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.
- 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.
- 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows.
- 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.
- 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

BE READY
FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
December 5, 2009

- 11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.
- 12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.
- 13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved.
- 14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.
- 15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),
- 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
- 17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.
- 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.
- 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!
- 20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.
- 21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.
- 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.
- 23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.
- 24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
- 25 "See, I have told you beforehand.
- 26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.
- 27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
- 28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.
- 29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
- 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
- 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
- 32 ¶ "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.
- 33 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near--at the doors!
- 34 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.
- 35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.
- 36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.
- 37 "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
- 38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,
- 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
- 40 "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.
- 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.
- 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.
- 43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.
- 44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

BE READY
FAIRVIEW, TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
December 5, 2009

- 45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?"
- 46 "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.
- 47 "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.
- 48 "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,'
- 49 "and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,
- 50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,
- 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

1 Thessalonians 5:

- 1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.
- 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.
- 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.
- 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.
- 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.
- 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.
- 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.
- 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.
- 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.
- 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

HOW DO WE GET "READY"?

- 1. STUDY THE BIBLE**
- 2. WATCH FOR THE SIGNS TOLD US IN THE BIBLE**
- 3. PLAN OUR ACTIVITIES; OUR FINANCES; OUR LIVES**
- 4. PREPARE OUR WORSHIP**
- 5. COMFORT EACH OTHER**
- 6. PREPARE TO LEARN**
- 7. PREPARE TO TEACH**