

Material and Spiritual Readiness

2 Timothy 1:7 ESV

“7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”

The times we are blessed to live in are proof of the infallible word of God. Those in this world who are without Jesus Christ, are without hope, but those of us who walk in the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit are full of Hope for the fruition of God’s promises of a new Heaven and a new Earth and the return of our King Jesus! It is true, there are many tribulations beginning and more to come. Here at home, inflation is raging, and finances are tasking every household to the limit with no obvious end in sight. The moral fabric of America is being torn and replaced by “moral autonomy” and idol worship. They want to “kill God” and replace Him with their idols on His throne. (This may sound familiar to those who study His word). Identity of each generation is being attacked, the family unit is being attacked, fatherhood and the importance of masculine influence is being attacked, innocence and purity of children are being attacked by sexualizing them, gender reassignment, normalizing pedophilia and homosexuality, using confusion, chaos, with the end of Christianity as the goal. Free speech, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are all being redefined by those currently in power by means of iniquity, in order to secure their own agendas. We are in ANOTHER foreign war. This time in Ukraine (a government that persecutes Christians), a proxy war with Russia, that has placed us within a hare’s breath of nuclear war. We are closer now than during the Bay of Pigs in the Kennedy administration. They persist with the claim of preserving democracy around the world, but a closer look reveals the efforts to maintain a war economy that that enrich a few, while hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost and our tax dollars are paying for it, placing our future generations under crippling debt.

In the last week alone, Hurricane Helene ravaged the southeast United States creating destruction and a death toll higher than Hurricane Katrina and still rising. The inexplicable, delayed response of government is ongoing, while thousands suffer. Blatant and discovered iniquity by our leaders have driven distrust by the citizenry to an all time high. **We must do better!!** Dock workers and longshoremen (some of the highest paid blue-collar positions in the country), go on strike for the first time since 1974, **for more money** and job security. They did this while the country and economy are already suffering, and severely impacted the price and availability of necessities. The full effect of this has yet to be realized. The largest ballistic missile attack in the history of Israel was conducted by Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel may retaliate with nuclear weapons.

I mentioned that we are blessed to live in these times. Using worldly logic, it is difficult to see the blessing. **We are not of this world!!** Is the future unclear? No, it is becoming very clear that the return of Christ is soon. In all of this, one thing is palpable to those who are vigilant. **Faith is rising!!** Today, let’s look deeper into how and why we should be prepared.

Material readiness:

1. Mindset

1 Peter 4:7

“7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.”

- Faith, not fear. Know the enemy and don't be surprised.
- Worries are negative meditation.
- The distractions of the world will harden your heart and prevent proper prayer.
- Proper prayer will always realign us with God's presence.
- Consider all that God has done and his Faithfulness.
- Live in a constant state of expectation of God's promises.

2. Recognize the state of the world and the state of your environment

- Strive to know the truth about what is going on.
- Recognize the potential threats and crisis's to you and those you care about, that could take place.
- Let the Holy Spirit speak to you by showing you the contrast.
- Study and know the Word of God, so that you may see the lies. The word is the benchmark of all truth.

3. Plan and prepare

Proverbs 16:3 ESV

“3 Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

1 Timothy 5:8 ESV

“8 But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

Proverbs 6:6-8 ESV

“6 Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.

7 Without having any chief, officer, or ruler,

8 she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.”

Proverbs 21:5 ESV

“5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.”

Proverbs 24:3 ESV

“3 By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established;”

- Know and learn what material things you will need to be self sufficient and to care for others.
- Being dependent on God and being self sufficient are not mutually exclusive.
- God blesses you with wisdom as you seek it and will provide for all who are obedient.

4. Rely on one another

Exodus 18:21 ESV

“21 Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.”

2 Corinthians 6:14 ESV

“14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?”

Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV

“24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 ESV

“9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!”

- Church family, Christian Community
- Communicate now
- Combined resources

Spiritual readiness:

1 Corinthians 16:14 ESV

“14 Let all that you do be done in love.”

Proverbs 16:9 ESV

“9 The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.”

John 16:13 ESV

“13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

1. Individual spiritual responsibility is a daily choice.

Ephesians 6:13-17 ESV

“13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,”

2. Stand firm in the principals and direction of Jesus no matter what is happening in the world.

1 Corinthians 16:13 ESV

“13 Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”

3. We fight against temptations. The enemy knows our tendencies. Our hearts and minds are the battlefield! What temptations will you be fighting?

Matthew 26:41 ESV

“41 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

4. Recognize the seasons. Pay close attention! Prayer is vital!

Luke 21:29-36 ESV

“The Lesson of the Fig Tree

“29 And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

Watch Yourselfs

“34 “But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. 35 For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

5. Be not anxious but grateful!

Philippians 4:6 ESV

“6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”