

## Being Ready Always

“Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For, He that would love life, And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips that they speak no guile: And let him turn away from evil, and do good; Let him seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, And his ears unto their supplication: But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.” (1 Pet. 3:8-17).

How many times are these passages read, but not acted upon? “Which one?” you ask: 1) “Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: 2) “not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing,” 3) “let him turn away from evil, and do good; (4) Let him seek peace, and pursue it.” 5) “being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a good conscience.” 6) “your good manner of life in Christ” (7) “better...that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.”

When considering passages such as this, there may be a tendency to focus on one statement, i.e., “being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you” and a worthy focus it would be: “Be”? Have you ever been stung by the “be” word? i.e., “My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, That I may answer him that reproacheth me.” (Prov. 27:11). The “be” word of the present concern, is, “being ready always.”

There are many areas (spiritually) that may challenge your readiness. When the apostle Paul was in the city of Athens, “the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him” (Acts 17:18). When Stephen was being upbraided by five different synagogues, “they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council, and set up false witnesses, who said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law” (Acts 6:12-13). On the day of Pentecost, the apostles spoke to “men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem” (Acts 2:14). The point is, the opportunity to “give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you” (Ibid.), may come from various quarters. Such being the case, Peter says, to be “ready always” (Ibid.).

How can the child of God prepare himself to be “ready”? I’m glad you asked! In the book of Ezra, the reader is introduced to the book’s name sake, i.e., a skillful scribe, and priest who had prepared himself for the upholding of the law of Jehovah, “Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances” (Ezra 7:10).

By following the example of Ezra, i.e., to 1) set your heart 2) seek the law of Jehovah 3) do it 4) and be ready to teach it, only he who does so will be “ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you.”

Thus, the question: “Are you ready?”. ret