

2 TIMOTHY 4:2(NKV) Preach the word! ***Be ready*** in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

1 PETER 3:15(NLTSE) Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, ***always be ready*** to explain it

- ***Recap:*** last week we discussed some steps to ensure we're ready for service in Christ, namely: realising the need of salvation, having a real and personal experience with Jesus and then understanding the power of our testimony.
- This week we'll delve a little further into the topic
- The challenge is to live in such a way that people actually do ask about our Christian hope.
- Here are some things to consider, to ensure we're ready disciples:

1. Being ready is going to cost us:

LUKE 9:57-62(NLTSE) 57 "As they were walking along, someone said to Jesus, " I will follow you wherever you go." 58 But Jesus replied, " Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head." 59 He said to another person, " Come, follow me." The man agreed, but he said, " Lord, first let me return home and bury my father." 60 But Jesus told him, " Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God." 61 Another said, " Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family." 62 But Jesus told him, " Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."

- Absolutely nothing is for free. If you receive something for "free" someone else has already paid for it. Something has been sown into the universe for you to reap it.
- Being ready is going to cost us. Jesus illustrates this in the text above.

2. Being ready will require an unwavering love for Christ and not a sense of duty

LUKE 14:26-28(NLTSE) 26 " If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison, (love Jesus more by comparison) your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. 27 And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. 28 "But don' t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it"

- It's love for Christ that will best equip us and not a sense of duty.
- The "cross" we'll have to carry, are the things God brings into our lives to help us die to self. Jesus had to die on His cross.

3. Being ready will take time. Nothing worthwhile comes easily

GALATIANS 6:9(NLTSE) So let' s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

4. Expect breakthrough but prepare for the battle of opposition

1 CORINTHIANS 16:9(NLTSE) There is a wide-open door for a great work here, although many oppose me

- The more of a threat you become to the devil, the more he'll oppose you.

5. We *DO* have what it takes to be ready disciples:

2 CORINTHIANS 3:6(NLTSE) He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant.

- Don't let lies of not being good enough, keep you from Christian ministry

6. Let's not waste time in making sure we're ready disciples:

EPHESIANS 5:16-17(NLTSE) "Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do"
(NKJV) redeem the time

- We never know when our time, or someone else's, is up!

CARE GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Having looked at this topic for two weeks now, how has your perception of "readiness" changed?
2. What do you think Jesus meant when He said: "carry your cross"?
3. Discuss ways in which we can better use the time we have, for Christian ministry