



JOHNSON AVENUE
Church of Christ
WHERE *God's Family* BUILDS ETERNAL HOMES

A Spiritual Encouragement Message

March 31, 2020

Be Prepared

A scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. It has been over two decades, but the Scout Law has been impressed upon my mind so much that I can still recite it. Another statement that has been stamped into my brain is the Scout motto, "Be Prepared". Whenever we would go for a hike, do a benevolent project, go rock-climbing, or do anything really, the Scout motto was to be carried out. Like my Scoutmaster used to say, "Prepare for the worst and hope for the best."



While at the time I had no idea that many of the Scout teachings were rooted in the Word of God, as a Christian, I can see it vividly. This principle to "be prepared" is found many times throughout the scriptures. Jesus told us to be prepared for His return (Matt. 24:44), Peter wrote to the church to be prepared to give a defense for the faith that you have (1Peter 3:15), Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs so that his children would be prepared to face the world with wisdom, and the list goes on. While the topics that would fall under this command to Be Prepared are numerous, I want to focus on the importance to be prepared to serve your neighbor.

During Jesus' ministry on earth an expert in the Law of Moses tested Jesus by asking Him what a man must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25). Jesus' response was that to inherit eternal life one must love God and "love your neighbor as yourself." Disciples of Christ, we must be prepared to love our neighbors as ourselves and the current circumstances we are in provides us with a great opportunity to do so. Let us reflect on the Good Samaritan that is given as an example of love and how we might follow his example to love our neighbors today. (Note: Don't know the story of the Good Samaritan? Read it in Luke 10:30-37)

Be prepared, a need may arise. One aspect of the story of the Good Samaritan that I seemed to have overlooked is how prepared he was (Luke 10:34-35). It would have been rather challenging for the Good Samaritan to help the man that was beaten and robbed if he wasn't prepared to do so. Did he think about the possibilities that might arise during his

journey and prepare for them before he left? Did he consider that he might come across someone that was going to be in need and pack a little extra for them? I don't know the answers to those two questions but I think they are encouraging to ask. I also think they are questions to ask ourselves during this time. Are you prepared to serve your neighbor, especially those of the household of faith during this time? A need may arise, have you prepared accordingly?

Be prepared to help those in need. I would encourage all of us to take some time to consider what might come on our journey and prepare ourselves to help others in need. The Samaritan had bandages and oil on hand to help the beaten man. He had the ability to transport him to the Inn and the financial ability put him up in a place to recover while his wounds healed (Luke 10:34-35). Are you prepared to help someone or a family that is without work, food, or quarantined because they have the coronavirus? After making sure you have prepared to help your family, have you started to prepare to serve another? We can do this by putting a portion of our grocery items aside for a need that could arise, putting aside some of our money with our neighbors in mind, and looking for opportunities to use these items we have laid aside to serve our neighbors in their times of need.

Be prepared to receive help. We all aspire to be the noble, loving, and compassionate Good Samaritan that loved his neighbor but who is pumped up to be the man that was beaten on the side of the road? Nobody? Asking for help is a challenge for most of us because we want to serve rather than be served. Please recognize that we all need help from time to time and if you find yourself in need, please ask. During this unique season were many have found themselves unemployed, without an income, being told to stay in your home if you're sick, or ill to the point you need to go to the hospital, we need to be willing to ask and receive help. The members of the Lord's church are prepared to serve those in need, especially those of the household of faith. Perhaps you don't need help right now, but please, start preparing yourself now to ask for help if you need it.

This important motto from the Boy Scouts to be prepared has resonated in my heart from childhood and rings true today. With so many changes occurring so rapidly, so many home due to the coronavirus, so many affected by the rules given by the president, governor, CDC, and others, we need to be prepared. Prepared for needs that might arise, prepared to help, and prepared to receive help.

If you need help please don't hesitate to reach out to me and give the saints of Johnson Avenue an opportunity to be the neighbors God has called us to be.

Andrew Lemus