

Living So That You Are Ready To Die

by Mike Glenn

Can you think back to your baptism? For some of you, that may only be a few weeks ago. For most of you ladies who read this, it is probably a number of years. But, can you remember? Can you remember the excitement of coming into Christ? Can you remember the determination that you were going to study your Bible regularly? Can you remember your determination to become involved in the work of the Lord and in teaching and inviting others? Those were special days. I hope that “specialness” has lasted all this time because it provides the substance to our salvation.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:58, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” We must be stedfast in faith, unmovable in faithfulness with soundness and always abounding in God’s work. For too many of God’s precious sheep, the joy of salvation has been forgotten and the humdrum affairs of life have dulled our appetite for “always abounding.”

Jesus addressed this sad, but real, possibility in Luke 14:25: “And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26: If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27: And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. 28: For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? 29: Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30: Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31: Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32: Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace. 33: So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. 34: Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?”

In the two examples, Jesus said we must plan to finish and be victorious. It is the only way we can be his disciples. It is the only hope we have. Paul said that we are saved by hope (Romans 8:24). It is the driving force behind our continued faithfulness. We desire and believe we can be saved. But, hope is not a wish. It is a desire with reasonable expectation. “...be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life (Revelation 2:10). “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. **Henceforth** (emphasis mine, mg), there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness... and not for me only, but for all them that love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7-8). Are you ready for his return, his “appearing”. Peter, writing to Christians, taught that God does not want any to perish (2 Peter 3:9). But the world will end and there will be a judgment (Hebrews 9:27). Peter then asks in verse 11-12, “...what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of the Lord.” Are you ready for the day of the Lord? Sisters, we must live faithfully to receive the reward.