

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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BEING READY

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Parents may ask their children, “Are you ready for our vacation trip?” The eager reply may be, “Yes, we are **READY!**”. The husband may turn to the wife and with hopeful eyes and ask, “Honey, are we **READY** for our vacation trip?”. With a sigh bordering on exhaustion, the wife may respond with, “Yes, dear we are **READY** for the trip.”

The word “ready” conveys the meaning of “willingness” and “preparedness.” The young children, with no responsibilities for the trip are ready because the “want” to go. The mother and wife may be wanting to venture on an enjoyable trip, but she is conveying to her husband that all “preparations” have been made so the trip can begin.

The same two concepts of being eagerly willing and fully prepared are also conveyed in the Greek words of our New Testament. They help us see what is involved in being ready in our lives as Christians.

Peter exhorts Christians to be “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you

a reason concerning the hope that is in you...” (I Peter 3:15). Readiness here is emphasizing the need to be fully prepared.

We must be knowledgeable of the basis of our hope, which is the resurrected Christ (I Peter 1:3-5). This definite knowledge of the Lord helps us to set apart Christ in our hearts as Lord. Without knowledge, we cannot give positive declaration to those inquiring about our hope. We must also prepare ourselves by having our emotions in check. We must be ready to give answer with “meekness and fear.” Not all inquiries will come from those initially favorable to Christianity. We must harness ourselves and not reply with arrogance or bitterness, but give answer with a healthy reverence for God who will judge the words we speak (Matt. 12:36). Thirdly, we must be prepared “always”.

Paul also gives us an example of being eager and willing to preach the gospel of Christ to others. He writes, “So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome” (Romans 1:15). Just like the children anxious and excited about their vacation trip, Paul was

ready to preach in Rome. Can we say that our lives reflect this willing and eager heart to teach others the gospel of Christ?

Have you ever noticed how more enjoyable our trips are when we have taken the time to prepare and do not have to rush at the last minute gathering things together? Paul wanted the giving in Corinth to reflect this kind of readiness. They were to give on the first day of the week as they had been prospered, and into a common treasury so Paul would not have to go to each one and collect it when he came (I Corinthians 16:1-2). This would help make sure the important purpose of giving could be preserved in that the afore promised “bounty...might be ready as a matter of bounty and not of extortion” (2 Corinthians 9:5).

When the Lord comes, we will not have the time to suddenly gather our distracted lives which are pursuing the things of this world, and focus our sole attention on serving the Lord in righteousness. We must first want to be righteous. Are you Ready? We must prepare now. Are you Ready?