

Are You Ready?

This past Friday (December 7th) marked the sixtieth anniversary of the surprise bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japanese forces. It was on that day sixty years ago, that many of our sailors still laid in their beds sleeping, as the bombs began to fall. Before anyone had a chance to defend themselves, the U. S. Pacific Fleet was severely crippled. Many ships were either sunk or disabled, but most importantly many lives were lost. The reason the strike was successful was because it took place without anyone knowing!

Throughout the New Testament, the call is sent out for people to be prepared. Jesus, in discussing the destruction of Jerusalem said, *“Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect”* (Matt. 24:44). Peter said, *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up”* (II Pet. 3:10). The idea, whether you were a Jew or a NT Christian, was to be prepared. Since we do not know when the Lord will return, we must always be ready to meet Him when He does appear. This is perhaps one of the main dangers facing the Lord’s people today. We sometimes become lackadaisical, although we proclaim the eventual return of the Lord, that we put off the possibility of His return today! Note with me some ways we can be prepared when that time comes.

Study. This was Paul’s charge to Timothy. The first is recorded in II Tim. 2:15, *“Be diligent (study) to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.”* In order to please God (do His will) we must know God and His plan for us. The only way to accomplish that goal is to study.

Another way we can grow closer to God is through prayer. Jesus taught in Matt. 7:7-8 to *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”* Prayer is, or at least should be, a very important part of our Christian lives. When we pray, we have a great opportunity to grow closer to God. We can petition Him with our care, anxieties, thanksgivings, and ask for His help. But most importantly we can better understand His will which will help us prepare for our meeting with Him.

The last way we can grow closer to God is by living a Christian life. In I Jn. 2:15 John wrote, *“Do not love the world or the things in the world.”* We cannot be at peace with God if we are still clinging to the things of the world. Jesus said we cannot serve both God and the world (Matt. 6:24). By keeping ourselves pure and unspotted from the world, we’ll be prepared for the Lord’s return.

We must be careful that we are not caught off guard today. Jesus is coming back, we know that for sure. We should approach each day as if it were our last and that at any moment we’ll be with the Lord. So, the question we must ponder today is, “Are you ready?”

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