Week 4 ~ Always Be Ready

Dear Church Family,

How ready are you? Would you leap into action whenever, wherever, and however Jesus calls? Parents, would you change schools or even move if your kids were being poorly influenced by negative friendships?

Well-grounded workers, would you abandon your careers if they got in the way of following Jesus?

Young people, would you travel to the corners if the earth if it meant serving the will of God?

Elders and seniors, would you mentor and teach Christ if it meant forsaking your comfort and safety?

Church family, are you ready?

Philip was ready. In Acts 8, we read of a confident Jesus follower named Philip (who is confusingly enough not one of the 12 disciples but another Philip). As a result of being persecuted, Philip fled into a foreign community away from his home. In this place, God works through Philip to lead many to Jesus. Things start looking up for Philip especially when Peter and John show up to work alongside him.

But then, Jesus calls. Philip receives instruction to leave and travel into the wilderness. And, wildest part of this call yet, Philip is not told why he should go into the wilderness or what will happen; just to go. So guess what, Philip goes. And God, yet again, works a miracle. Philip is given opportunity to lead a stranger to faith in Jesus; in the middle of nowhere!

The story ends with Philip winding up in yet another region and continuing to preach Jesus. He just can’t seem to stop. What a guy!

Unavailable

How available are you? Our lives are often a seemingly never-ending rollercoaster of checklists, schedules, agendas, and responsibilities to do. Sadly, most of us feel we have little time available. There is always something to worry over or tend to; never a moment to breathe.

At least, that’s how things seem to be. Now I know I run the risk of stepping on toes with this talk, but just know church that your pastors love you and only want the best for your life. Our prayer is when you experience conviction that it be led by the Spirit and not guilt or shame.

With this said, here is the reality of our modern circumstance: we have a choice. We can let the world and its agendas run our lives or submit our lives to Jesus. Our problem is not in being unavailable. Our true and much deeper problem is determining who has more authority. Who speaks louder to you? Your boss? Your paycheck? The comfort of home? The school system? What’s popular and recognized? Or, is it Jesus? Whose opinion matters more to you?

The Need for Availability

It is no easy thing facing the reality of Scripture. And God’s Word teaches we choose whether we are available or unavailable. Now, I want to make clear, this subject of being available extends beyond mere church attendance or involvement in church events and activities. This principle should guide and govern your home life and daily interactions church.

So, are you ready? Are you ready to share Jesus? Are you ready to go wherever God calls? How available are you to answer Jesus’ call and find your life’s purpose? Because without availability, I can guarantee this truth: your life will never be fulfilled if you live your life unavailable.

No matter how busy our lives, we must determine to be ready. We must decide to be eager. And we must be prepared to do the will of God at the drop of a hat; even if it requires sacrifice.

How to Be Ready

So what is the key? How do we live life ready like Philip? Well, the answer is simple: The Gospel must dominate your life. Philip and the early Church fundamentally believed there was no greater driving force or purpose than that of the Gospel. The story and salvation of Jesus overflowed their lives to the maximum!

So, how valuable is the Gospel to you? If the Gospel becomes priority, then you will be ready. You will be available. If this Gospel narrative fills your life, then three characteristics will dominate your life: you will love God, you will love people, and you will make Jesus known.

This is our purpose church. Are you willing to be ready? It could mean giving up everything you know. As scary as that sounds, Jesus has your best interests in mind. He is for you, not against you. So whatever path Jesus has in mind, as hard as it may be, you will always find life, purpose, and joy regardless.

Church family, are you ready? Jesus has a purpose for your life and greater things lies ahead!

With Love,

Pastor Vern Pastor Ty

Group Discussion

*Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with your group.*

1. How available are you in your life? Why or why nor are you available?
2. Do you honestly feel you have a choice in being available? Many of us feel as though life is just too busy and that we don’t have a choice in this matter. Discuss why you feel you do or do not have a choice.
3. What would need to happen in your lie to make you more available?
4. What changes can you make, right now, to make more time for the Gospel? What can you do to make more time for Jesus?
5. When was the last time you read the Gospel? Have you ever fully read the story of Jesus?

Closing Prayer

*Close your time together in prayer. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about based on the topic of today’s discussion:*

* Thank Jesus for always being available for you.
* Pray for strength to be more available in your life.
* Ask forgiveness for the times you chose busyness over being available to God or someone you love.
* Pray for wisdom in planning and leading your life.
* Pray for a deeper love for Jesus’ story and for what He has done.

Weekly Challenge

Again we are challenging you church. Know we are not motivated by resentment but by a longing to see Jesus work and flourish in your life. And our lives flourish best when we are available. So this week, choose a time to be available where you are usually busy or distracted. You have mornings, evenings, lunches, and plenty of car rides to occupy with Jesus. Take a time when you are usually unavailable and make yourself available to God. I guarantee, this is the start of a healthy habit that will enrich your personal life, family, and walk with God.