

"ALWAYS BE READY"

11 / 5 / 17

Acts 27: 27—38; also I Peter 3:15 |||||

(1070, 11/11/07; 1467, 11/11/12)

"But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

(“Always Be Ready” for trials and difficulties to come, as well as SUCCESSES, and “Always Be Ready” to tell about your HOPE in CHRIST.)

INTRODUCTION — I WAS a BOY SCOUT for several years when I was in GRADE SCHOOL / MIDDLE SCHOOL. I ALWAYS REMEMBER the MOTTO of the BOY SCOUTS: ***"BE PREPARED."*** That's why I carry a POCKET KNIFE, similar to my TRUSTY BOY SCOUT KNIFE, in my pocket EVERY DAY.

THE BIBLE tells us SIMILAR ADVICE: *"Always be prepared...."* we are told. We see that DEFINITELY in the life of the APOSTLE PAUL in Acts 27 —

"ALWAYS BE PREPARED":***I. For TRIALS to HAPPEN***

1. BE READY for TRIALS to HAPPEN — ***BECAUSE THEY ARE GOING TO TAKE PLACE, ANYWAY!!***

----->> LOOK at the TRIALS PAUL FACED in ACTS 27.....

2. We read in Matthew 5:45 that Jesus taught, *"[the Father] sends rain on the Just and the Unjust, too."* (NLT)

3. Ever since the days of ADAM and EVE, ***THIS HAS BEEN AN IMPERFECT WORLD!!*** Sooner or later, things happen...

Like the old saying, *"Get ready for the other shoe to drop!!"*

4. TRIALS and PROBLEMS will happen, No Matter what we do—
SO BE GLAD, the Bible tells us! In Romans 5:3, we read: “*We can rejoice too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us to learn to endure.*” So, take the TRIALS as a LEARNING experience!

4.b. EX.: I have been DRIVING over 30 years, and have had MANY INTERESTING EXPERIENCES with CARS!!! I DON'T THINK I HAVE TOLD YOU about my FIRST CAR, and what happened to it.... 1974 Mercury Capri (Built by Ford of Europe, 2.8 liter, 60 degree V-6, 4 speed manual transmission; 2 door coupe) (Needed to have FUEL PUMP replaced; took it to nearby SHELL station—while they had it on the hydraulic lift....)

THESE THINGS JUST HAPPEN TO PEOPLE!!! [Matt. 5: 45 ? ? ?]

5. BE SURE, tho', that God will not leave you Helpless !!

I Corinthians 10:13 says, (*Read from a Bible....*)

WHEN WE ARE TEMPTED, when we face trials, **God has given us the FREE WILL to CHOOSE to GIVE IN, or to RESIST SIN—** and if we want to RESIST, God will give us the STRENGTH and COURAGE “*To provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*” (I Corin. 10:13; NIV)

6. SO, THAT'S IT—We all face TRIALS, PROBLEMS, and TEMPTATIONS—but God will give us the STRENGTH and WISDOM to stand up against it.

PAUL also EXEMPLIFIED another way for believers to “BE PREPARED”:

“ALWAYS BE PREPARED”:**II. To EXPLAIN YOUR HOPE in CHRIST —**

1. PAUL was not only ready for TROUBLES to happen, **but he was ready to EXPLAIN why he did not fear his trials—** why he had FAITH in God, regardless of his circumstances.

2. He told the men on the ship: *“Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.’ So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as He told me.”* (Acts 27: 23—24, NIV)

3. Paul had opportunity to give a DEFENSE of himself and his faith to King Agrippa, the great-grandson of Herod the Great, a few weeks before this “SHIP in the STORM” incident, and when Herod Agrippa challenged Paul for trying to convert him, Paul answered, *“I pray that not only you but ALL WHO LISTEN TO ME . . . may become what I am, except for these chains.”* **PAUL wanted ALL PEOPLE to come to JOYFUL SALVATION in JESUS CHRIST.**

4. The APOSTLE PETER stated that **this is EXACTLY what Christians should be Prepared To Do** . As we read earlier, Peter wrote in his first Letter, *“But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”* (I Peter 3:15, NIV)

5. What PETER and PAUL wanted every Christian to do was to SIMPLY EXPLAIN WHY they believe in Christ, and what is the HOPE THAT THEY HAVE. It is called **WITNESSING,** or **FAITH-SHARING,** and we can do it ANYWHERE.

CONCLUSION — FOR INSTANCE: ONE EXAMPLE of FAITH-SHARING, ANYWHERE

Katie, a junior in high school, nervously walked into the church youth group party that Linda had invited her to attend. She hadn't been to a church since she was a little girl and didn't know what to expect at a Valentine dinner with mostly strangers. But her heart started to calm when she found valentines at her plate that had been written for her from everyone there. They had cards for each other too, but it touched Katie's heart that they would think to do that for her, a visitor to the group.

Katie felt so welcomed that she accepted Linda's invitation to a church service. There she heard about God's love for her in spite of her sinfulness, and she embraced Jesus' forgiveness. The youth group had given her a fragrance of God's love, and God opened her heart to trust Him. **SO — FAITH—SHARING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HARD!! JUST—SHARE JESUS' LOVE!!**