

Part 5 Guidelines for Responding

Anticipating the challenges of serving others

Preparedness is not just for you and your family. Our Christian witness as spiritual *salt* and *light* in the lives of others is contingent on our involvement in the world around us. It is interesting to meditate on how Jesus describes criteria for separating believers and nonbelievers at the final judgment (Matthew 25:31-46) based on their response to “these brothers of Mine [of Jesus]...even the least of them....”

As Christians, our preparedness should anticipate how we can step forward to extend the love of Christ as we help others facing a personal crisis or in a time of societal crisis.

When I began sharing with others about preparedness, it was laughable how many times I heard people say, “I’ll just come to your house!” I began contemplating how best to respond to this flippant remark, especially from fellow believers. It clearly implies that the person did not take preparedness seriously. BUT, if in the unlikely event such a crisis emerged, they would presume upon me. The sub-sections below are my attempt to address this and related critical issues you may face.

A. Biblical responses to those who say, “I will just come to your house!”

Without going deeply into this topic, the following biblical references provide some food for thought for replying to those who might use this statement:

- 1) Paul exhorts the Thessalonian believers with these words: *“For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.”* (2 Thessalonians 3:10) This also applies to preparedness!
 - The children’s story, *The Little Red Hen*, has a moral lesson about this, too.
- 2) Jesus tells the parable of the ten virgins preparing for the bridegroom. Those who were prudent had prepared and were ready when he came, but those who were foolish had not prepared well and were away when he came and were not allowed in. (Matthew 25:1-13)
- 3) *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”* (Galatians 6:7) See also 2 Corinthians 9:6 – you reap what you sow.
 - Foolish people tend to spend money on their own pleasures and desires rather than preparing for the future. They squander what God has entrusted to them.
- 4) Jesus’ parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) concludes with these sobering words: *“For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away”* (verse 29).

What we possess has been entrusted to us by God, it does not really belong to us. We brought nothing into this world, and we will leave with nothing! The question, then, is what does God expect of us? What sort of stewards ought we to be, since we are responsible for using our possessions (and prepping) for His glory, not just to gratify our own desires? Be wise.