

ARE WE "ALL IN" FOR THE FUTURE IN 2017

A. Series Introduction

1. Key Ideas

a. *GENERIC USE: to be totally, utterly, and fully invested in a cause or enterprise*

2. Key Verse

a. *"Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you." (1 Sam 12:24)*

3. General Outline

- a. *ARE WE "ALL IN FOR THE LORD" - IN OUR DEVOTION?*
- b. *ARE WE "ALL IN FOR THE LOST" - IN OUR OUTREACH?*
- c. *ARE WE "ALL IN FOR THE TRUTH" - IN OUR OBEDIENCE?*
- d. *ARE WE "ALL IN FOR THE BODY (church)" - IN OUR SERVICE?*
- e. *ARE WE "ALL IN FOR THE FUTURE" - IN OUR PREPARATION?*

B. Sermon Introduction

1. THE TITLE: "ARE WE "ALL IN FOR THE FUTURE" - IN OUR PREPARATION?"

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS QUESTION

a. *This is CRITICAL: it reveals our health and our success a church body - whether this will even be here in five to ten years. failing to prepare is preparing to fail.*

C. Topic Introduction — the need to prepare and be ready for the future

1. We all tend to be procrastinators ... in one way or another. We are unrealistic about the future.
2. According to a recent survey, Americans remain an optimistic people. One of the effects of such optimism is a rosier vision of the future than is realistic. For example, 10% of us believe we will live to be 100. In reality, only 0.02% will make it to the century mark. That means only 2 people in ten thousand live to be 100.
3. And the greatest reality for everyone one of us scarcely crosses our minds. We will die. And most of us, even believers are not ready for it.

D. Quotes

1. Basic to New Testament ethics is the belief that Christians should live on earth in the light of heaven, should make decisions in the present with their eye on the future, and should avoid behaving here in a way that would jeopardize their hope of glory hereafter. [J. I. Packer]
2. The world might stop in ten minutes; meanwhile, we are to go on doing our duty. The great thing is to be found at one's post as a child of God, living each day as though it were our last, but planning as though the world might last a hundred years. [C. S. Lewis]
3. We treat sensible and present things as realities, and future and eternal things as fables: whereas the reverse should be our habit. [Richard Cecil]
4. With God the only difference between the future and the past is that certain truths which are as eternal as God himself have not yet become part of human history. [W. Ian Thomas]
5. The progressing Christian must cultivate the concentrated gaze of a person living in the future. [J. A. Motyer]
6. If we are to better the future, we must disturb the present. [Catherine Booth]
7. I am here to day to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.

E. ARE WE ALL IN FOR THE FUTURE — IN OUR PREPARATION?

1. ARE WE PREPARING FOR TOMORROW?

I. PREPARE TO OBSERVE THE WORSHIP OF THE LORD (1 CHR 15.1-13)

"David built houses for himself in the City of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it."

- A. *We Must Prioritize Our Place of Worship — built houses and a tabernacle (1)*
- B. *We Must Prioritize Our Manner of Worship — obeyed the commands involving worship (2)*
- C. *We Must Prioritize Our Organization in Worship — promoted the Bible's model of worship (3-13)*
- D. *We Must Prioritize Our Obedience in Worship — they had done it wrong the first time (14-15)*
- E. *We Must Prioritize Our Praise in Worship — real worship is not conscious of man (16-28)*

II. PREPARE TO SEEK THE WORD OF THE LORD (EZRA 7:10)

"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel."

- A. *We Must Endeavor to Learn the Word of God — seeking and studying the law*
- B. *We Must Endeavor to Obey the Word of God — submitting to the teachings of the law*
- C. *We Must Endeavor to Teach the Word of God — passing those truths on to others - teach the law*

III. PREPARE TO DELIVER A WITNESS FOR THE LORD (2 TIM 4:2)

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

- A. *We Must Be Ready to Answer the Criticisms of the Unbelieving (1 Pet 3:15)*
"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;"
- B. *We Must Be Ready to Engage the Concerns of the Unbelieving (Rom 1:15)*
"So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also."
- C. *We Must Be Ready to Withstand the Conflicts of the Unbelieving (Acts 21:13)*
"Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

IV. PREPARE TO COMMISSION THE WORKERS OF THE LORD (2 TIM 2:2)

"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" we are not building a memorial to ourselves - we are building a bridge for the next generation to find as a trusted way to truth

- A. We Must Recognize the Nature of Our Role in Training Others — we are messengers of the truth*
- B. We Must Recognize the Privilege of Our Role in Training Others — we have been chosen as conduits for the truth*
When 1 Clement was sent to the church at Corinth, the author sketched that chain. 'Our apostles appointed the aforesaid persons (that is, the elders) and afterwards they provided a continuance, that, if these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministry.' The teacher is a link in the living chain which stretches unbroken from this present moment back to Jesus Christ.
- C. We Must Recognize the Importance of Our Role in Training Others — we are the links to the future of the faith*

V. PREPARE TO ESCAPE THE WARNINGS OF THE LORD (HEBREWS 11:7)

"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."

- A. We Must be Hearing the Warnings of God — being warned of things*
- B. We Must be Fearing the Warnings of God — moved with godly fear*
- C. We Must be Heeding the Warnings of God — prepared an ark*

VI. PREPARE TO ANTICIPATE THE RETURN OF THE LORD (MATTHEW 24:44)

"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

- A. Parable of Fig Tree (24:32-41) - teaches expectancy in hoping*
- B. Homeowner Surprised by Thief (24:42-44) - teaches alertness in watching*
- C. Parable of the Unfaithful Servant (24:45-51) - teaches faithfulness in a delayed arrival*
- D. Parable of Virgins (25:1-13) - teaches preparedness for an early arrival*
- E. Parable of Talents (25:14-30) - teaches stewardship in answering*
- F. Revelation of His Judgment (25:31-46) - teaches compassion in testing*

VII. PREPARE TO ESCAPE THE WRATH OF THE LORD (AMOS 4:12)

"Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!"

- A. We Must Not Succumb to Materialism (1-3)*
- B. We Must Not Succumb to Externalism (4)*
- C. We Must Not Succumb to Narcisism (5)*
- D. We Must Not Succumb to Carelessness (6-11)*
- E. We Must Not Succumb to Hopelessness (12-13)*

CONCLUSION ...**A. PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE**

- 1. Choose two people to pray for this year ... when events arrive, etc.*
- 2. Choose one person to disciple this year ... one individual to replace you when you go*
- 3. Choose one service you do not normally attend — and start coming*
- 4. Choose one area in your life that you know God wants you to change and submit it to Him*
- 5. Help us determine the needs of our ministry to fulfill its mission — present the survey*

B. INVITATION HYMN