

## **Prepare for His Kingdom – Part 2.**

**Sermon to the Elect of God on Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026.**

**Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. (Ecclesiastes 1:2)**

This verse is the premise of King Solomon's writing of the book Ecclesiastes, which after extensive musings on the purpose and meaning of life, Solomon comes to this conclusion at the very end of the book: **Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)**

We know these last two verses very well, and we quote them often, as we should. What I'd like to do today is to tie this conclusion to the concept we delved into last time – Preparing for the Kingdom of Christ and of God. What does that practically look like and what manner of people ought we to be?

**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. (2 Peter 3:10-14)**

As a reminder, in part one of this sermon series, we began our inspection of the preparation of Christ's Kingdom by identifying what that Kingdom is and looked at what Scripture teaches regarding that Kingdom and preparing for it, by reviewing most of the parables Christ uses to teach about the subject matter. For part two today, we will look at more practical doctrine and application as helps for the body as to the 'how' does one prepare for His Kingdom and how Christ will judge all flesh concerning our time in our earthly tabernacles.

To prepare for today, I did a Google search of the phrase "Prepare for His Kingdom". Now a-days when you do a Google search, you will be provided an AI-Overview. My typical practice is to avoid all things related to AI, if I can help it. However, I was

intrigued with the results and included them on the last page of this sermon, as I found them to be rather helpful as a general overview.

As I mentioned last time, I also sent a message to every member of the church asking what they think of when they hear those words (Prepare for His Kingdom). I want to thank you again, because those responses were heavily used in what content I ended up covering today.

Here are the themes I received from the body, in their responses, including citations:

- Separation from the world / love not the world (**Romans 12:2, 1 John 2:15**)
- Preparing for eternity (being a part of that Kingdom) (**2 Peter 1:5-11**)
- Serving the Lord's people – "their welfare ought to concern me above all else"
- Setting your affections on things above (**Colossians 3:2**)
- Both church and individual preparedness (**Revelation 2-3**)
- Having our conversation in Christ (**see Charles' sermons from 04/26/2026 and 06/08/2026**)
- Discerning the signs of the times (watching and praying) (**Matthew 16:2-4**)
- Mortifying the deeds of the flesh ("an antidote to the deeds of the flesh") (**Romans 8:13, Colossians 3:5**)
- "Redeem the time from the old man" (**Ephesians 5:16, Colossians 4:5**)
- Having on the armour of God (**Ephesians 6:10-20**)
- Thoughts into captivity / strive against sin / our bodies a living sacrifice (**2 Corinthians 10:5, Hebrews 12:4, Romans 12:1**)
- Of one mind, heart, body (**1 Peter 3:8**)
- Actively doing the will of God / Obedience (**Matthew 7:21**)
- "A loose hold on the things of this earth – ready to let them go any moment" (**Job 1:21, 1 Timothy 6:7**)
- Be thankful / Content in your lot (**Colossians 3:15, 1 Timothy 6:6-8**)
- Pray without ceasing (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**)
- "Keep Christ as your main focus" (**Hebrews 12:2**)

### **How does one Prepare for His Kingdom?**

The Webster dictionary definition for the word "Prepare" means "to make ready beforehand for a specific purpose, event, or need. It covers getting things in order, equipping someone for a situation, or formulating materials." Key points are to make ready, creating or putting together, mental or physical readiness, and being willing. In general, think occupying. This is an active and tiring work, doing everything with all of

your might (**Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. Ecclesiastes 9:10**).

I touched upon this in my previous sermon, but a servant properly occupying isn't just standing around watching out the window to see when their Master returns. It's also not waiting until the very last minute to get busy doing the things the Master requires, once you know that the Master is at the gates of the city. This is not what is intended by this preparation into Christ's kingdom. This occupying is with a calm urgency knowing that our King could show up any day and we are to be found in a state of active watchfulness and readiness, and not being slothful right until you see Him coming through the clouds or you meet him in death.

From a doctrinal perspective, this cannot happen without Christ and His Spirit working in us. Before we dive into what this preparation might look like, let's be clear on who and how one gets on that path. This begins with the call of the Holy Spirit, which leads to Repentance, to Baptism as a public display of faith and of washing away of your sins, to Regeneration or a new man in Christ, and then to taking up your cross daily (spending the rest of your life in occupying). Each of these aspects of the life of a Christian is different and varied. It's personal to that soul. When Christ went into a city or village, He could have so easily just had the thought and every single soul in need of healing could have been healed. He knew exactly where they were, what they were thinking, what they needed. He heard their groaning perpetually. Instead of just doing one massive healing, He interacted with each person individually. This often took hours upon hours. Christ knows and feels the deepest and heaviest groaning of each of His sheep (**Romans 8:26**). It is the most personal thing and He is with each of His sheep exactly when they need Him, all at once. Remember, everything is about Him, nothing is about us.

Many a soul have cried out, what must I do to be saved (**Acts 16:30**). A soul that has Christ's love can never lose it, and so what else is there to do than to live out the remainder of your days in full dedication to Him? So, once a soul is called and regenerated, what must they do? How must they live? The short answer is for Christ. Practically, what does that look like? I said just a bit ago that our relationship with Christ is deeply personal and different for every soul. Therefore, what you do to occupy and prepare will be personal and different. As we looked at last time in the parable of the workers in the vineyard, the call to salvation occurs at different times for each lamb, so that preparation may be the entirety of one's life or the final moments. Consider the repenting thief on the cross, who in his final moments of life, repented and believed on the Lord Jesus. In that final moment, his heart and spirit were fully matured and

perfected to where it needed to be or else our Christ would not have made the promise He made.

**And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. (Luke 23:39-43)**

Christ's commandments provide us with the proper bounds for how we serve Him in this life, so we don't have to think great thoughts. I used to think about this idea of what I should be doing more of or differently to serve Christ and the church so much, to the point I would get wrapped around the axle that it had to be some great, impactful thing, no matter what it was. If the example of the thief on the cross teaches us anything, it is that our salvation has nothing to do with our works but simply Christ. Our lives are all for pleasing and serving Him.

It is Christ that lives in us and His Spirit works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, so there isn't anything we can do of our own hand. It is the faith of Christ and the Spirit directs that faith to where we should go and what we should do. The Lord uses Scripture and history to teach us what some practical things are that each demographic of person could be doing in occupying and living a life dedicated to Christ and God. In like fashion, godly parents have their children understand what practical things they are to be doing with their time to serve their parents and their God, at each stage of their life, as a useful parenting tool. It changes and looks different depending on the age and the lot of each child (number of siblings they have, their birth order, etc.). God's word does the same thing for us at our various stages of life.

Our brother Sam did a seven-part sermon series on an exposition of Titus chapter 2 (05/12/24, 06/30/24, 10/20/24, 12/08/24, 01/26/25, 03/16/25, and 05/04/25), in which he covered many helpful practical doctrines for each type of person. I thought of writing specific lists of examples that each type of person could be doing but that isn't proper. It's whatever the needs of the body are and those needs continually change. To write a prescriptive list would restrict and limit the possibility of fruit, and risk quenching the Spirit. Remember the edification we've received by several of our brethren in the past: Learn, do, and teach. Whatever that may be. For example, you don't have to learn to build a fence in order to serve the Lord, but it can be a need and way to serve at a given time. Each person has to do the work of learning what that service is, in each

stage of their lives. Instead of listing specific activities each demographic should be engaging in, I'd like to give some practical instruction that will help guide what and how that group does this preparing.

## **Children**

Children are to honor and obey their parents. They are to hear the instruction of their father and forsake not the law of their mother (**see Fred's sermon on Proverbs chapter 1 from May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026**). They should be setting good examples for their siblings. They should do what their parents say when they are told. They should do a good and diligent job on whatever they are told or asked to do. They should do it the way they are instructed by their parents to do it. They should actively seek out ways to relieve the burden of their parents. Once they are of an age to do it, they should read the scripture every day for themselves, actively participate in the reading of scripture with their house, listen intently to every sermon, and pray to their God. If they are asked to fold the laundry, they should do it like Christ is standing there. If they are asked to watch their little sibling while they play, they should do it like Christ is standing there. If they are asked to do yard work, they should do it like Christ is standing there. If their parents have a heart to serve the Lord, they will fill up that child's time with good things and will be provoked to be doing so. I encourage you children to seek out how you can fill your time with good things and not with the vanity of this fleeting life. I pray the Lord gives each of you a heart to hear and do these things.

## **Young Men and Women**

Young men and women have an increase of physical and mental strength. They also have an abundance of time available as a resource. Their mental and physical strength should be fully expended at the end of each day, as they are squeezing out every drop of available time they are given by their God. Young men are instructed in scripture to be sober, to have good works, to have uncorrupt doctrine, to be grave, sincere, and to have sound speech (**Titus 2:6-8**). Young women share many of the same attributes and commands as young men, but they are in a unique position to be a qualified and specific help to their parents and / or husband. They are also instructed to love their husbands, their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, and obedient to their own husbands and fathers (**Titus 2:4-5**). Both are to be showing those attributes in the expenditure of their time and strength. Every day, reading the scripture with intention and praying to their God, so that it becomes as much a habit as eating, drinking, and sleeping.

You can use many different metaphors and analogies to describe how a person occupies their time to serve the Lord. I like to use filling up your plate and as your capacity grows, so does your plate, and you perpetually keep it full. How are you using the energy you have today and is it expending energy for the sake of expending energy or is it intentional and focused for the sake of serving?

If you are a young man or woman with a family, then that is where a lot of your energy will inevitably go, and it's not a wrong thing, but you still have to have an outward focus. Are you guiding your house with the intent to serve the body? Yes, there is practical internal focus that is needed with a family, especially while you have younger children. As they grow, that focus becomes more spiritual in nature. For those that don't have children, I speak as our brother Paul and say thanks be to God that your time and efforts are not divided and you can solely dedicate your resources to our Lord.

I'm reminded of the Proverbs 31 woman and how her energy was future looking (**see the sermon series from our brother Sam on 08/19/18 and 08/26/18**). That's how a lot of our occupying goes. It's planting the seeds of things with faith that the Lord will allow fruit to be produced whenever and wherever God has determined. Yes, tend to the practical helps of your house and of the body while it is today, but always be future looking with the hope that if the Lord will, it will allow this or that thing to bear fruit in someone or something. A lesson you teach or the example you set for a person, could have lasting impact.

Similar to the role that children have, the younger men and women are to be honoring and obeying their parents, and just like the children they are still to be looking for ways to relieve the burdens of their parents. If you find yourself without your parents in this place, then look to other aged brethren to see whose burden you can relieve. For those that have come to years and have the blessed privilege to still be in their parent's house or under their rule, then consider whether your parents should have to lift a literal or proverbial finger to do anything. In many cases, you won't be asked to help with something from one whose burden you can relieve, and my suggestion is you shouldn't have to be asked you should be the one asking. Just like a child living with their parents be looking (your head on a swivel) at what you can do to identify a need or a help that you could provide (time, money, skills, labor, preaching, and on and on). Put your needs last. That's what our aged men and women do, because that's what Christ did.

At the end of the day, if you struggle with what you could be doing more of to redeem the time in occupying, then be praying and looking and asking how you can be of service. If you are doing that in faith, the Lord will provide and make it known. There

isn't a one size fits all solution in practically what to do, as each part of the body is different and provides a unique purpose to the edification of the body.

**Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)**

### **Aged Men and Women**

The primary role of an aged person in life is to be a teacher, having lived the years of their life and garnering much experience and gifts from God. They are to set the example for all others to follow. They are instructed to be sober, grave, temperate, and sound in faith, in charity, in patience (**Titus 2:2**). By this time in your life, reading the scripture and praying every day is so common place, you are lost without it. Our aged brethren have toiled and labored in this vineyard for decades and have immense experience to pass on to the younger. Their labor and toil aren't over, but it changes. I mentioned thinking of our occupying of how our energy is focused and expended. As a person ages in the body, they naturally phase out of various roles and responsibilities and the younger fill in those gaps. The value of their experience brings to bear that there may be things done in the past that might not be right or may not even be necessary any longer or could be done differently by the younger generation. The labor and energy they expended in the past becomes different later in life. They can do less of the physical heavy lifting and turn to more of the spiritual heavy lifting: praying, ministering in the word, and teaching in any opportunity they can.

The job of the younger generations are to be looking at ways to help relieve physical burdens (while the older generation passes those things on) and also willingly receive the help and teaching they are offered from the elder. Meanwhile, the older generation are to be looking for those opportunities to teach and to be good teachers. What makes a good teacher? Well, based on the examples we have with us here, a good teacher is someone who is very patient, they are subject matter experts on what they are teaching, and they know how to adapt their methods to the ways and rate at which people learn. This role of a teacher takes years of experience to grow into and is a responsibility of the younger to grow into, as well. Remember: learn, do, and teach.

I believe I can say that the gaps that our aged brethren have filled and owned aren't being held on with tight grips. The quiet laboring and work that have been carried about for decades are still quietly being done. If an eager, willing younger soul seeks to learn from the learned elder soul, it will be happily received. I'm encouraged by the willing and thankful work that the Lord has wrought in this body as we see the younger seeking

ways to be taught by the elder, and the elder doing the teaching. Such activity is cyclical throughout every generation and to be actively engaged in with all gravity and faith. We can never do enough to serve our Lord. Our daily duty is to seek what our Lord requires and to be doing what He requires.

### **How Christ Will Judge Us**

I could not find the sermon in which this was said, but I think a lot about when our brother Ben said in a past sermon about how all that we do, we should act like Christ is standing right next to us (because He is). Would Christ be happy with you if He heard you saying this or that (because He does)? Would Christ be happy with you if He saw you doing this or that (because He does)? Would Christ be happy with you if He heard you thinking this or that (because He does)? In all things in our life, would we want Christ to return and we be caught saying, or doing, or thinking something that would bring anything but joy to His countenance?

Given that everything is vanity and our sole purpose is to fear God and keep His commandments, how ought we to be spending our time? Would we want Christ to see that (fill in the blank) if He was right next to us?

No matter your demographic, the commonality between us is how we treat the Lord's people. Consider from my Dad's sermon on Christ's people being "A Peculiar People" from May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026 that one of those markers given to this peculiar people is the occupying or the preparation that makes them separate from the rest of the world and sanctified unto God. Mortify the deeds of the flesh, put away the old man, put upon you the armor of God, and redeem the time. Rinse and repeat every single day, no matter your state in life.

**If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. (2 Timothy 2:21)**

Our efforts around this holy preparation revolve around our love, our serving, our ministering, and our provoking of the Lord's people. Our Christ said that how you treat one of His little sheep is how you treat Him, and it will be how all of creation will be judged.

**When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then**

**shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (Matthew 25:31-46)**

Our lives as followers of Christ truly are intended to be servants to His servants. It is part of our own personal spiritual perfecting and the spiritual perfecting of the Bride. One of our aged women spoke to me about how she thinks about the body being so spiritually in sync that there is no room for fleshly interference. We are to serve and look for any and every opportunity to do so.

**So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. (John 13:12-17)**

How we treat any one of the Lord's is in fact how we treat Christ. Our pride, our envy, our strife, our contentions, our grudges, our hatred, our murmurings, and call the role (even if only in thought); if we have it to any of the least of these our brethren, it's not against this or that brother or sister but it is against Christ.

One major take away in all of this is that preparing for the kingdom of Christ IS our chief aim and end. The patriarchs and brethren of old looked for and watched for a city with foundations, whose builder and maker is God (**Hebrews 11:10**), and so do we. This preparing should be what engages our waking and sleeping thoughts and activities.

The Lord said He comes as a thief in the night, but we are not in darkness that the day should overtake us as a thief (**1Thessalonians 5:2-11**). There will be a sudden shift in that the life we knew before and how we spent our time will be over. It reminds me of the suddenness of an affliction or distress that the Lord puts in front of you. Everything you were planning to do in that day stops and you are now fully taken over by the affliction or distress right in front of you. Everything else fades into the background and becomes irrelevant. Once Christ's kingdom is here, not only does everything else become irrelevant, it becomes as if it never existed. We will be fully invested forever in service to Him, which is how everything should be, i.e. the restitution of all things (**Acts 3:21**). Therefore, we are to always have a loose grip on the world and our possessions and relations in it, and be ready to lose them at any time if that is what the Lord requires.

Our preparations for Christ is the reason for our existence and the meaning of our lives. This is the work and the labor of our lives, but this work is not directed by our flesh, it is of the Spirit. Even though it is the work of the Spirit, our flesh is commanded to work because every work shall come into judgement and every creature will have to give an account. **“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26)**. Therefore, we as members of the body of the Bride of Christ are duty bound to provoke one another to this life-long work as followers of Christ. It is a provoking of the flesh because it is weak, while the spirit is indeed willing.

**Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Matthew 26:41)**

There is great danger in not engaging in this preparation. We learn that stark reality and outcome in the parables from Christ. Ultimately, it is our everlasting soul and rejection from entrance into that Kingdom that is lost. It is our crown we must hold on to, brethren, although those that are His can never truly lose it. In a past sermon from our brother Benjamin, he reminded us that we don't obey Christ and then we have grace to be saved, but rather it is because we have grace and so we obey Christ. Those that have grace, have the Spirit, and those that have the Spirit will be called a good and faithful servant when our Lord and Savior returns and like our brother Enoch of old will have this testimony – that we pleased God (**Hebrews 11:5**). I love you all dearly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

## **AI Overview of the Phrase “Prepare for His Kingdom”**

Preparing for the Kingdom of God involves a lifestyle of repentance, seeking righteousness, and spiritual rebirth, aimed at aligning oneself with God's will. It requires intentionally developing godly character, living out His commandments, and sharing in Christ's holiness, rather than focusing on earthly pursuits.

Key aspects of preparing for the Kingdom include:

- **Repentance and Transformation**: Acknowledging sin and turning away from it, as preached by John the Baptist and Jesus (Matthew 3:1-17, 4:17).
- **Seeking Righteousness**: Prioritizing God's Kingdom and His righteousness above personal ambition (Matthew 6:33).
- **Spiritual Rebirth and Maturity**: Being "born again" to enter and see the Kingdom, as taught in John 3:3.
- **Active Obedience**: Practicing daily holiness and doing the Father's will (Matthew 7:21).
- **Consecration**: Fully surrendering one's life to God, as a "living sacrifice," rather than being conformed to the world (Romans 12:1).
- **Focus on the Eternal**: Fixing one's hope on the new heaven and new earth where righteousness dwells, rather than current, temporary challenges (2 Peter 3:13).

This preparation is framed as a proactive "training" for future service in God's kingdom.