

Always Be Ready

The good news of Jesus Christ was always meant to be spread from person to person, admonitions and challenges to “preach the word” being abundant in the New Testament. We would expect to hear 1 Peter 3:15-16 instruct, “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; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.” There are at least three things that we must consider in order to “always be ready.”

We must always be ready to listen. In our world of “hurry and rush” we’re told that many people seldom take the time to listen, even to their own families. Jesus seems to have been encouraging “listening” among his disciples Matthew 16:13: “He asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” It is not possible to give a defense, or an answer, if we have not heard the question. Let us take time to listen to others. We cannot properly answer them if we do not hear them, and if we avoid them because we fear their questions we will never be challenged to grow in Christ and neither will they.

We must always be ready to learn. Matthew 16:13 was a prelude to a more important question in verse 15: “He said to them, But who do you say that I am?” The challenge to listen is coupled with the challenge to learn and have the right answer when called upon to give it. It has been said that one reason some people do not want to share their faith with others is because they are uncertain and unlearned in it themselves. Let each Christian strive to be well educated and confident in his knowledge of the word. Jesus said, “Learn from me . . . (Mat. 11:29).”

We must always be ready to stand for, and upon, the truth as it is revealed in Christ’s word. Jude 3 says, “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” We must expect to be confronted regularly with beliefs and teachings which do not conform to Christ’s word. “Each to his own” has never had any part in God’s plan for mankind, or Jesus would never have come to earth, and most certainly never would have been crucified. We must be unashamed, unwavering, uncompromising, and bold (Eph. 6:17-20), but gentle (2 Tim. 2:24-26), in or defense of the faith. We must always be ready.

Randall F. Matheny
PO Box 911, Warren, PA 16365