

## READY FOR ANYTHING

"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.

Dr. J. B. Phillips translated this statement in these words: "I am ready for anything through the strength of Him Who lives within me." Here we have the essence of New Testament Christianity--Christ within. We have the secret of victory--through the strength of Christ. We have the attitude that we should adopt--ready for anything. It is because we are not ready to comply with the will of God that blessings are withheld.

### I. Are You Ready For Service?

There is something for every Christian to do for the Lord, something that no one else can do in the same way. If we are unwilling to do the service that God has for us, we are retarding the progress.

"We are not here to play, to dream, to drift,  
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.  
Shun not the struggle; face it,  
'Tis God's gift. Be strong."

There are church members who will die for a cause, but, if you ask them to teach a Sunday School class or do something in the church, they will be offended.

God is still saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8). He is appealing to us for service. He wants those who are ready to go for Him to the place of His appointment. But, if we are not willing, He cannot use us.

When God said to Isaiah, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" the prophet did not ask a single question about the task to which God was calling him. Without hesitation he was ready to go forth in obedience to the will of God. Without consulting anyone, he put himself unreservedly into the hands of the Lord saying, "Here am I, send me." He made a two-fold dedication--the dedication of himself and the dedication to the Lord's service. There was the dedication of his whole being to God, and then there was the willingness to be in the place where God wanted to use him. Have you come to that place in your life? Have you given yourself to the Lord for His service? If not, give Him your personality, your possessions and your plans now, and go forth to do His will. Are you ready for service?

### II. Are You Ready For Sacrifice?

Paul said, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:8). There was not any pang of regret in Paul's statement, "I have suffered the loss of all things."

Have you ever given up anything for Christ? He gave up the glory of the Father's presence and suffered in life and in death that you might be redeemed and saved. Have you ever sacrificed anything for Him? C. T. Studd laid a fortune at the feet of Christ and gave himself in missionary service. He said, "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make." If William Carey had not suffered and sacrificed, there might never have been the Baptist Missionary Society or the modern missionary movement.

### III. Are You Ready To Do Little Things For The Glory Of God?

It was a custom among the Jews that when guests were assembling for a feast, the servant of the household removed their sandals and washed their feet in a basin of water. Such a procedure was practically necessary in a dusty country where the people wore only thin sandals. Perhaps the disciples performed this humble duty in turns since they were too poor to have a slave to do all the menial services for them. On a particular evening neither of them volunteered to do it. Since there had been a sharp contention among them as to which of them should be considered the greatest, neither of them would condescend to wash the feet of the rest. While each of them stood on his dignity, Christ Jesus quietly arose from the table, picked up a towel, tied it about His waist, took an empty basin, filled it with water and began to wash the feet of His disciples and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

Surely they could not have been rebuked more severely than by seeing their Lord do what they thought themselves above doing. They were greatly humiliated by the fact that, while they were aspiring to a throne, He was willing to take a towel and render the lowliest service that one could render for another. He thereby taught them and us the glory that plays about hands devoted to humble service.

Loving acts of humble service to fellow Christians is carrying out the will of our Lord. Are you ready and willing to do little things for the glory of God? Men and women are needed and wanted who will do small things and dull things with a large heart and for a great purpose. Because you cannot do big things, don't refuse to do little things, for the big thing is made up of countless little things done by ordinary people.

### IV. Are You Ready For Disappointment?

Yes, disappointment is coming and you should be ready for it. Things do not always work out as we had planned. We begin Christian work, and then we pray, preach and teach with the expectation that multitudes will be saved, but it does not happen. It is so easy for us to forget that Christ said some seed fell on stony ground, some among the thorns and some by the wayside. Nothing was wrong with the seed or the sower, but Satan was active and men's hearts were hard.

When William Carey and Dr. Thomas landed in India, Dr. Thomas preached to the people with such freedom that they listened for three hours, and then gave them rice and curry, sweetmeats and fruit. Bengal scholars showed them such courtesy that Carey hoped that the citadels of learning would soon capitulate to Christ. They were to discover, however, that the struggle was going to be long and tense. Carey prayed and preached and worked for seven years before he saw his first Indian convert. During those years there must have been many disappointments, heartaches and tears. It was said of him that "He was almost dried up by discouragement." Nevertheless, he labored on and won.

### V. Are You Ready For Persecution?

In speaking to His followers our Lord said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20). In this world of opposition to Christ and the teachings of His Word, there is pressure, persecution and suffering. Can it be that the reason you are not

being persecuted is because you have become an expert in compromising? Does your witness-bearing challenge the godlessness of our age? Of course, if you are not doing anything to hinder the work of Satan, he can afford to leave you alone. Would you stand the test if persecution came? You may be moving into a time when it will cost you more than it does now to be a true follower of Christ. Therefore, you should be fortified by the truth that the living Christ is with His people in the floods of affliction and in the fires of persecution, and, although sinful man may seem to win, Christ's final victory is assured.