

Preparing to Stand in the Coming Crisis!

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7

“How do I remain faithful in the shaking? Where will I hide, what will I eat, how will I survive the time of trouble?” It can be terrifying to contemplate how we are going to make it through the end times if we are not rooted in Christ. The final events of earth’s history are coming upon us even now. How can we be prepared to stand the coming crisis?

Paul gives us one significant key in Philippians 4:5, where he urgently asserts, “The Lord is at hand.” This pressing reality often leaves many feeling anxious, so it is fitting that Paul’s very next words are these: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6, NKJV). In other words, don’t be anxious about the Lord being at hand, but pray about everything! The antidote to any anxiety, especially end-time concerns, is prayer. The promised result of our prayers is what will actually see us through the coming final events: “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

In this world, with its constant turmoil and upheaval, our need is for peace, which should be expected only from time spent in prayer. Paul continues in this passage to point out that he had learned how to be content in any and every circumstance “through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). Remember, this is coming from a man who was stoned, shipwrecked, beaten, and imprisoned! Truly, Paul knew from personal experience that prayer is key to finding peace and contentment in every time of trouble. No wonder we find him praying and singing joyfully when he was placed in prison stocks at midnight, even though he had just received many stripes with rods (Acts 16:25).

Peter, also, noted that prayer is the key to enduring the end times: “But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers” (1 Peter 4:7, NKJV). Peter discovered for himself the devastating results of neglecting to pray. Jesus had pleaded with Peter and the disciples to “watch and pray” in order to not “enter into temptation” (Matthew 26:41) when they were on the verge of the greatest crisis of their lives. But Peter fell asleep rather than persisting in prayer, and before he knew what he was doing, he had betrayed his best Friend at the moment when Jesus needed him most.

Inspiration tells us, “It was in sleeping when Jesus bade him watch and pray that Peter had prepared the way for his great sin. All the disciples, by sleeping in that critical hour, sustained a great loss” (The Desire of Ages, pp. 713, 714). What victory might we be losing today because we are sleeping when God has called us to watch and pray?

In Luke 21:36, Jesus explicitly prescribed prayer as the key to standing in the end: “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man”.

Ellen White was given a vision of the end, in which she saw that it was those who persisted in prayer who would endure. “As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, to encourage their hearts and light up their countenances. Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. . . . I saw angels of God hasten to the assistance of

all who were struggling with all their power to resist the evil angels and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But His angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them. . . . All seemed to have a deep sense of their unworthiness and manifested entire submission to the will of God; yet, like Jacob, every one, without an exception, was earnestly pleading and wrestling for deliverance” (Early Writings, pp. 270, 272).

It couldn't be much clearer. The key to standing in the end is not stockpiling food or finding the perfect hiding spot. Instead, the key is in developing a tight hold upon Christ through earnest, agonizing, and persistent prayer. The promised result is that our hearts will continually be guarded by the peace of God and that God will bring justice in answer to our earnest prayers!