

Statewide Preparedness Test

John Isaac Edwards

As part of Severe Weather Preparedness Week during the week of March 18-24, 2012, federal and state officials conducted a Statewide Tornado Drill Wednesday, March 21. During this drill, the National Weather Service sent a Tone Alerted warning message over the NOAA Weather Radios. DHS also set off the outdoor warning sirens. The purpose of these tests was to allow each county to test the warning sirens in a simulated emergency situation and to provide the opportunity for businesses and schools to test their procedures for severe weather incidents.

It's a good time for us to think about being prepared spiritually. Many see the need for severe weather preparedness, but overlook the importance of spiritual preparedness. It's sad when alerted messages are sent and folks fail to make the proper preparation and lose their belongings and lives. Sadder still is the loss of souls, man's most valuable possession (Matthew 16:26), due to a lack of spiritual preparedness.

Warning Messages. The Scriptures are full of messages to alert us to the fact that Christ is coming. Christ promised, "I will come again" (John 14:3). Angels said, "...this same Jesus... shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Peter penned, "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" (2 Peter 3:10). Paul proclaimed, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God..." (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Since the trump may sound at any moment (Mark 13:32), the coming of Christ will bring about the end (1 Corinthians 15:23-24), we'll stand before the judgment seat of Christ to hear the reading of our eternal verdict – "enter" or "depart" (Matthew 25:23, 41), spiritual preparedness must be a constant. When the trump sounds, it will be too late! The time for preparedness is now!

Testing Our Spiritual Preparedness. I'd like to recommend that each of us undergo a spiritual preparedness test. We prepare spiritually by hearing Christ (Matthew 17:5), having faith in Christ (John 8:24), repenting of our sins (Luke 13:3), confessing our faith in Christ (Romans 10:9-10), being baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27), and "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts," living "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12). Take this test: (1) Have you heard Christ? (2) Do you have faith in Christ? (3) Have you repented of your sins? (4) Have you confessed your faith in Christ? (5) Have you been baptized into Christ? (6) Are you denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world?

Are you spiritually prepared?

I'm Divorced – What Are My Options?

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We must set aside our emotions, allow the Lord to answer the question, through a careful and prayerful reading of His word, and be satisfied with His answer.

The Rule: No Divorce. God's rule is, No divorce! God hates putting away (Malachi 2:14). God's marriage law, from the beginning, made no provision for divorce (Genesis 2:18-24). Jesus said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder...from the beginning it [divorce] was not so" (Matthew 19:6, 8).

One Exception: Fornication. The Lord gave only one exception to the no-divorce rule, when He said, "...saving for the cause of fornication" (Matthew 5:32), or "...except it be for fornication" (Matthew 19:9).

If You Did the Putting Away. If the marriage was Scriptural to start with, and you divorced your spouse for some reason other than fornication, then you have an unscriptural divorce. You need to repent of putting asunder what God joined together and "be reconciled" to your spouse (1 Corinthians 7:11). If you put away your spouse for the sin of fornication,

then, according to Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, you have the right to marry another, provided you marry one who has a Scriptural right to marry: one never before married (1 Corinthians 7:1-2), one whose spouse has died (Romans 7:2-3), or one who put away a mate for the cause of fornication (Matthew 19:9).

If You Were Put Away. If you were put away by your spouse, then you do not have a Scriptural right to marry another. Jesus never gave the put away person the right to marry. If so, where is the passage? Jesus taught, "...and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matthew 5:32; 19:9).

Marriage is a life-long agreement and we need to think very seriously before entering into it. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Romans 7:2-3).

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Assembling Times:

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.



**The Bible
Is Our
Only Guide!**