Welcome back to our sermon series

**FIRST RESPONDERS**

First Responders are the first people to respond and take action after an emergency

First Responders have to be prepared

Today we are going to be talking about

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Really, we should all be prepared for emergencies

This week Hurricane Dorian did a lot of destruction up the east coast
Hopefully the people in its path were prepared

I grew up in Florida and I remember preparing for hurricanes: shutters, water, gas…

I’m also especially qualified to talk to you about preparedness because I was in
Boy Scouts

Sept. is national preparedness month. www.ready.gov

What are you preparing for? What will you be ready for?

**SPIRITUAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

What is a spiritual emergency?

When you or someone around you is in danger of falling out of faith.

When you find out that someone does not have faith in Jesus Christ.

You could look at it this way: What emergency isn’t a spiritual emergency?

When someone openly challenges your faith.

**1 PETER 3:15 (NIV)** But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

What about Jesus’ return? It will be an emergency if you haven’t prepared.

**MATTHEW 24:36 (NIV)** “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

**MATTHEW 24:37 (NIV)** As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

**MATTHEW 24:38 (NIV)** For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;

**MATTHEW 24:39 (NIV)** and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

They could have been prepared if they had listened to Noah and to God.

**MATTHEW 24:42 (NIV)** “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

**MATTHEW 24:43 (NIV)** But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

**MATTHEW 24:44 (NIV)** So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

But didn’t Jesus also say “Don’t worry about tomorrow…”? – Yes. Matthew 6:34
He doesn’t want us to be anxious about our daily needs, but He does want us to be spiritually prepared

**GALATIANS 6:8 (NIV)** Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

**3 P's OF PREPARATION**

Alliteration makes things more memorable

Prayer, Penitence, Perspicacity, Polyhedron, Pensacola, Pepperoni, Prius,
Pre-pressed Plumber Pants – none of these

I apologize for popping P’s in the microphone

The three P’s of Preparation are Priorities, Pack, Perseverance

**PRIORITIES**

In order to prepare, it has to be a priority

Your actions demonstrate your priorities

Doomsday Preppers

Jesus tells us: Seek first God’s Kingdom and God’s righteousness and all the rest will be given unto you. Matthew 6:33

Is our spiritual preparedness, and our relationship with God a priority?

Story about Lazarus

What do your actions show to be your highest priority?

Why are priorities important?

If it’s not a priority, you probably won’t do it. You won’t prepare.

If your faith is not a priority you can easily lose it.

Faith was a priority for Pastor Kiesel's great grandfather.

Make Spiritual Preparedness a priority by acting like it is a priority. Live it out.

**PACK**

Doomsday Preppers have their equipment. Some people have an emergency kit.

When preparing for a hurricane you have to get your supplies together

What is in you spiritual emergency kit?

Bible – do you read it or just own it.

In an emergency you want to have the most critical items close to you at all times.
They need to be easy to access and easy to use.

Do you carry the Word of God in you? Can you cite or quote a few verses?

What else?

Prayer is a powerful tool in a Spiritual Emergency. We have to be ready to use it.
We need to practice it frequently.

They say, when you have a hammer everything looks like a nail.
We need to get to a place where we see every situation as one that could benefit from prayer. And we are willing to pray.

What else? How about the armor of God.

**EPHESIANS 6:13 (NIV)** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

**EPHESIANS 6:14 (NIV)** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

**EPHESIANS 6:15 (NIV)** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

**EPHESIANS 6:16 (NIV)** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

**EPHESIANS 6:17 (NIV)** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Our Spiritual Emergency Kits should be full of supplies, and we need to have lots of experience using all of them.

**PERSISTENCE**

We have to stick with it. We’re never finished getting prepared.

Doomsday preppers don’t stop prepping.

We need to keep working every day. It needs to remain a priority. And every day we need to work like it is our top priority.

**GALATIANS 6:9 (NIV)** Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

We need to be encouraged to persevere and not give up because being prepared is

**PAINFUL**

We have to give up certain things to focus on what is most important.

Not only that, but being prepared to be a first responder can have painful moments

Imagine all the unpleasant things that cops, firefighters, and paramedics have to see and deal with.

Villagio can be painful. But we grow through pain.

Keep it up. Persevere. Run the race with endurance.
Being prepared, even with its painful moments, is better than being caught unprepared

**HOLY SPIRIT**

**POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**LUKE 12 11-12 (NIV)** “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

That’s not to say that we don’t need the three P’s of preparation, but the best way to get prepared is to get in contact with the Holy Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit is like a dispatcher: go over there, talk to that man…

The Holy Spirit helps remind us of what is the top priority.

The Holy Spirit dispenses the tools in our Spiritual Emergency Pack.

The Holy Spirit can help us to persevere when we would otherwise quit.

**\*\*\*MUSICIAN\*\*\***

Now the question is: How prepared are you?

Sometimes safety and emergency preparedness presentations make me feel a little uneasy because I realize how unprepared I am.

The point is that they should motivate me to get prepared.

If this message made you feel a little uneasy, that’s alright.
Let it be motivation to get spiritually prepared.
If you realize that you’ve been asleep in your faith, then wake up! Get prepared.

**ROMANS 13:11 (NIV)** And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

You will face spiritual emergencies in your life, and they are coming like a thief in the night. Will you be prepared, or will you have to rely on someone else to be your spiritual first responder?

If you’re feeling a little under-prepared there is something you can do about it right now. At the end of service every week we open the altar and invite everyone to spend some time in prayer.