

Our Emergency Plan

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 20 July 2025

Preacher: Pastor Shane Eccles

[0:00] So we'll be in Psalm 46 and then Psalm 32. One scripture from each. Psalm 46 and one says, God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

Amen. How many believe that? God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Psalm 32 and 8. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.

I will guide thee with mine eye. Amen. How many believe God can instruct us and teach us in the way that we should go? How many want to be guided by your eye instead of God's eye?

I'd rather be guided by God's eye. Amen. I want him to guide me with his eye. Amen. So for today, I'm going to preach and teach, just talk a little bit about our emergency plan.

Our emergency plan. Help me pray. Lord Jesus, I thank you for what I feel in this place. God, I feel your anointing. I thank you for your word today. God, I pray that it goes forth with anointing.

[1:08] Let it be received. God, give us spiritual ears to hear. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. So, you know, in life, there's lots of things in life that we depend on as our sources of strength and protection.

Strength and protection. In life, there's various challenging scenarios that come up and situations that come about that we have to deal with on a day-in and day-out basis.

Amen. You know, that's life, right? We hear that term. That's life. It's just challenging scenarios and situations, one after the other. And today, I'm thinking of all the choices and all the decisions we have to make.

And there's a multitude of decisions that we'll face in life. And if we're honest with each other today, we would have to agree that oftentimes we make choices without really fully understanding what will be around the corner of that decision, what the consequences of that decision would be when we make that decision.

I like to say that we typically will make decisions that we think in that moment is going to bring us more happiness. And we make decisions based on trying to increase our happiness in that very moment.

[2:22] And we never would make a decision that if we knew it would cause us disaster or cause us harm or danger, I don't think we would be willing to really make that decision.

And so I think mostly we try to make decisions that we think are going to work out, that we think are going to be okay for us and not provide us great harm and danger.

But I think if we're really honest with ourselves, we would have to agree today that we really don't really know. And, I mean, that's why the divorce rate, the way the divorce rate is.

When they were standing up there saying, I do, I don't think in their mind they knew that, you know, so many months or years from now, this is going to be an ugly, turn out to be an ugly thing and whatever.

They probably wouldn't be saying, I do at that point. But in their minds, they think that they found the one that's forever, right? And so every decision that we make, we're really trying to do the right thing. We're really trying to make a good decision.

[3:20] But it never, often, I won't say never, it often doesn't work out like we intended or thought because we don't really know what the consequences of those decisions are going to be and what's going to be around the corner.

We don't always have all the correct information, but still choices and decisions have to be made.

And so we make decisions day in and day out how to handle what comes our way, right?

We do that. Every single day we make decisions. We made a decision whether we want to come to church today or not. And I'm glad you guys made the decision to be here today. It was a good decision in my opinion. Amen. I believe God would agree, right?

And so it's just a fact of life. We should do our best. We should try to make educated decisions. But the fact remains, we usually don't know and therefore cannot possibly consider every single thing. And so we are unaware of everything that will result in the next decision that we make in life. Making decisions in life and going through life, I imagine, is like going through an unexplored cave. [4:21] And there's a cave system. I've mentioned this before in a different message that I learned about. It's in Kentucky called the Mammoth Cave System. And there are currently over 426 miles of passageways that have been surveyed and mapped out in this one cave system.

426 miles. As I mentioned in the message that I preached before, and I included this analogy, that would be equivalent to driving from here to Tijuana.

That's how big this cave system is. Only the part that they've mapped out. And there's more. And there's more. 426 miles of passageways have been surveyed. And to me, that's mind-boggling. And that's just the part of the cave system that's been explored. And yet there are still large amounts of passageways and corridors that go here and there, and that cave system that have not yet even been explored.

Who wants to go to Kentucky with me? And that's life, isn't it? I don't know why I compare this in my mind to life. It's just a large network of twists and turns, right?

[5:28] And there's a lot of darkness in what's around the corner, you know? I don't know. I've never been in caves like that. I'm just using my imagination. But it seems like there would be a lot of decisions have to be made.

Am I going to go here or there? And, like, what's around the corner? And hopefully I have a map, right? A large network of twists and turns, that's life. And, yes, many situations have been experienced by others, right?

A lot of people have gone there, been there, done that, you know? You've heard that before. But there's still a real chance of becoming lost in the twists and turns of life.

There's still that real chance of becoming lost. And we would be fools to go exploring in that mammoth cave system without an emergency plan, without taking some sources of strength and security or protection, taking with us the right tools to navigate that cave system.

You would be foolish to go into those caves without lights, for example. I mean, how far would you be able to get into the mouth of a cave, you know, let alone 426 miles into the cave without light?

[6:39] I mean, we need lights, right? Maps, extra food and supplies. You know, I probably couldn't carry enough food that I would require for sustenance, you know? And some sort of emergency plan in case of the very real possibility that you become lost and disoriented, it becomes your reality, you know?

Like, especially for me. Like, I like to think I know where I'm going. I don't have time to go into stories about asking cows for directions, but I've done that before. I've been out in the middle of nowhere and asked for a cow.

I asked a cow, how do I get back to the main road? He just gave me a blank stare. So, you know, but anyways, we would be foolish to go into a situation like that without dependable equipment and a well-thought-out plan.

And even then, with all the twists and turns, there's no guarantee that we wouldn't get turned around, disoriented, off track, and lost. And like I said, that's life. That's why I'm trying to compare it to life.

Every time you come to a split in the road of life, do we do this or do we do that? Do I go that way or do I go this way in life?

[7:48] And even then, with all the twists and turns, there's no guarantee. There's no guarantee we're going to make the right decision when we come to those points. We have to have a plan. We have to have a plan.

Are we just walking blindly into the next decision? You know, those decisions have to be made. And we're making decisions all the time. That's going to affect our lives in major ways. But how prepared are we for that?

Have we done any preparation? Have we prepared ourselves to make those decisions? Or are we just blindly, haphazardly flying by the seat of our pants, you know, into this maze of twists and turns without a real plan, without the right tools, without the strength and protection that we need in order to survive what's ahead?

You know, what does your word say?

First of all, what is the spirit speaking to me about this before I make a decision? All right? And so we want to be prepared and we want to be protected. We want to have a plan. And we, in order to be best prepared is to know that we're in the will of God and his word.

[9:17] Psalm 32 and 8 says, I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye. Amen. Like I said, I want to have God's eye directing me.

I want him so close to me that I can hear his voice behind me like a trumpet in my ear telling me to go to the left or go to the right.

Amen. If I don't hear, if I don't hear, if I come to a fork in the road and I don't hear a clear direction, I'm going to stay right where I'm at until I do. Amen. I'm going to try to take a look at my emergency plan.

I'm going to open my Bible and I'm going to consider some things that I've developed and put into my life that give me strength and protection, which are some of my spiritual disciplines.

I'm going to go to prayer. I may fast a meal or two, maybe three, a whole day. And I'm going to pray and I'm going to ask God's direction before I make a decision. I don't need to just go, you know, haphazardly down into the next cave in life.

[10:18] Amen. Amen. We need to have the voice of God in our lives. And we have that in the word of God and through our spiritual disciplines. We have to learn to let God instruct the way we should go in life and let him guide us with his eyes, with his eyes.

And if you do not have a connection with God like you know you're supposed to, then you should be warned today. Let this be a warning to you that your next decision in life will likely lead you into your next disaster in life.

You're speaking, you're looking at someone with a lot of experience in this regard. Okay. I have a lot of experience leading myself and even my family into disaster. Amen.

I remember a moment where I was not in the Holy Ghost and I was let anger consume me and I walked off a job when I had a brand new house.

I was in a brand new family, a wife of just a few years and two small kids in a brand new custom built house and I walked off the job in anger with no backup plan.

[11:25] No, just, you know, if you're looking, I'm just, what I'm trying to say is you're looking at somebody with some experience. Okay. About leading, making decisions and leading myself and family into disaster.

Okay. And, and, and the results of that, it's going to cost us something. It did cost us something when, when I made that decision. You're, and so we have to ask ourselves, are you prepared really to suffer that kind of loss?

Is it, is it really worth not having a plan? Is it, at the end of the day, was it really worth it? And I know God can, can get us, you know, recalculate our direction and get us back on the path when we repent and start putting God first again.

Amen. We're still alive. My family made it. But you know what? There's a, there's probably about a good six or eight years of hardship that we'd probably didn't have to go through. If the guy you're looking at wasn't such a knucklehead that he couldn't pray or, or have some Holy Ghost, you know, anointing instead of just reacting to making decisions.

On the fly. But preparation's important. Preparation is pre-planning and pre-organizing and pre-acquiring resources and pre-everything else you can think of.

[12:36] Pre, pre, pre. That's the key word in preparation is pre. That pre part, meaning before any decision, before any incident, before any emergency in life.

Prepare now for what could be coming next. And a popular term, and I use it in, in, in trainings that I teach at work is because failing to plan is planning to fail.

Failing to plan is planning to fail. There, there aren't a few of us in here today that have the responsibility of preparing facilities at our place of work for dealing with situations that arise.

A large part of emergency response planning is all that preparation that goes in ahead of time.

Making sure that all the things are in order now when there is no emergency and you have a good mindset that you can sit down and focus and make a plan.

Plan so that if there is an emergency, we don't have to stop in the middle of emergency and say, what do we do? You know, but we have a plan that we can fall back to and understand what to do and with whatever comes.

[13:44] And continue as I go to apply this to life. Okay, I'm talking about life. I'm using an example of work and emergencies, but I'm talking about life. Okay, and so, so that there's an emergency, we can respond appropriately and hopefully limit the cost of what that emergency is in our life.

Just like we never know when a risky or threatening situation will come about at work. In life, we don't know how or when exactly we will be faced with a trying situation.

And decisions have to be made in those situations. What are we going to do? What are we going to learn or lean on when that happens? And it can be something we bring upon ourselves or from, you know, and just like most emergency situations at work, it's because someone got lazy and tried to cut corners.

Same thing in life. We can bring things out on ourselves because we get lazy. We try to cut corners. It could be as a result of our previous decisions that we've made. Or it could just be in the innocence of not fully understanding how something works, you know, or in getting in over our heads when we didn't really intend to do that just out of a lack of knowledge and understanding. But one of the things that Jose and I are heavily involved in is planning and preparing for fire emergencies at our facilities. And for probably what the good last year or so, Jose's had a special role of emergency response training, ERT, we call it.

[15:22] And his job has primarily been to make sure that we're in a good position to be able to respond to an emergency. And one of the things that we're involved in is making sure that the things are in place that we need to have in place.

And if an emergency arises, that's part of the planning process, right? Making sure the plan is in place, the preparation is happening, the tools we need to respond are there and available, right? And we can't just go day by day and hope that there won't be a fire at the facility or hope that there won't be an emergency at the facility and not plan and prepare for the fact and the real possibility that and the likelihood that there really will be one day.

And so what do we do? We plan. We prepare far in advance. First of all, we make sure that we have in place best practices to prevent the fire from ever taking place. Every aspect of our facility should have plans in place to prevent fire from occurring.

There's a lot of opportunities for fires at our facilities. And so the people working with those machines and things like that, they have to be having good practices. And so we implement things in the workplace like cameras to help us detect fires.

[16:39] Or we make customizations to a water truck that we use for dust control that we could use as a fire truck in the event that there's a fire.

We install mass notification systems. We do everything we can to be able to alert the workers in areas that might be affected by the hazardous condition and to avoid the area.

And there's a whole bunch of things that we do to prepare. That's what I'm talking about. We prepare. We prepare. And once we have put all the tools in place, we ensure we put those things into practice.

We don't just put tools into place and not practice them. We do fire tests. We set off smoke grenades to see if the cameras will alert us or not. You can't just assume that it's going to work. But you put the plan into practice and we test them and make sure that we're ready for the time a real event may take place. And it's the same thing in life and in the spirit.

[17:39] We're all responsible for our own spiritual preparedness is where I'm trying to get to. We all have to be responsible to make sure that we're living and following some spiritual best practices in life every day.

It's a daily thing that we have to do to prevent a spiritual crisis from ever happening in the first place. Knowing that the reality that a crisis is very likely to come in life, we not only have best practices in how to live in place, but we also have to have implemented some contingencies and some protocols to follow to deal with that real-life scenario when it raises its ugly head and says, hello, here I am.

Right? Right? And trust me, if we're going to be in an emergency situation at work, I want Jose there with me. He seems to be able to snap up and jump and just react instinctively to what needs to happen.

Amen. So when that emergency raises its ugly head, I want to be prepared. And I want to be around people that are prepared to help me too. Right? Amen.

And not run from those people or not be a part of that. Because a real-life situation is going to test how well we plan, how well we prepared, how good was our preparedness.

[18:59] Was it really, did we really even prepare? On that first day of season this year at Liberty Packing, Jose, Hannah, and I got to experience what I'm talking about firsthand. Amen.

There was a fire at Liberty. And Jose and Hannah happened to be working in the SOC. We won't talk about how it seems like fires always happen around Jose.

But he had nothing to do with it. He was working in the SOC. And I was about 10 minutes away. And then it happened.

And then a fire started at Liberty, one of the work areas. And there was a piece of equipment that wasn't maintained right. It wasn't put back together right. And a piece of that broke or wasn't attached right.

And it fell into a rotary system. And then because what should have happened, again, because of all the best practices that we have in place, there's a best practice on how to install that bag system to make sure it doesn't fall into the rotary.

[20:00] Right. Right. And then if it happens to do that, though, there's also a best practice to have in place that if it does, that that rotary turns off. Instead, it kicked up a notch and went faster.

So the programming was wrong. There's all it was a chain of events that took place where best practices failed. When there was a lot of smoke coming out and the coordinator was alerted, he didn't respond.

He thought it would be just something, you know, that could not really a big deal. And it took about 30 minutes of that happening for them to realize, hey, we have a fire.

So a lot of things didn't go well. Right. But then once we got informed and alert, the plan sprung into action. And in the real life scenarios happening, our plan is being tested now.

Right. How good is our plan really? And so immediately the response plan is being tested. Did the cameras work to help us spot a fire? Did the outfitting of the water truck help us to put out the fire?

[21:10] How well did the mass notification system work? Did it communicate everything's tested in real life situations? Your level of preparedness. Were you lazy in your daily best practices and preparing for this catastrophe that has now taken place in your life?

And over the last week, as I went over it in my mind, the incident at work, a lot of things stand out about our response plan and preparedness, of course.

You know, and that's my job. That's always on my mind. Thinking about how to improve and all this. But one of the things that really stood out to me in particular and where I want to try to apply it to what I'm talking about today is that there was one firefighter that stood out to me.

He wasn't really helping out a lot, to be honest with you. But he did stand out, not for that reason. But he was asking, do you guys have an SDS binder? Are there any chemicals in this work area? And I would keep telling him, no, I'm aware there's no chemicals in this area or this product that's burning. He's like, well, do you have an SDS binder? Do you have an SDS binder?

[22:21] He was persistent, and I kept reassuring him. There's no chemicals in here that you have to be concerned about. So obviously when a fire is burning and you start chemicals getting involved, it can create a very dangerous situation for everybody at hand.

And so this firefighter keeps asking for the SDS, and I would tell him, there's no chemicals that we use in this area. And so finally, I'm like, I think Jose was standing there, and he was overhearing all this.

He's like, I can go get it from safety. And so he went off to go get and brought this SDS binder. And the SDS binder tells you what chemicals are used and how to deal with them and all that. And we confirmed that there was no chemicals.

But something stood out to me about that, his persistency in asking for the SDS binder. It caught my attention. And when his life and the life of his fellow firefighters were on the line, he wasn't just going to take my word for it.

He wanted to see it for himself. He wanted to go to the place of authority in a sense, which would be that SDS binder to say yes. And that's all part of the preparedness.

[23:27] It's all part of the SDS binder has to be prepared in advance before the emergency, right? But it's all there in advance. And he had to go to the authority in a sense.

And obviously I'm going to apply that to the word of God. Amen. There's going to come times in our lives where our spiritual life is at risk. And the spiritual life of our spouse and our children or our

loved ones are also at risk.

And there's going to be some choices that we have to make. And there's people that we're responsible for. And so before we just take someone else's word for it, someone, I've never met that firefighter before in my life.

He didn't know me from Adam. And how would I expect him to take my word? He didn't even know what my roles and responsibilities were there. And even if he did, he probably still wouldn't. He still insisted on having the authority in his hand, which was that book, to look at and see what's here. What am I faced against? What do I have to make sure to make sure that myself and those that I'm responsible for are going to make it out of this safe? And if there's some sort of hazardous condition that I need to be aware of.

[24 : 33] Amen. I hope you understand where I'm trying to apply this together. We need to have the word of God. We can't just take our buddy's word for it. We can't just take some random person we just met word for it. But we need to understand what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God in this situation in life.

And we get that from the word of God. We get that from godly counsel of spiritual leaders we have in our lives. And so for us, the information we need that can prevent a catastrophe can be found in the word of God.

Fighting a fire without knowing what chemicals are in the fire and burning, it's a danger. Exploring a cave without a map or light, we're talking about dangers, being lost in darkness without guidance. It's a danger. Trying to navigate life without the word of God is also a danger. In fact, trying to navigate life or emergency situation without the word of God is more than a danger.

It has eternal consequences. It's more than just a danger. But if you can learn to turn to God, God said, I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shall go, and I will guide thee with mine eye.

[25 : 39] See, God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Amen. Don't be the one that makes decisions without consulting the plan. Amen. Don't be the one that doesn't know what to do when the emergency happens and looking around.

What do I do? What do I do? Don't be the one that doesn't come to the safety meetings. Amen.

Amen. Hebrews chapter 10, 25. Forsake not the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhort one another and so much more as you see the day approaching.

Amen. That's talking about assembling, coming to church, being a part of the body of Christ. Don't forsake that. Don't skip on the safety meetings. Amen. There might be an emergency that comes in your life, and you're going to need to know how to respond to that and not just stand around.

Amen. And not know what to do. But you've got to have some people in your corner, the body of Christ with you, the word of God with you, and know what to do. Amen. Amen. And so the Bible tells us that Jesus will return.

Right? The Bible tells us Jesus will return. This is what the scripture is actually talking about.

Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, encouraging one another, and so much more as you see the day approaching.

[26 : 56] The day that God would return, that Jesus would return. The Bible tells us the signs that lead up to Jesus' return. The Bible tells us that we will see the signs, and we will know that that day is getting closer when he should come back for his church, and that we should come together and encourage each other more often when we see those signs approaching.

Amen. Amen. That's good advice because it is in the house of God with the people of God that we learn of his ways and that we encourage each other through situations that we face in life.

And there is strength and safety in the house of the Lord. Amen. And in the fellowship of God.

Amen. But I thought of that verse this past week because what if Jose and I knew?

What if we knew back in January, seven months ago? We didn't know the exact time, but we knew it was going to be in. We knew the season. Right? Because the Bible says no man knoweth the day or the hour.

But he does tell us the season when you see the fig tree giving forth its leaves. You know that that generation is not going to pass. So we know the season. Right?

[28 : 10] We know the season. We knew it was going to be the summer of 2025. What if Jose and I knew all the way back in January that in this season that there would be a fire?

And we were given the exact place where the fire would be. It would be in the pumice area. And this is the reason why it would happen. And this is how it's going to happen. The exact nature of the fire. The exact details of the fire. We were given all that information, Jose, in advance. And guaranteed that it was going to happen. But we just didn't know what day or hour it was going to happen. What would we do from that day going forward? On the first day of season, what would we be doing? We didn't know exactly when it would be.

We didn't know the day or the hour. Right? But we knew the season. We would prepare and prepare and prepare to make sure that we were ready when it happened.

[29:05] Amen. There's nothing we could do to stop it from happening. It's going to happen. Jesus is going to return for his church. Whether you're ready or not, he's going to return. We don't know the day or the hour.

We know the season. And I can tell you that we're in the season. Amen. We're in the season of God's return. And so what would we do if we understood that?

If we really believed that and we knew that? Yes, the Bible says he is going to return. And he will return for his church. He's coming back for us. Amen. We need to be prepared to meet him on that day when he does.

And so we know for 100% of fact that he's coming back. We know the season he's coming back. We don't know the day or the hour he's coming back. But what should we be doing every single day until he does?

Amen. It's obvious when we look at it that way. Prepare, prepare, prepare. Amen. We have to prepare and prepare and prepare to make sure that we are as ready as we could be spiritually to not only be ready to meet Jesus when he returns, but to deal with all of life's twists and turns and all the emergencies that come up in our lives day in and day out as we go through life.

[30:15] We don't want to be spiritual victims of life's circumstances because life and our spirit is connected. When we experience things in this physical world, it affects the spiritual and vice versa.

Don't mistake. Don't be the one that mistakes and doesn't understand that our spiritual nature and our physical nature is connected. And everything that we see going on around the world is ripple effects of things going on in the spiritual.

And the things we do in the physical affects our spirit. And so we can create in the physical realm, we can create spiritual disciplines or we can ignore them.

Or we can ignore them. Don't be foolish and think that the circumstances in life have nothing to do with our spirituality or what's going on in the spirit. You know, well, that's just life happening and has nothing to do with the spirit.

No, nothing in your life doesn't have to do with the spirit. Nothing. They are inseparable. They are connected. And one affects the other.

[31:21] And guess what? A decision in life is coming. You may be faced with the decision. You may be facing a decision right now. Or you may be facing a decision tomorrow.

But one's coming. I can guarantee you that I can't guarantee when a decision in life is going to have to come your way. But I can guarantee you that one will soon. And then there's going to be a lot more after that all through the rest of your life.

Decisions to make. Crisis to deal with. So prepare, prepare, prepare. Amen. Let's all stand today. I believe everyone here has been around long enough to know what the spiritual disciplines are. We talk about them a lot. Prayer, fasting, reading your word, understanding the word, having knowledge of the word, applying it to your life. We understand that. Those are the best practices in your plan of preparedness.

Those are the best practices to keep spiritually sharp to make sure that we make good decisions and avoid spiritual pitfalls in life. Amen.

[32:25] And so our emergency plan is to practice our spiritual disciplines. And when an emergency comes, to look to the word of God and to the body of Christ for our strength.

Amen. Amen. Amen. In your life, there's going to be situations that come. It's unavoidable. They're going to come. We have to go through things. It's just, it's life, right?

And so we have to have a plan in place now. We can't just, we can't just haphazardly go through life without a plan. Jose, we can't, we can't approach the, the, our jobs lightly.

Our responsibility is to make sure that the facility is ready and prepared to deal with an emergency. Right? And, and how much more important is it that us in our lives that we're spiritually ready and

prepared to deal with whatever comes our way?

I don't want some circumstance in life to knock me out of the kingdom of God. I don't want to lose out on salvation, my eternal salvation over some circumstance that comes in life.

[33:31] That, that'd be a travesty. We can have a plan to prevent most issues by increasing our spiritual disciplines and getting committed to God.

Make a commitment. And if we stick to it, we're going to be successful. But if you aren't even trying, you'll become more and more familiar with the issues of life because they're going to become part of your daily, your daily life.

You're going to be very familiar with issues in life. If, if, if you are in life situations today, then turn to God. Turn to God. For God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Amen. Do you believe that today? So if, if you're in a life situation today, I, I invite you to turn to God today. If, if everything's okay right now, if everything's fine, you don't, you're not in a life situation, still turn to God.

Turn to his word. Learn, learn about the, get a plan. Practice his plan. Practice spiritual disciplines. For God said, I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way thou shall go, and I will guide thee with mine.

[34:41] I, amen. Amen. Let's, let's find a place to pray and connect with God before we leave. Amen.