

## **SERMON**

**DATE: Saturday/Sunday, January 26-27, 2019**

**SERIES TITLE: STEADFAST: *Joining God in the Work of Building His Kingdom***

**SERMON TITLE: Always Be Ready!**

**SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 2:1-8**

[1] In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before,

[2] so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.” I was very much afraid,

[3] but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

[4] The king said to me, “What is it you want?” Then I prayed to the God of heaven,

[5] and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

[6] Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?” It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time.

[7] I also said to him, “If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah?”

[8] And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?” And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests.

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**Title: Always Be Ready!**

**1. Serve God in the meantime.**

- Glorify God by your attitude and behavior.
- Continue to fast and pray.
- Continue to serve God where you are.
  - “The best way to get a better place of service is to serve faithfully where you are.”
  - If you are not faithful in the small things, who will give you something large?

**2. Stay close to God; Look for His open door.**

**3. Look for the good hand of God.**

- Affirmation
- Blessing
- Helping Hands

# Lagniappe

Martha often tells me, "It doesn't take much to make you happy." Sometimes I don't know how to take that.

Today, I want to write about a number of things that do make me happy and when I think of them, I smile.

As I write this, I've just walked through the Connection Center here at First Baptist Church. I saw a number of people who are "hanging out" – some are getting work done sitting in the sunshine alongside those huge windows. I love to see people at FBC during the week. It made me smile to see those people, and they became the impetus for this writing.

I smile when I think about caring, praying people. I visited my mother this week who is now 89 years old and struggling. So many people texted or emailed me about praying for her and for me. I often respond to such kindness in this way, "Martha and I are sustained by the prayers of God's people." What a great joy to know you have people who are praying - for you, and the people you love!

I smile when I see God working in people's lives. We are all flawed people. We all need to grow and change. When I see people respond in God's love when they are attacked or mistreated, I smile and thank God for how He is working in us.

When I see people giving financially and giving their time to help others, it makes me smile. We all know when we care for "the least of these," whatever we are doing we are doing to Christ Himself.

What really makes me happy is to know that our Lord Jesus sees His people becoming like Him. That must make Him smile.