

It's Time To Wake Up!

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Rom. 13:11-14

Apathy and lethargy are problems that often afflict the people of God. Many Christians simply “go through the motions”.

Many churches exist, but with little zeal or progress. Such problems were common in New Testament times.

The church in Ephesus left their first love. Rev. 2:4, “*Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*”

The church in Laodicea became lukewarm. Rev. 3:15-16, “*I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*”

Paul felt the need to exhort the brethren in Rome to awake from sleep. Rom. 13:11-14, “*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*”

Have we become lethargic and indifferent to eternal things? If so, “It’s Time To Wake Up!” With Paul’s exhortation before us, consider some reasons.

Why we need to wake.

Rom. 13:11-12, “*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”*

“**Knowing the time**”.

Knowing the nature of time. Time is short. Time is fleeting. James 4:14-17, “*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is*

evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

Knowing what time it is. Now is the time to obey the Lord. Now is day of salvation. 2 Cor. 6:1-2, “*We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*”

“Now is our salvation nearer”.

Our salvation is nearer — in what way? The Lord’s return is nearer. Our own death is nearer, should we die before the Lord returns. Heb. 9:27, “*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*”

Than we first believed.

Every day brings us closer. Think of how much time has gone by since we believed!

“The night is far spent”.

The night — referring to the moral darkness of this world. 1 John 2:8, “*Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.*”

Is far spent — literally, “is cut off”. It is becoming short; it is hastening to a close. 1 Cor. 7:31, “*... the fashion of this world passeth away.*”

This world and time as we know it will not last long.

“The day is at hand”.

The day of eternal blessedness is at hand — is about to dawn on us in our resurrection unto eternal life.

2 Pet. 1:19, “*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.*”

Since these things are true, let us walk (conduct ourselves) properly.

How we ought to walk.

Rom. 13:12-14, “*The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye*

on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

“*Cast off the works of darkness*”

Such things as mentioned in this text:

- Rioting (revelry, drunken & frolicsome – Strong’s).
- Drunkenness.
- Chambering (sexual activity, lewdness).
- Wantonness (sexual lust).
- Strife (arguing, fighting).
- Envy (wanting, pursuing a person or thing another has).

Such things as mentioned in other texts:

Gal. 5:19-21, “*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*”

- Adultery (sexual relations with someone else’s spouse).
- Fornication (sexual relations of any kind – broader term).
- Uncleanness (impure, lustful thoughts).
- Lasciviousness (Unbridled, excessive lust).
- Idolatry (worship of false gods).
- Witchcraft (sorcery, magical arts).
- Hatred.
- Variance (wrangling, contention).
- Emulations (jealousy).
- Wrath (anger).
- Strife (promoting self, selfish ambition).
- Seditions (dissentions, divisions).

- Heresies (a body of men following their own tenets; originally, capturing a city).
- Envyings (wanting, pursuing a person or thing another has).
- Murders.
- Drunkenness.
- Revellings (rioting, drunken & frolicsome).
- And such like.

Col. 3:5-8, *“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”*

- Inordinate affection (lust).
- Evil concupiscence (desire or craving for something forbidden).
- Covetousness (greedy desire to have more, avarice) which is idolatry.
- Malice (desire to injure).
- Blasphemy (slander, injurious speech).
- Filthy communication (foul & obscene speech).

“Put on the armour of light”

The breastplate of faith and love, the hope of salvation as a helmet. 1 Thess. 5:8, *“But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”*

That armor of God including truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, the hope of salvation, the Word of God. Eph. 6:10-17, *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your*

feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ”

First, in baptism. For in baptism we “put on” Christ. Gal. 3:27, “*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*”

We are raised “with” Christ, “made alive together with Him”. Col. 2:11-13, “*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;*”

Then, in developing Christ-like character.

Putting on the new man. Col. 3:10-14, “*And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*”

Being renewed in mind, a new man in true righteousness and holiness. Eph. 4:20-24, “*But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*”

Growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

- 2 Pet. 1:5-8, “*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

- 2 Pet. 3:18, *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”*

“Make not provision for the flesh”.

Something we must do!

If we want to live spiritually. Rom. 8:12-13, *“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”*

If we desire the love of the Father. 1 John 2:15-17, *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”*

Something we can do!

With the aid of the Spirit.

- Rom. 8:13, *“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”*
- Eph. 3:16, *“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man,”*
- Eph. 3:20, *“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,”*
- Gal. 5:16-17, *“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”*

With the aid of God’s providence. 1 Cor. 10:13, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

With the aid of watchful prayer.

- Matt. 26:41, *“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

- 1 Pet. 4:7, “*But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*”
- 1 Pet. 5:8, “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*”

How serious are we in this regard?

Do we avoid circumstances that might tempt the flesh? Do we abstain from activities that arouse fleshly lusts?

Conclusion.

Brethren, are we sleeping? Indifferent to matters of the spirit, careless about things eternal? Lethargic in our service to the Lord, apathetic about our spiritual well-being?

If so, then “It’s Time To Wake Up!”

The time to change and grow will be soon be gone! The day of eternity will arrive and we won’t be ready!

Let us be children of the day, not of the night. Put on the Lord Jesus. Put on the armor of light. Walk properly.

Make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its fleshly lusts, and we can look forward to obtaining salvation through Jesus Christ! 1 Thess. 5:1-11, “*But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*”

How do we make this possible? By becoming a Christian. The following are the steps necessary to make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a*

rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”

- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* Acts 11:18, *“... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”* If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.
- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are “**UNTO**” righteousness, life, or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness,

“But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said *“it becometh **us** to fulfil all righteousness.”* We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? *“for the remission of sins”*. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* (Mark 16:15-16).

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”* (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”* (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”* (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn't mean "sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don't take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?

