

It Is Time To Awaken!

(11) *“And do this, knowing the time that now it is **high time to awake** out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed.* (12) *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.* (13) *Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.* (14) *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts,”* Romans 13:11-14).

The preceding verses are too comprehensive in scope to fully examine in one article, so we will only note some of the high points, and then consider its main focus; namely this, **“it is time to awaken!”**

Herein the apostle Paul referred to *“the time”* (referring to the character of that *“time”*), and concluded that it is *“high time to awake out of sleep,”* or to arouse from a state of lethargy and indifference. Cf. I Cor. 15:34; Eph. 5:14. The stated reason for awakening *“out of sleep”* lies in the fact that *“our salvation is nearer than when we first believed”* (v. 13). *“Salvation”* looks to the past when we first obeyed the gospel (Titus 3:5), and it looks to the future when we receive our heavenly reward (I Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:6-8). Each day that faithful Christians live brings their *“salvation”* (future tense) *“nearer”* than when they *“first believed.”* That being the case, we must *“cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light,”* and *“walk properly”* before the Lord (vs. 12-13). Contextually, this means that we must avoid revelry, drunkenness, lewdness, lust, strife, and envy, that we *“make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts,”* and that we *“put on the Lord Jesus Christ”* (vs. 13-14).

All Christians have a very formidable foe, the devil, who *“walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”* (I Peter 5:8). We must continually be on guard, ever seeking to resist the devil *“steadfast in the faith”* (I Peter 5:9; cf. Jas. 4:7). One moment of spiritual drowsiness can result in our being caught off guard, and being victimized by the nefarious, unscrupulous, devious, *“devices”* (2 Cor. 2:11), of our *“adversary”* the devil (I Peter 5:8). Hence, it is always *“high time to awake out of sleep”* (Rom. 13:11). However, truth be known, spiritual slumber is difficult to avoid. Consider the church at Ephesus as an example; doctrinally speaking, that church was very sound, and they had even *“tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars”* (Rev. 2:2), but they left their *“first love,”* and were commended to *“repent”* lest God should remove their *“lampstand from its place”* (Rev. 2:4-5). Then, too, we recall the church at Laodicea; **they** said of themselves *“I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,”* but **God** said *“you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked”* (Rev. 3:17). Obviously, spiritual slumber had set in; they had become *“lukewarm,”* and God threatened to *“vomit”* them out of His *“mouth”* (Rev. 3:16)!

Both Old Testament and New Testament history are filled with examples of good people who dozed off into a state of spiritual stupor and thereby (figuratively speaking) became lunch meat for him who *“walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”* (I Peter 5:8). Hence, it is **always** *“high time to awake out of sleep”* (Rom. 13:11)! Specifically, we shall now consider some of the things to which...

We Need To Awaken :

1. To A Realization that people without Jesus Christ are lost! “The bottom line” is this: “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23), and “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom. 6:23). Sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1-2), and this means that every sinner, to be saved, must deal with the sin problem in his life. Jesus knew the eternal, tragic plight of sinners; this is why He came “*to seek and to save that which is lost*” (Luke 19:10). This is why He voluntarily submitted to a humiliating death upon the cross; it being that He might “*taste death for everyone*” (Heb. 2:9), and thereby become “*the propitiation for our sins*” (I John 2:2), thus making it possible for God to be both a “*just*” God and “*the justifier of the one who has faith (an obedient faith) in Christ*” (Rom. 3:26). Cf. Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9.

2. To A Realization that Christians have a responsibility to the lost! Jesus told His disciples to “*go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*” (Mark 16:15). The apostle Paul charged Timothy, saying, “*and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*” (2 Tim. 2:2). Each Christian should have the attitude of the apostle Paul who said “*I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise,*” and then said “*As much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also*” (Rom. 1:14-15). It can well be said that Paul’s “magnificent obsession” was to convert the Roman Empire to Jesus Christ, and to that end (following his conversion), he devoted his life. And we are charged with the responsibility to “*imitate*” him, just as He imitated Christ (I Cor. 11:1)!

3. To A Realization that we have so many opportunities! “*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith*” (Gal. 6:10). Consider this: we live in a free society, where free speech is still allowed. We live in a time in which there are so many forms of transportation available, and a time of unparalleled communication opportunities. Modern technology is such that we can easily sit at our desk, and send Bible teaching material around the world! And this does not even begin to take into consideration the opportunities to distribute Bible tracts, have private studies with various individuals, use the telephone, send Bible Correspondence Courses through the mail, use Face Book, talk with our neighbors, co-workers, people whom we meet on the street, etc., etc.

4. To A Realization that Death Awaits Each Person! After sin reared its ugly head in the garden, God told Adam, “*In the sweat of your face you will eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return*” (Gen. 3:19). The inspired writer of Ecclesiastes said “*the living know that they will die...*” (Eccl. 9:5). The writer of Hebrews said “*It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment*” (Heb. 9:27). Friend, there is no getting around it; if the Lord doesn’t come first, you **will** die! Sooner or later, the “*silver cord*” of life will be “*loosed;*” the “*pitcher*” will be “*shattered at its fountain,*” the “*dust will return to the earth as it was,*” and “*the spirit will return to God Who gave it*” (Eccl. 12:7). Death is both certain and universal!

5. To A realization that the Day of Judgment is coming! “..we must *all* appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). God “has appointed a day on which He will judge the world by the Man whom He has ordained,” namely by Jesus Whom He raised “from the dead” (Acts 17:31). Jesus will be the Judge (John 5:22,27), and His “word” will be the standard by which we shall be judged (John 12:48). Indeed, “it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). In life, we sometimes make appointments which we (due to negligence, forgetfulness, or circumstances) fail to keep. But **death** and the **judgment** to come are two appointments **we will keep** — whether we are ready are not!

Conclusion: In view of these things, “it is high time to awake out of sleep...” (Rom. 13:11). We must awaken to a realization of the things herein cited, and thereby “make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts” (Rom. 13:14), and “prepare” to “meet... God” (Amos. 4:12). We should do it now, for tomorrow could be too late!

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