

SLUMBERING SAINTS

Romans 13:11-14

INTRODUCTION

- Sleep is a vital part of life – it is essential for our health and function to get adequate sleep each night
- But sleep must be in its place
- When people sleep when they should be awake, the consequences can be disastrous
- In Scripture, sleep is used figuratively, firstly as a euphemism for death, but also as an apt illustration to depict man's spiritual state
- The lost are asleep and spiritually dead to the things of God (Romans 11:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8)
- It is not until God's grace shines upon us to awaken us from our stupor, that we can see ourselves as we truly are, and we see the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and by faith in him, pass from death unto life
- Not only are the lost said to be as sleepers, but Christians also are described in this way in Scripture

I. WE MUST WAKE FROM SLEEP (11)

- A. We are to “know the time”
 1. Have a proper view of time
 2. Realise that time is fleeting and must be valued (James 4:14-17)
 3. Understand what the time is
 - a. The children of Issachar “had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chronicles 12:32)
 - b. “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 6:1-2)
 - c. Today is the day to hear His voice and obey him (Hebrews 3:7)
 4. It is “high time” – “the hour has already come”
- B. It is time to awake out of sleep
 1. Sleep is defined as “*a state of inactivity, with a loss of consciousness and a decrease in responsiveness to events taking place*”
 2. Sleep is a state of:

- a. Inactivity
 - b. Ignorance
 - c. Vulnerability (Matthew 13:25)
- C. Our salvation is nearer than when we believed
- 1. Salvation refers not to justification or sanctification, but glorification (1 Peter 1:9)
 - 2. Christ's return is nearer (Titus 2:13; Hebrews 10:25; James 5:8-9)
 - 3. Our own death is nearer (Hebrews 9:27)
 - 4. Far too many believers live in a state of complacency when they should be in a state of urgency
- D. The night is far spent
- 1. This present world and life is likened to the darkness of night (1 John 2:8)
 - 2. But it is "far spent" (1 Corinthians 7:31; 1 John 2:17)
- E. The day is at hand
- 1. When the Sun of righteousness comes, it will be "day" (Malachi 4:2)
 - 2. As we await the day, the word of God lights our way in the darkness (2 Peter 1:19)

II. WE MUST WAR AGAINST SIN (12)

- A. Cast off the works of darkness
- 1. The waking person rises and casts aside his blanket and his bed clothes to put on the clothing for the day
 - 2. Likewise, the believer must cast off those things that bring him into spiritual lethargy
 - 3. The believer is commanded to "put off" and "lay aside" the "old man" (Ephesians 4:22); "anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication" (Colossians 3:8-9); "all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings," (1 Peter 2:1); "all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness" (James 1:21); and "every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us" (Hebrews 12:1)
- B. Put on the armour of light
- 1. Here is a soldier being called out of his barracks to prepare himself for the battle

2. The believer is to put on “the new man”, “bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forgiveness and charity” (Colossians 3:10-14)
3. We are to be adorned with the nine-fold fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
4. We are to put on the whole armour God (Ephesians 6:10-18)
 - a. The loins girt with truth
 - b. The breastplate of righteousness
 - c. Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace
 - d. The shield of faith
 - e. The helmet of salvation
 - f. The sword of the Spirit
 - g. Praying always
5. Armour protects us from a myriad of problems both physical and spiritual (2 Corinthians 6:7)
6. Sanctification requires *both* putting off the evil and putting on the good (2 Timothy 2:22)

III. WE MUST WALK IN SANCTITY (13-14)

- A. An honest walk
 1. This means “honourable” and “decent”
 2. It particularly has reference to the believer’s testimony to the world (1 Thessalonians 4:12)
 3. The Christian should have a conversation that is becoming of one who is of the “day”
- B. A clean walk
 1. Rioting – revelling, licentious conduct
 2. Drunkenness – Use of intoxicating substances (Galatians 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3).
 3. Chambering – “Lewd, immodest behaviour” including fornication and adultery (Hebrews 13:4)
 4. Wantonness – lasciviousness, unnatural lusts, including sodomy
 5. Strife – contentions
 6. Envy – jealousy

C. A Christlike walk

1. Baptism is described as “putting on Christ” (Galatians 3:27)
2. The “new man...after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24)
3. The believer is predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son (Romans 8:29)
4. Christ set us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2:21)
5. We are to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18)

D. A spiritual walk

1. We are to make no provision for the flesh
2. Sinful flesh is not to be nourished and gratified
3. We only have ourselves to blame when we sin (James 1:14-15)
4. God in His faithfulness always makes a way to escape temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13)
5. We must ensure that our senses and our very thoughts are guarded against the slightest countenancing of sin (2 Corinthians 10:5)

CONCLUSION

1. “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Ephesians 5:14)
2. “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” (1 Thessalonians 5:6)
3. The world we live in is in utter darkness
4. This shows us that the day is close at hand
5. Whatever God has called you to do, do not put it off for a later day
6. Stop saying “tomorrow” or “soon”.
7. Say, “With God’s help, I’ll do it today!”