

# Romans 13

Sunday 3/14/2010

I want to again have you turn to Romans chapter 13. I think Romans chapter 13 has been a great chapter for us information-wise. Last week, we examined another aspect of the concept that it says in there, "Owe no man anything." We saw the first time we looked at that concept how it's dealing with the lost world and our debt to not be ashamed of the Gospel, and our debt, because of what Christ did for us on the cross, to take the Gospel and live our lives with that debt.

We tied it into the number one problem that all God's people have today for the most part, and that is physical debt, being so much in debt to the world that you can never fulfill the debt that God has for you for the lost. Then last week, we looked at the other aspect of it, and we saw our debt to love each other as God loves us, based on the fact that when you and I were unlovable, God loved us. When you and I didn't deserve God's love, He loved us. Because of that love for us, we have a debt, not only to love the world but to love each other as God's people.

I gave you two more great principles of loving each other based on God loving you, and you had to have those now in your little list of verses.

1. John 15:12

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

2. 1 John 4:11

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Then we talked about the great principle: how Christ fulfilled the law. I showed you the difference between the Old Testament law and how it worked in the Old Testament. Then I showed you how, when Christ came, He redefined the law for us. He basically took the Ten Commandments that God had given Israel and redefined all ten into two. Those two are called the royal law and the law of Christ. One of them is the fact that we love God, and the other one is the fact that we love each other.

I made this point, and this is probably the greatest point that you want to get out of what I said last week and as we move on even today: God understood the aspect that if you really truly love God, if you truly, truly love God, and the love that you have for God is paramount in everything in your life, then you cannot help but love each other. We talked about that.

Then we talked about Christ fulfilling the law, and by you and I having Christ in us when we get saved, then we are to fulfill the law in those two aspects also. Because of that, and based on that, we looked at a great verse in Romans 13:10, which says:

*Romans 13:10*

*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Then I showed you, and we closed out with this last week, the seven characteristics of the devil. Then I showed you the seven characteristics of a child of God. I took you back to Proverbs 6:16, and it talked about six things that the Lord hates, and then the seventh being the abomination. I actually walked you through the history of the Bible, and showed you—in fact, you participated

in that with me—and we came to the conclusion that starting in Genesis, running all the way up to the Church Age, you will find these six things manifesting themselves. Of course, we came to the conclusion last week that the number one thing that is the abomination of God is sowing discord among the brethren, coming to the place where we show ill toward each other by the things that we say about each other without the love of Christ and the love of God.

We countered that with the seven characteristics of God found in Romans chapter 15. I went through those. We will go through those in great detail when we go through chapter 14 and 15 here in the next couple of weeks; we will get that started. But I showed you that the number one aspect of the problem in the devil's attack in the Church Age, as we lay that thing through, is sowing discord among the brethren. That is the final thing that is the capstone before Christ comes back.

## I. The Urgency of the Time

Now today, we are going to move along with that, and we are going to look at chapter 13 again, and we are going to come down through some other great principles that I just think that you have to see. There is so much in this great chapter. You remember I told you last week that these last final verses, 8 through 14, not only form a closing statement around chapter 13 that we have just come through, but it also forms a bridge to get us from chapter 13 into chapter 14 and chapter 15. These two great chapters deal with our relationship with each other.

I told you last week that where we wanted to go New Year's Eve, we talked about where we were going to go and the accountability and the responsibility that was going to come with that. We laid out a plan, and we began to enact that plan with our prayer groups and our men's and our female groups, working together, the "iron sharpening iron" concept. It is no accident that as we work through this thing, that God's timing, that we were in the book of Romans, and now as we are getting into that phase, we are going to talk about the two greatest chapters in the Bible that show what your attitude and my attitude should be toward God's people. This is a great bridge to get us ready as we go into that because chapter 14 is a chapter unto itself that really shows us how to get along with each other when we have differing ideas, not necessarily doctrinal issues, but things that we are all different and we all have different views of things and how to work through all of that. Then chapter 15 focuses on what we ought to be doing with each other: the seven characteristics of God versus the seven characteristics of the devil. It's a tremendous deal.

But I want to read for you here chapter 13, verses 11 through 14, and then we are going to talk about some of this, and I think that you will see how this thing begins to work. Before we ever open up chapter 14 and 15, he is beginning to show us what's wrong with us as Christians, and this is so true. If you have been in Christianity for any short length of time at all, you know what he is about to tell us is absolutely true.

Let's begin reading in verse 11.

*Romans 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.*

Now, Father, we thank Thee and praise Thee for the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, we love You today. We thank You, Father, for the Word of God that You have given us. Father, I pray today that You will just do in our hearts and our lives today the work that needs to be done. There are many people here today, Lord, and each one of them has something in their life that they need from You today. Each one of them is dealing with something different. Each one of them is dealing with areas and levels that are much higher maybe than somebody else. But we all have something that we need today. That's why we're here. That's why we've joined and understand the concept of the New Testament local church. Today, Lord, we ask You to take these things and to help us to understand them in our life. Help us to grow through it and help us to become everything to You that we need. We'll thank You now and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

## II. Knowing the Time

Now, this passage to me personally has always been a great passage. I think that it's a great way to end chapter 13 and then begin to start chapter 14 and 15. The key to this passage that's going to kind of phase out this chapter, moving to the next chapter, is really verse 11. He simply says this: "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." You know what the key there is: "knowing the time."

Now, I didn't coordinate this with time change Sunday, but it just worked out perfectly. I had no idea. In fact, it just seems like three weeks ago we changed them back the other way. I don't ever change my car radio clock or any of those things because I know it's just a short time and it'll be back on track where it's supposed to be, so I don't ever mess with it. But let me ask you a question: Do you know what time it is right now? I mean, do you know what time it is right now? Most of you have a watch. I'll be very honest, too, I am very suspicious of people who don't wear watches because I don't think you care what time it is. You're the same way when a preacher gets up to preach and he doesn't have a watch on, you really get worried. Don't put it on me now. But you have a watch. You know why it's called a watch? It's called a watch because you watch it to see what time it is.

You know, as mortal beings, when God made us, He put us and made us to be constant with time. In other words, in the terrestrial world that we live in, everything we do is built around time. Inside you is what we commonly call a body clock. Your body clock works with your body, and

it tells you what time it is. You know when it's time to eat because you get hungry. You know when it's time to go to bed because you get tired. Your body clock—and I was telling some of the guys this morning, we were talking about time changing, and my body clock is very, very fragile. I just, I don't know why. I mean, for somebody who's traveled around the world and been in as many time zones as I've been, you'd think I would get used to it. I don't get used to it.

When I choose to travel around the world and go to Africa or the Philippines, I mean, to me, flying four hours to LA and then getting on a transatlantic Pacific flight that's going to take me to the Philippines, and I'm on that plane 26 hours non-stop, you are trying against the time. In other words, when you finally get there, you've lost a day. I started on Wednesday, and back home it's Thursday, but where I'm at, it's Friday. Now, that confuses me even standing in front of you. My body clock, and finally I had to go get sleeping pills, and that's how I could fix it. I stayed awake one time in Africa for four days and couldn't sleep. I was at the point where I was hallucinating at the end of the four days. I mean, I'm not kidding you, and I finally, one of the gals had Valium, and I'll be eternally grateful for her for the rest of my life, but nine Valium put me out, boy, and I'll tell you, I was asleep, man. But I learned my lesson, and I went to a doctor, and some of you nurses are going to cringe when I tell you this, but he put me on Halcion. Now, Halcion, I find out, is an illusory drug that makes you want to kill people, and it was very restricted back then. Well, I was going to El Salvador at the time, when in El Salvador you can walk into the pharmacy and you can buy anything you want to buy. So I went in and bought 500 bottles of Halcion. I opened my own pharmacy, and that's how I did it.

I tried everything in the world. They tell you that if you put lights behind your knees—and they actually sell the bands that have little lights on them—that if you put that behind your knees, because whatever it is, this part of your legs is sensitive to your body clock, I don't know, and that you don't have a problem, it doesn't work for me. The only thing that worked for me was Halcion, because we all have a body clock, and mine is terribly fragile. I can just go to California, where it's what, two hours different, and it messes me up. So we all have a body clock, and we as human beings are relevant to time. Everything we do is built around time.

I think that's talking with people about the Bible and God, and you get into the deeper things like eternity, and I see it many, many times over the years that you try to explain to people, God's people, what eternity is and maybe how it's going to work in eternity, and the question always comes up, "You know, what are people doing up in heaven right now that have died?" We have an idea that they're walking around up there, the golden streets, and checking things out, and I've even had some people think that there are big TV screens up there watching what's going down on Earth and all of these things. We think those crazy things because of the fact that we are relative to time, but when you step out of this body, you step into a world where there is no time. You know what? There's no time anymore. You're up in heaven. "How long have you been here?" Well, you haven't been here at all because there's no time to be here. We can't grasp that concept because everything we do is relative to time, everything that we do.

That's one of the problems that astronauts have when they get out past the Earth. As long as you've got the Earth in sight, you have some reference of time, but I'm telling you something, you get way out in space where the Earth just looks like a bright star, and there's no up and

there's no down and there's no left and there's no right and there's no morning and there's no night and there's no relevance of time, and your watch is worthless. You watch how your body reacts to that. Well, one of the ways of getting information out of people that we now designate as torture is the fact that they'll put people in a room, and after three or four days with no time, no sun coming up, no—and they'll put lights on all the time or total darkness or whatever—they break down because the human body was designed around time, and when we get out of that mode, it's hard. It's hard.

Just as we are relative as human beings in the world that we live in to time, when it comes to the Bible as God's people, we also have to be relevant to God's time. You see, God has a watch just like you have a watch, and God has a timepiece to tell what time it is for God's events, just like you have a watch to tell you when it's time to eat, time to be at your appointment, time to be at everything that you do. Just as if I took everybody's watch and I put you in a room where you had no relevance of time, in three or four short weeks you would be ready for the loony bin. Your bodies would completely break down because your bodies are designed to have a reference to time.

Now, I'm coming to a point here: when it comes to God's time, the reason why so many of God's people break down functionally as a child of God and cannot get functional the way they need to is they've lost their perspective of God's time. In other words, as human beings, physically, we are relevant to understanding what time it is physically, but as God's people, our sanity and what we accomplish for God depends on our understanding God's timepiece.

You know what time it is in America right now. You understand what time it is in the world right now according to God's clock. I find it interesting that even the unsaved world, they see what's going on, and because they see what's going on, they do not understand, but they see something in the air. You realize on July 17th, in the year 2007, a research study group in Washington D.C. came up with what they called a "Doomsday Clock," and it's also called a "Countdown to Armageddon." This was not even a Christian group. You see, Armageddon, which we know as the end of the world back there in our chart as we know it, when Christ comes back, Armageddon is such a common word down through the centuries, everybody associates Armageddon with the end of the destruction of planet Earth. So what we have is a group in Washington D.C. who has a Doomsday Clock that is based on world events, and according to them, in the year 2007, on their Doomsday Clock, which everything is over at midnight, we're at 11:47. 11:47 by the unsaved world.

Now, let me ask you a question, this is time change Sunday, what time is it now? I got something here I want to—I hope this works. It hasn't worked yet this morning because it's time change Sunday, but let me give you this here. Write this down. Write this number down: 303 is the area code, 499-7111. Anybody know what that number is? That's the Pizza Hut right down the street. We're going there right afterward. Anybody know what that number is? Raise your hand if you know. Anybody know what that number is? No, don't say it out now, raise your hand. Why are you saying it without raising your hand? What did you say? You made a joke, but tell everybody. No, time out, just hear the joke. Go ahead, what is it? The reject hotline. All right, I hate when somebody has something funnier than what I'm about to say. I just hate that.

Here we go, let's see if this works. Put this on your prayer list. Here we go. Hook that, put on a speaker. How do I do that? Nope, that's forward. Yeah, it is, it's the reject hotline, and it's busy. Oh, boy. One more time. I'll get it. Yeah, sometimes I just call this number and listen to it. Excuse me, listen, I'm going to go 60 seconds. Every one of these ticks is a second. This number is the number out in Denver, Colorado. The reason why I want you to hear it is because I want you to hear what the guy says. It's all right, we got time. You gotta hear what he says or lose the whole point. At about 40 seconds, she'll break off, and then you'll say something.

I know what that is. That's a number you can call to get the exact time in America. If you have, most of your cell phones have a little program in there that are tied to this. If you have a clock at home that is sensitive to this, it'll search out the signal, and last night if you got up and your clock had already changed its time, it's one of those clocks. I mean, now, and it's, but the bottom line is this: he said two hours, four minutes, coordinated universal time.

Now, let me ask you a question: How many got watches on today? Who's got a watch? You got one? You got one? Put your hand up. You got a watch? Put your hand up. Greg, what time do you have on your watch right there? 11:33. What time do you have? 11:35. What time do you have? 11:32. What time do you have? 11:32. What time do you have, sweetheart? You got it. You got a promise, but you're going to join this church and come back forever. I need you in my sermon. I'll call you on Thursday, tell you the line that you have to say. That's great. Who else? You got one? You got one? What time you got? You didn't change your name. Marci, what time you got? All right, we had 11:30. I'll just go ahead here. What do you got? 33. 33. What do you got, honey? 11:31. We had 11:31, 11:33, 11:35, 11:34, 10:35 over here.

Now, are all of those reliable? No. There's one standard for time in America, and that standard of time is in Greenwich, England. Greenwich, England, sets the time for all the nations of the world. I don't care if you're Chinese, I don't care if you live in the Middle East and you're a Muslim, I don't care if you're a Russian, I don't care if you're South American, Central American, North America, you live out in the Pacific someplace, or you live in Australia, your time zone is set by one standard of time, which is in England. In other words, all of you who have a different time, that's nice, I thank you for your input, but in reality, they're not very reliable because there's only one standard of time. God infused time into our world, and when they find the time out in Greenwich, England, they find it from the Royal Observatory. The Royal Observatory fixed the exact time on the stars, and we know who made the stars now, don't we? Time was infused in our physical world by God. In the military, they call that Zulu time because the military counts the time differently from A to Z, and Greenwich, England, is Z, Zulu time, because of the fact that that is—sometimes it's called GMT, the M being the meridian, because Greenwich, England, is right on the meridian by which they start the time.

So what I'm saying is this: I appreciate everything that everybody had to say, but your time was not very reliable because no matter what you think it is, whatever time you think it is, it's only the time that God has a standard by His standard of time that it really is, and that is based on England. We haven't got into church history yet on Tuesday nights with England. We haven't got there yet, but when we do get to that point down the road a ways, you're going to find why God chose England to be the standard time zone for the time that you and I have for the nations of the

world. May I say this, by the same token, that you have to get English time. Now, I'm an American, I don't appreciate that. I just assumed it'd be American time. I know there's Germans that would appreciate that would be German time. Why not Berlin? Why not Washington D.C.? But the bottom line is, no matter what you and I think about it or what time you really think it is, it's only the time that the absolute standard says that it is.

Now, that's for you and for me in our time world. When it comes to God's time clock, you know what? They have just as many people that say, "Well, I think this verse means this out of the NIV. I think this verse means this out of the ASV. I think this verse means this out of the RSV. I think this means this out of Living Letters or Dead Epistles. I think this means this." The bottom line is, it's the same concept. Just as God has one standard for time in England, God put out His standard of time in the Bible from, guess where? England, in 1611. If you have a King James 1611 Authorized Version out of England in 1611, where God decided to call the time, then with that book, you can know what time it is exactly, and you won't have to depend on everybody else's opinion of what time it is, just like we did with the watches. Shall that thing work now?

Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5:1, he said this, and boy, it was a great statement:

*1 Thessalonians 5:1*

*But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.*

Then God's people should know what time it is in relationship to Christ's coming.

Let me jump ahead here for a second. Let's go back to that verse. Here's what he said, verse 11: "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." Now, that's a confusing verse. I could just see if I don't explain this, I'm going to get some of this on Thursday night. "How in the world can our salvation be nearer than it was when we believed and got saved?"

Now, I gotta ask this one, raise your hand somebody. Whoa, I gotta go over here because this girl over here, she's sharp. Go, you're all sharp, but I want to hear what she said. What is that? Now, you all gonna be offended if I say it ain't right? Okay. I think it's the second coming of Christ he's talking about our salvation in the world. Oh, very good. Now, she said, "Yes, it's the second coming of Christ," and that's not exactly true, but you're close enough, I'm going to give you the bonus. Okay. Now, but tell me somebody what that means. Larry in the back, what is it? Real loud, like you're yelling at your wife. Well, no, no, this was salvation is what? What do we know? We studied this in Romans. We studied in Romans. Yeah, go ahead. Yes, the glorified body. Remember in Romans chapter 8, two adoptions. Right now, you're adopted spiritually the moment you get saved, and that saves your soul, but your body's not yet redeemed. When does your body get redeemed? When Christ comes back at the Rapture of the Church, and that's what he's saying here: the salvation of your body is nearer than when you got saved.

I tell you this, preaching this all the time, you ought to live your life every day that you're one day closer to meeting Him than you were yesterday. You're one step today farther to meet the Lord Jesus Christ than you were yesterday. One step farther this year than you were last year. The question is, are you getting closer to Him, or are you getting more like Him the closer you

get? That's the question. That's the question. And Paul says that of that time and of the seasons. Now, all time goes back to God, and the times and the seasons, the times and the seasons are exactly what he's talking about here because they're always going to be connected with the second coming of Christ. The signs and the seasons, the times and the seasons, they're always connected with Christ coming back for you and for me.

In Romans chapter 8, there are two adoptions. In Romans 8:14-18, it's the redemption of your soul, and in chapter 8:22-23, it's the redemption of your body. Two adoptions: one spiritual, you got it right now, and one physical. One is common, and he says we need to be awake. We need to know what time it is because we are nearer our salvation now than when we believed. Wow, what a great concept.

### III. Awake Out of Sleep

Now, look what he says the next thing he says in verse 11: "knowing the time." If you know the time, if you don't have to rely on all of these people to tell you what time it is, and you call up that number and you get the time based on God's standard, Greenwich, England, based on God's stars to get the exact time, then I don't need anybody else in this world telling me what time it is. If I got God's timepiece down, I know what time it is in America. I know what time it is in America. That's why the urgency of what we're trying to do as a church. I understand where we're at in that concept.

He says, "knowing the time," verse 11, "that now it is high time to awake out of sleep." You know, the church is likened to an army. Jesus Christ is called the Captain of our salvation. The great battles back in the Old Testament, especially in the book of Joshua, but all of them really are pictures of the battles that you and I go through in life, every one of them. In the concept of the church, and how foreign this is today, there are two aspects of the church: there's the church militant and then there's the church triumphant. The church militant will be you and me right now as soldiers of Jesus Christ, and that's why Paul told Timothy to endure hardness, which most Christians cannot do today, to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He's called the Captain of our salvation. We're told in Ephesians chapter 6 that the armor we put on is an armor for warfare.

*Ephesians 6:12*

*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.*

*Ephesians 6:13*

*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.*

What is it? A sword, a helmet, a shield, a breastplate, everything that a soldier would have to fight in the first century. Of course, we now come to the concept of God's army, and sleep in the Bible. We are supposed to be an army of Jesus Christ, the church militant, and when he talks about our salvation being nearer than when we believed, that's the concept of the church

triumphant. That's when you do get your glorified body, and we are to be awake as God's army spiritually and never be asleep.

We are to stand upon a wall. Remember we talked about when we first started our church, and I used this New Year's Eve, I went back to the beginning to lay out where I was going, and I told you that when we started our church, I taught you the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. I told you that the book of Ezra was so important because we needed to learn how to build our spiritual body first, because Ezra is a picture of them rebuilding the temple. Then I took you to Nehemiah, and I told you we got to have a plan as a church. You cannot be a pastor and fly by the seat of your pants, trying to decide what you're going to do. If you ain't five to ten years out, I'm not really yelling because I'm mad. You're looking at me like I'm mad. I'm not really mad. I'm just, I get intense. You're getting tense. You do get intense. Okay. Oh, well. If you don't have a plan for five or ten years out, you're going to get nothing done. That's why I told you Ezra is the book that deals with the building of the temple, but then we got into Nehemiah. I told you that Nehemiah dealt with the building of the wall, and I told you the wall went around the city, and the city is a picture of the church. It's made up of buildings, and every one of you is a building made of God if you're saved this morning. The wall around that was the Bible doctrine that protected that church, and in the Old Testament, they stood there watch on that wall so nobody or nothing came in to destroy the city of God. We're to stand upon our wall of this church, and we're to be on a watch.

*Isaiah 21:6*

*For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.*

*Isaiah 21:11*

*He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?*

You know, in the military, in the army, most of you guys that have been in the army, you know this is true, the hardest time in a war combat situation, the two worst things that any soldier wants to hear—and I talked to you about one a while back—the two worst things that any soldier wants to hear is the one that he's going to be part of a rear guard action. When he hears he's going to be part of a rear guard action, he knows that he's going to die because that basically says that you're going to stay behind or hold off the enemy while everybody else escapes, and you got your platoon picked or your company picked or your battalion picked, no matter how big the mess is, and you're going to stay behind and hold them off and be taken prisoner or die. So 600 men are going to pay the price so 6,000 men can escape. Boy, that's a tough one. That's a tough one.

The second thing a combat soldier hates to hear is, "Hey, Bob Alexander, you got listening post tonight." In a combat zone, here's what happens in a combat zone, and remember now, as Christians, we're in a war, in a combat zone. This is what happens: nighttime is the worst. Nighttime, nobody's going to try to, unless they're just overwhelming in strength, nobody, especially the Orientals, are never going to come on a frontal attack without probing through the night because they know that night is a great ally. Night is a great darkness of night, and is an

incredible—and a listening post is simply this: you got your main body of two, 300 men that are bedded down for the night. They may be bedded down, they're going to try to get as much rest as they can, but they know that they're sleeping on the edge. But 200 yards out on all points of the compass, you know what you do? You dig a foxhole and you put one or two men in a listening post. Normally it's one, and they put that man out there, and that man is, he's 200 yards in a pitch black, and if you ever been in a jungle or you ever been someplace where it's absolutely so dark and black at night that you can't see the hand in front of your face, and you're put out there in a foxhole 200 yards out, this guy's over here, this guy's over here, and one or maybe sometimes two guys behind you, and what you do there is you sit through the night and all night long you sit and you watch and you listen. You can't see squat, but you listen. You listen for the probing enemy to come in. You are the advanced guard in the listening post that you're out there on the perimeter while all the other guys get their rest. Your job is to stay awake and to look and to listen on what's coming your way. Unfortunately, most of those men are found in the morning with their throats cut. Most of them are found gone, that they come in and overwhelm them and they take them prisoner through unspeakable tortures and unspeakable things that the enemy does to them. The reason why they get their throats cut or many times they get taken prisoner is simply one concept: they fell asleep. They fell asleep, and while they slept, the enemy came in because nighttime is the time, and it's an incredible—

When I was in, and most of you guys that were in the same time I was in, you know, we'd always have these little cadences that we, whenever we marched or we ran, and they all have these little songs they'd put to them. Most of them you can't say in public, but you know, I'll never forget, it goes through my head all the time. I don't work out or don't run outside that I'm not thinking in my mind those chants and those things that we used to say when we ran. I don't remember all of this one, but the one part sticks in my mind. It was, it was based to a popular song back then, but I don't remember the song, I didn't know what it was, but it went, it went, it talked about, you know, but it all came down the end, and it was like this: the end of the song, "One day and at night while you're sleeping, Charlie comes a creeping all around." You know why? Nighttime was Charlie's time. Nighttime's always the enemy's time. Nighttime offers the great protection of not being able to see what's out there.

You know as well as I do, nighttime makes many people afraid. Nighttime is a time of sin. John 3:19 says:

*John 3:19*

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

That's nighttime. That's nighttime.

Most of you saw the movie *\*Inglourious Basterds\**, and we all like it because, you know, we like seeing people get scalped, get their heads cut off, and all that stuff, and all the gore that goes on with it. But you know, now I got to tell you that movie was totally fictional. Obviously, nobody ever blew up the German High Command and killed Hitler and ended the war. I mean, it was just fun entertainment. But if you watch at the beginning of that movie, when Brad Pitt is calling

these guys, he's got a field jacket on, and on his field jacket over here, he's got a little arrowhead, little red arrowhead. That is a combat patch for the First Special Service Force. If you looked at it close, it'd have Canada down the middle of it and USA over the top. The First Special Service Force, and they called the SSF, was the beginning of what we know today as the Special Forces. They were a group that was made up of British and Americans, and they were trained to a high degree of combat skills, and they were a very elite unit. He's wearing that patch on his thing. Now, it had no connection with that other than this, and I caught it the moment I saw it. When I saw the rest of the movie, I put it all together. It was the SSF who the Germans were terrified of. The Germans called them the "Black Devils." You know why they called them the Black Devils? Because their greatest operations were at night, and the Germans would put out their listening post, the Germans put out their sentries, and the First Special Service Force guys would go out, maybe eight or nine, ten guys, all night long, and they'd sneak around behind the enemy lines. They'd do it for fun. They'd do it because the movie wasn't any good that night. They'd actually sneak out behind German lines four or five miles and sneak up on sentries, sneak up on their listening post, and they would actually cut their throats, and then they would put a little note on them in German bragging about it was their group that did this and that they were going to get everybody they put out there. Well, can you imagine the fear? You know what their motto was? You know what their motto was? "We own the night." And the Germans were afraid of them. So that is loosely based on that group that actually did that, even though the movie is pretty much what it is.

But it shows you that nighttime makes people afraid. You can look at a bush in the daytime and you see it's a bush. You look at a bush in the middle of the night and you'll swear somebody's standing there. You'll hear noises out there that during the day don't bother you, but at night, every sound is something. You'll hear a deer. I wonder how many in Vietnam, how many caribou were killed because people at night heard a click or somebody step on a branch that snapped, and they thought it was the VC, and they opened up, and many, many times a herd of water buffalo met their God. Nighttime's scary. Nighttime's scary.

The real job of a Christian spiritual leader in every church is to watch and listen and to stay awake so the younger ones can get what they need, and that's why he says, "knowing the time that it is high time to awake out of sleep." Now, as God's people, we need to be awake during our night watch, the Church Age, and we don't need to fall asleep. You see, that was Israel's problem, wasn't it? Remember back in Isaiah, I gave you this when we come through Romans 11:8, and it goes back to Isaiah 29:10, that God said to the nation of Israel:

*Isaiah 29:10*

*For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.*

God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see.

You ever get so tired your eyes just start going down and you can't keep them open and you can't see? The next thing you know, that's how a lot of people wreck their cars, right, Jack? Hey, I've been there. I'm not a good nighttime driver. Boy, I'm not much good at anything. I'm not a good

nighttime driver. I don't have a good body clock, but I just, you know, I drive at night when I get tired, I'm done, man. I better pull over to the side of the road. I don't kid myself in saying I can stay awake. The window winding it down works for a while, but then you got to turn the heat on because the kids are frozen in the back, and you got to thaw them out, then you fall back to sleep again. I'm not good at it. When I'm driving, nothing more I hate, nothing I hate more than driving on a long trip. I hate it. I only do it because I have to, and I hate driving because I just, it's boring, and I just get to that point, and at nighttime it's even worse. There's nothing to look at, there's nothing to see, it's all dark out there, and you get tired, and everybody else sleeps because you're driving, and the next thing you know, your eyes started getting heavy, and the next thing you know, and you said, "What? You think I'm just going to close them for a minute?" And then you know what? When you open up, there's Saint Peter at the gate, and you're saying, "Hey, man, how you doing?" And you look back down, and you just went off the left, the center, went through a semi, killed 28 people, and you're dead.

I'm telling you, that was Israel's problem. They got the spirit of slumber. They couldn't keep their eyes open because of their unbelief. They went to sleep on their watch, and we know what that watch was in the Old Testament. When they slept, Baal came in. Baal worship came in, and all the other nations with their abominations, and in time to destroy the nation of Israel because they fell asleep. You see it again in Matthew chapter 25, don't you? The ten virgins, five were wise and five were foolish. Verse 5 says:

*Matthew 25:5*

*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.*

I think the greatest example that is for you and for me is in Matthew chapter 26, Christ's agony in the garden. The greatest time and the greatest trial of His earthly ministry. No greater time should have all the 12 apostles been on guard, on watch. They were coming to get Him. He had now been betrayed. If there ought to be a red light flashing, red alert, it should have been now. He goes into the garden, and what He says to them in Matthew 26:38:

*Matthew 26:38*

*Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.*

And yet three times in the chapter, in verse 40, verse 43, and verse 45, He comes back, He finds them asleep. I don't have to remind you that the 12 apostles are, and you've heard me say this many, many times, the 12 apostles are a picture of what you and I should be in our life and our relationship to God. I read that story and I see what He was going through. Can you imagine? Did you ever read that passage in there at the agony of the garden? Did you ever analyze what He's absolutely going through in that particular part of His ministry? It's at the end, and just a few hours, they're going to come and take Him, and the next day He's going to be crucified on the cross. When He—there's no greater place in the Bible that shows the humanity and the deity of Christ at the same time. As a man, He's crying out to God to let this cup—and that cup is a cup of God's wrath going to be poured out on Him on the cross—and as a human man, He cries out

for there's any other way to let that cup pass, and then the God-man steps in and He says, "Father, Thy will be done." The agony that it went through. If there's ever a time when God's people need each other, it's when a church or an individual, through no fault of their own, goes through some tremendous agony that they need to be there. Here the Lord Jesus Christ, by the very 12 men who walked with Him, ate with Him, slept with Him, did the miracles, and was part of His ministry, in the hour of His need, when He needed them the most, they went to sleep.

I might say, ladies and gentlemen, and I speak this to myself as much to you today, when God needs us the most, when we ought to be on a watch, sharper and cleaner and clearer than any other time in the history of the world because of where we are at, I might say that today, when God needs us the most, God's people have fallen asleep. Bible Christianity has fallen asleep, and the enemy has infiltrated. I think there's a lot of things to our shame as Christians, and we'll see why that doesn't bother most of God's people here in a little while, but I think the tragedy to our shame today is some of the very groups that we look at and we brand as a cult and we make fun of. I'm thinking of the tragedy of being a Jehovah's Witness. When I look at Jehovah's Witnesses, I too know they're a cult. I too know that anybody that's connected with them from start to finish and believe their doctrines, that wasn't saved before they got in, couldn't die and go to hell. I too carry that weight, a burden, and see that. Then I also understand that they are some of the hardest people to work to win to Christ anywhere in the world. You don't learn to win them to Christ by going and getting books. You learn to win them to Christ by getting in and finding out what they believe, much like we did with the Church of Christ. But yet, I gotta say something for you and to me: every day of their lives, they're out knocking on doors. Every day in their life, it'd be hard to find a hundred streets on any particular day in Kansas City where two or four weren't working it. They may be working it for the devil, but they're working it. They may be totally wrong in their doctrine, but they're doing what they think is right to do. You know what? They got some part of it right because they call their organization, in the very paper they put out, they call it "Watchtower." We make fun of them because of their Watchtower when we won't even stand our watch on the tower that God has given us, to our shame, to our shame, to our shame, to our shame. And we got the guts to call them a cult for the Christians.

I don't know if you know this or not, Paul in his writings three times he tells God's people to wake up. Do you ever see it? Now, if you ever want a little outline for even a devotion, I mean, this is great, but if you want a sermon, this is a great sermon. The first time he says it is in 1 Corinthians 15:34, and he says there:

*1 Corinthians 15:34*

*Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.*

You see, this one here's a wake-up call for the lost people around you. This is the hard reality for God's people. I've been around God's people all my life, as most of you older Christians have been, and many of you have been with me for years and years and years, and you know this is true: it's never ceased to amaze me how God's people can think they're so spiritual, but yet they never have any burden for lost people, never, never at all, never at all. It's a hard reality. We think

that we're spiritual, but the truth of the matter is, the Bible says, "By their fruit ye shall know them."

I think every child of God—I read a book, and I don't, I read a lot of secular books just to keep myself up to speed on things, but I'll tell you one book, secular book, and I wouldn't recommend a lot of secular books that I read to a lot of God's people because I wouldn't want to mess you up because some of them look pretty convincing unless you really know your Bible. But I'll tell you one book every child of God ought to go out this afternoon and buy, and that is a book that probably most of you read in high school: \*The Emperor's New Clothes\*. Remember that one? Remember how the emperor got fooled into thinking that he had the most beautiful clothes on that he ever had, when he out, he was naked, and everybody was afraid to tell the emperor that he was naked, and he was as naked as a jaybird walking around because somebody had told him that he had great clothes on, and this royal apparel was the best in the world, and he was so caught up in himself and so caught up in him being the king and so caught up in him being who he was that he could not even see that he was naked himself, and the people around him, because they feared him, would not come to him and say, "Hey, pal, I got news for you, you're naked, and you're pretty ugly when you're naked, so put some clothes on." No, it took a little child. It took a little child who blurted out in the middle of a great procession, "Ain't the king naked?" Reality.

I've been around God's people all of my life. I've seen them all of my life who come to the place where they think that at the Judgment Seat of Christ, they're going to be clothed beyond imaginable, and yet they're going to be naked. Paul says, "I speak this to your shame." Do you see what that verse is saying? It's basically saying not bringing people to Christ is a sin.

A couple of weeks ago, I threw out a little baited hook. I do this a lot. Sometimes I'll throw something out just to see who responds to it. That's another way you can find out who's really on target and who's not. I'll say things sometimes and just throw them out there, and a couple of weeks ago, and something I was saying, we were talking about winning people to Christ, and I brought up the fact that there's a prayer in the Bible that if you have a dry period in your life where you're not winning people to Christ, there's a prayer in the Bible that you can go to and get a hold of God, and it's a, there's an illustration in the story of the Bible of somebody else who was barren in their life of bearing fruit, and the prayer that they prayed to God was the ultimate thing that God used in their life to—and let's face it, everybody goes through dry spells. I'm not one of these guys that think that you need to win every person you meet to Christ. I mean, you can go, I've books, and I've known preachers get out there and tell you that if you're not winning every person to Christ that you meet, there's something wrong with you. I don't believe that. I don't. I don't win every person I meet to the Lord, and every Christian goes through dry spells in their life where they get, they get, and the reason why that is because most of God's people never really understand what it takes to be an active soul winner and be used of God anyhow. So we all have dry spells in our lives.

You know, somebody said, "Well, I won, I won people to Christ in my life." You know what? Even a broken watch is right twice a day. I mean, you just run into it sometimes. But there's some things that need to be in a person's life, and we're not going to go through all of those things today, but I threw out a baited hook about four or five weeks ago about laying out of what was

the prayer that if you're going through a dry period in your life—and I'm not talking to you younger Christians, you people who just gotten saved, I'm talking about people like myself, people that, that you've been here three or four years now, you know what's going on—and it's a situation where I threw that little thing out, and you know what? I did it just to see what the response would be. Out of three people, three people came to me and said, "I can't hold three up." Three people came to me and said, "What's that prayer?" For everybody else, it's just either, "I don't care," or, you know, no amens on this, please, and I'm serious, just look at me, take what I'm saying, and no amens.

I'm not a very good athlete. I didn't say you couldn't laugh, I just said you couldn't say amen. I never have been. Athletics is not my deal. Oh, I play softball fairly well. The only thing that makes me a good softball player is I have an ability to own whatever corner of the plate and pitching, and I want, I can drop that sucker like a mortar crew dropping an 80 millimeter mortar on a target, but that's where it's at. Football, I'm fairly terrible at basketball. When I was in the seventh grade, I was a real jerk. I was an idiot. The coach back then, in my great elementary school, put out a thing that he was putting together some basketball teams, and I'm thinking to myself, "Boy, I'm a good bad, I'll go down and sign up for that because I really, I really am a good basketball player." So we worked out there, and a couple of mornings, you know, we had to go there before school real early, you know, and the gym had a bunch of guys, and you know how I'm all lined up and they say, "Okay, you go down and do this and dribble this and do," trying to find out who was what. I was the biggest idiot in the world. When we had scrimmages down there between guys, I was doing every hot dog stupid thing that you could think of, and I'm, you know, I was throwing layups from over here, you know, and shooting half court and doing these things, you know. Finally, after about 45 minutes of it, the coach blew the whistle, and he says, "Alexander," he says, "Come here." Now, in my mind, I'm thinking that this guy has now seen my incredible abilities of being a basketball star, Bubba, much like yourself, and I'm thinking that I have shined and stood out more than anybody else in the court, and he obviously wants me to be a captain on the team. And I walk up to him, and I said, and you got to remember the coach back in those days, the coaches were coaches, much like Kyle's dad. Where's Kyle at? Kyle's here someplace. He's with the baby. Yeah, his dad's a basketball coach. I mean, you just short hair, he just looks at, he's the coach. I mean, he's an old style coach, you know, there ain't many old style coaches. My favorite old style coach was Woody Hayes. Most of you don't even know Woody Hayes. Remember Woody Hayes? Well, what do you know? You remember John Woody Hayes? Yes, sir. Ohio State. Woody Hayes was my kind of guy. You know why he quit coaching? He got thrown out because he slapped some guy up along the head in his own team because he wouldn't do what was right. See, I don't have a problem with that. I think he should have been fired for not taking a helmet off then slapping him. He was an old-time coach. And back to the old-time coach, you guys have been in school, some of your teachers, you know, you know that back in the old days, and that's older people growing up, I mean, the coaches were coaches. I mean, and they didn't take anything from me. So he calls me over, "Alexander, come here." And I walk over there, you know, and I'm, I'm walking over, you know, I'm, I'm way before the times did his thing. I'm walking on like this, you know, everybody else is standing up and lying, and out of his eyes up in the air in front of everybody, he looks down at me, he says, "Can I ask you a question?" I said, "Yes, sir, coach." I thought he was going to ask me about my,

my, what is it, three two or four two or zone thing, I don't know. He looks at me, he says, "Can I ask you a question, Alexander?" I say, "Yes, sir." He says, "Don't you ever get tired being a jerk in front of everybody?" But everybody. Now, if you do that today, you get sued. Okay. You know what I said? That when I said, I thought, I didn't know what to say, and then I thought for a minute, and I said, "Yes, sir, I get tired being a jerk. I am a jerk." I never forgotten that in my life. Never have. It took something of that magnitude to bring me back to reality, and I realized I was a jerk.

Let me ask you a question: Don't you ever get tired, five years, ten years, six years, don't you ever get tired never winning anybody to Christ? Not going to bother you that you can go year after year after year, know what you know, and for some reason you just never hook up to winning somebody to Christ? I know, I know we have our excuses. I had mine when I was in the seventh grade. "Well, you don't know my circumstances." I have never known winning somebody to Christ ever having to do a name with where you work or your circumstances where you work. We come up with every excuse on the planet, and yet the reality of it is, he said, he said, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: and I speak this to your shame."

I'll tell you, I know what it is in my life. I do. I, and I watch this, and I watch this all of my life, all of my life, all of my life. The older we get, the less flexible we become. That's true of me. The more we get, the more we don't like change. The older we get, the more settled we become in the way we are, and if there's anybody who can never get to the point where you get set in your ways and unflexible, it's a child of God because God is always moving. God is always changing things. God always wants us to be adaptable. God wants us to be able to take in any situation, whatever it is, and when we get, the older we get, the less flexible we become, and we don't want to have our comfort level disturbed, and you know what happens? We fall into a sleep from which we do not want to wake up.

Those of you that have dogs, what's the best advice you could give somebody if you have an old dog, eight or nine years old, and you want to get his pep back in and you want to get him start acting like a younger dog, even though maybe he's an old dog? Raise your hand. I don't, everybody's mumbling. Yeah, Jan, what is it? Get a puppy. Get a puppy. That what you're going to say? Get a puppy. Yeah, the younger, the younger, the younger, the younger puppy will bring that back youth out of that old dog because the younger puppy will force him to not just lay around and sleep. He'll rekindle the old fire that he once had as a puppy. He'll see himself in that puppy. I, yeah, I don't know what they see, that's probably a bad statement. I just know my dogs have watches and they know when it's time to eat and they know when it's time to go out, whether they sit around and say, "Boy, I really feel old today. We had a puppy around here, I'd really find myself." I don't know that's true or not, but I want to say this, that's a great analogy, and I'll tell you why that now it is us older Christians, you know how you don't ever get to the place where you fall asleep? Fall asleep, stay with the young pups. Stay with the young people that are on fire. You stay involved. I watch you guys, I watch you guys, I watch you older guys and you women involved with the younger kids in this church, and that's why some of you don't go stale. Now, obviously, not all you can play volleyball. You got bad knees, you got bad hips,

you got bad backs, all of those things, those are legitimate things, but that doesn't mean you have to be out there on the court. The older men and women in any church and any ministry, if they're not actively involved with the younger pups that are coming up, you're going to fall into the trap where you get old, complacent, indifferent, and fall asleep. Something has to keep all of us, and it's the focus of where we're at and what we're doing with the younger people that are coming in.

I've got a young couple coming in this week, coming in Wednesday night at seven o'clock, and I want you to put them on their prayer list. They are a young couple that's coming over to see me who got some marital problems. I had a couple two weeks ago that came over to see me, and they're now part of this church. They're playing volleyball. I got a couple working with them, and they're actively involved now, and they're moving along in their marriage and getting the things that they need. I got, I got another scenario coming up this week. You know how I got this scenario? This is what I'm talking about. I got this scenario because another couple in our church, who both of them have only been saved for about six months, they don't know all that we know about the Bible, trying to learn it all, but they do know this: they know what God has done in their life, and they want God to do in another's life. So the greatest form of soul winning, when you don't know how to win somebody to Christ on your own, is to tell them, "You know what? This is what happened to me and my husband. This is where we were, and this is where we went, and somebody got us to this guy, and he laid it out for us. We got saved, and we're going now to that church. We're learning the Bible, and our marriage is well on the way." And that woman said to her, "That's exactly what I need in our life." And she called me, and they're coming over Wednesday night at seven o'clock, and I believe from the little conversation I have that both of them are probably lost. God will use anybody who wants to be used, but God won't use us when we fall asleep. God won't use us when we get indifferent. God won't use us when we get to the point in our lives where we just, we know what, we just don't want to change. We don't like the way things are here. I'm going to, I don't want, don't wake me up. Don't, don't, you know, it's just one of those things where it just, it just, it will not happen that way.

Then the second thing that Paul says is found in Ephesians 5, and he says here:

*Ephesians 5:14*

*Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

Getting the light of the Word of God here in the wake-up call Sunday morning, Thursday night, and all the things that we do, he says, "Wake up, it's high time to wake out of sleep." He says, "Arise from the dead." Dead sleep. Somebody says, "How'd you sleep last night?" "Oh, man, I died." That's the kind of sleep I'm talking about. Listen, some of God's people have been asleep for so many years that they're now dead to anything spiritually that God has for them. Boy, that is so true. That is so true.

You know why God's people don't like hard preaching in churches across the country? You know why the preachers don't preach like they used to? You know why preachers don't get up and just lay it out the way it is and let the chips fall where they may, and when it's right, it's right, and it's wrong, it's wrong? If you don't like it, go pound sand someplace that you preach the Word of

God and the truth. You know why? Because people today in churches don't like to be woken up. You ever try to wake somebody up from a deep sleep? They didn't want to be woken up. I mean, it doesn't work. It just doesn't work. Doesn't work. Doesn't work. I mean, it's the same reason that we don't appreciate being awakened from a real sound sleep and spiritually.

Of course, you know what happens when you dream? When you sleep, you have dreams. Now, the definitive chapter on dreams in the Bible is in Job chapter 33, and we surely don't have time to go into today, but it tells you why dreams are and it tells you what sleep really is from God's standpoint. That's the definitive passage on it. Now, I don't dream very much. If I go to bed right and I don't eat a lot before I go to bed, I have a pretty dreamless night. My dreams always come in after I eat a lot before I go to bed, which I try not to do, but I'm sorry, I do, and my nine pieces of anchovy pepperoni pizza turn into Freddy Krueger chasing me down the street. Would you ever notice how dreams, when we sleep, many times we dream? You know, dreams actually are just very short periods of time. That's why we all have this, you dream and you dream the alarm clock is going off, then you hear the alarm clock. Well, in reality, you didn't. The dream is so short and so connected that you really, it's the alarm clock going off and your mind just playing a trick story. I mean, that's how it works. That's how it works. We all have a dream where somebody's chasing us and we're shooting them and it won't stop them.

The worst dream I ever had is, and I, the worst dream I ever had, I dreamed I fell off a cliff. I mean, you know, if you, I was up 20, 30,000 feet, you know, and it was a terrible dream. I mean, it was almost like, in fact, it was so real, I fell off this cliff, and I'm, I'm, I'm on my face in the bed, and I'm, I'm, I'm dreaming I'm trying to hang on to the cliff, and I'm digging my feet in, I'm digging my, my fingers in, and I actually ripped a toenail off in bed. Oh, no, it wasn't bad. I mean, how many guys, you know, fell 25,000 feet and only lost a toenail? I mean, but it was real to me. It was real. I was, I was absolutely thought to myself, "I'm falling into fear," and I woke up. I woke up, and you know, and that's when, you know, we had, we had a big German Shepherd back then, his name was, uh, Fritz was her name, and she, she was the best German Shepherd. She slept with us, and I'll tell you, she, I looked over and there's a big black nose in my face, you know, saying, "What's wrong with you?"

The only other dream I had, did have one time, was I dreamed I had a heart attack, and I was laying there in bed, and I, you know, I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm sleeping, and all of a sudden I got this weight on my chest, and I'm just, I'm dying, and I can't move, restricted, just like I've always read about heart attacks, and I can't breathe, and I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm trying to cry out, and I can't, and I, and I finally opened my eyes, and I, and I said, "I'm having a heart attack," and I want, "I can't move my arms." This is what they say when you're having a stroke. "I'm too young to die, you know, I'm gonna die in bed, nobody's gonna know, it's dark." And I, and all that time, all of a sudden I stopped down, and right about two inches, pitch black, I heard this. That dog was laying on my chest with her face down in my face, and I was dreaming I had a heart attack. That was a hundred pound dog laying on my chest. Sleep comes with dreams, and in the dream world of Christianity, when we fall asleep, we dream we're doing what's right when we're not.

Then there's the last one, and that's here in Romans 13:11: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep." Romans 13:11 says Paul here telling God's people to wake

up. The Rapture, the salvation of your body, is near. Some people are asleep to the aspect of people going to hell all around them. Some people are asleep. Some husbands are asleep in dealing with their own wives in their situation they're in till it's too late. Some wives are asleep in dealing with their own husbands till it's too late. Some parents fall asleep and never wake up with what their kids are at and what their kids are doing till it's too late. Some people are asleep as to the Bible in their own personal life, and they just go from one bad situation to another.

Every bit like I said, ever try to get somebody up who just won't get up? Typical Sunday morning across America with parents and their kids. Parents get up, usually the wife gets up, the husband doesn't. The wife says, "Come on, honey, it's time to get up for church." "You know, I don't want to get up." "Come on, honey, come on, it's time to get up for church." He drags out. Kids are in their room. You'll walk in and say, "Come on, guys, time for church." I mean, nothing there. You out. You start to get ready. Walk back in. "Come on, now, it's time to get up for church." Nothing. Third or fourth time, "Hey, come on now, we're getting late, we got to get on, come on, get up." They will look at you and say, "Oh, Mom, we're really tired. Dad, we're really tired." "Come on, we got to get up, we got to go to church. Let's go, let's get going, let's get going. Come on, come on, come on, come on." You finally getting ready to leave, they're still in bed. They haven't done a thing yet, and you walk in and say, "We're leaving." Like that's going to help them now. "Oh, yeah, we're leaving." Then you get to church, and you know what you do? You call them on the phone and says, "Are you up yet?"

In the Marine Corps, in basic training, the clock went off at "old dark 30," that's 4:30 in the morning. You were required, you were required, you were required when the light came on to be standing at attention at the end of your bed, not two seconds after it came on. When the light came on, and there were guys that were so paranoid that they woke each other up at quarter till just so they could stay awake the last 15 minutes when they heard the drill sergeant come in, that when the light came on, they were standing up. It's called discipline. That's what God's people ought to have. It's exactly what God's people ought to have. The wake-up call for the child of God to wake up out of your stupor and find out what God wants you to do before it's too late because then it's over. I actually believe, I actually believe the Judgment Seat of Christ is going to be the great reality. Paul told us three times to wake up, and the greatest wake-up call is going to be, "Are we an army or what?"

When I was in the army, didn't have buglers anymore. They played it through a PA system, and at 4:30 in the morning, you got the, you got the reveille to get up, and you could have stayed up all night long. You could have been out drinking or boozing or carousing, whatever you wanted to do, but at 4:30, whether you were ready or not, the bugle went off, the trumpet sounded, and you had to get up and you had to face the reality of the next day, whatever condition you're in. Christianity is an army, and I'm telling you, God's people fall asleep and stay asleep until the great trumpet blows the reveille, and you have to stand in formation in whatever condition you have spent the night through, and that's where it's at. That's where it's at. God's people have lost their perspective, they've lost their passion, they've lost their purpose. They're living in a dream world right up to when that trumpet sounds. What a day that's going to be.

## IV. Night and Day in Scripture

Then the last part of this thing we're going to look at here very quickly is this, and we're going to stop here today and we'll finish it next week, but he says this: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." There's two aspects here we want to talk about. We want to talk about the night being far spent, day and night, how that thing works in a contrast. Now, in your Bible, nighttime will always be the Church Age in most scenarios.

*1 Thessalonians 5:2-8*

*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.*

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," John 8:12. Then He turned around and said in Matthew 5:14 that you and I are the light of the world. What is He talking about? You see this great reality found over there and laid out in Romans chapter 1, a very familiar passage that we've talked about many, many times, how the invisible things of Him from the creation are clearly seen and understood, the things that God made. Well, all the way back in Genesis 1:16, God made two great lights: the sun and the moon.

*Genesis 1:16*

*And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.*

The sun is the ruler of the day, that'll make the sun a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, Malachi 4:2, and the day that He's talking about is the day Christ comes back and rules, and there's no more nighttime. The moon now is made to rule the night. Two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, the lesser light to rule the night. Job 25:5 says that's you and me as Christians, and we are, Christ is the light of the world, but when Christ went back to heaven and the nighttime of Christianity comes in, now you and I are the light. How are you the light? You reflect the light of the Lord Jesus Christ into your life, into a dark world. You're like the moon. You're like the moon.

*2 Peter 1:18-19*

*And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

*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.*

There it is, the Rapture of the Church. You and I right now are supposed to be the light of the night, the moon which reflects the light of the sun to a world in darkness.

Now, I don't have time to get into this this morning, but let me tell you a great study. You want to take some time that it will probably be a dead end street for you because it is for me. It's Ecclesiastes chapter 3. Don't even bother going back there now, I'm just going to tell you about this. In Ecclesiastes chapter 3, you have 28 things that are relevant to time: time to be born, time to die, time to, time to this, time to that, time to do this, time to do that, 28 things. Now, the interesting thing about that is that those things are connected with the times and the seasons, and you're going to find that when you go back through there, you're going to find that these things are connected with the times and the seasons, and one of the things that you have is the moon. The moon. When you come down through there, he says 28 things. 28 days is the time of the moon revolving around planet Earth. It's also the time of the Earth's rotation, so the two stay one and one, 28, 28 days. Ecclesiastes chapter 3 with time, 28 things.

You know why? I'll tell you why. Because that moon's a picture of what you and I should be. Somebody tell me, somebody, let me ask you a question. What is a, what is a, what is a waxing moon? Somebody raise your hand and tell me what's a waxing moon? Anybody know? What is a waxing moon? Larger and brighter, right? What is a waning moon? What is a waning moon? Anybody know what a waning moon is? Yes, ma'am. And then what happens when it gets to the end of the moon, the waning phase? What's the next day that happens? A what? A what? A new moon. Somebody, what's a new moon? What is a new moon? No light. What is a new moon? Huh? No, no, what is a new moon? I'm looking for one. What is a new moon? No moon. There's no moon out of the new moon.

Do you know what you've got in 28 days that represent the time? And in that thing, it says, "A time to be born, a time to die, a time to marry, a time to build, a time to tear down, a time to plant, a time to sow, a time to this, a time to that." 28 issues of life found in an orbit of the moon around the sun, which makes up the time that you and I, that makes up the times and the seasons, and the moon, which reflects the light of the sun, a picture of you and me, is a picture of you and I going through those phases. You ought to be, ladies and gentlemen, a full moon tonight, today. Your light ought to be fully going out to this lost and dark world. You ought to be a full moon. You ought to be a full moon where the light of God is going out wherever you go. That is the key to winning people to Christ: not what you know, not what you say, how much of God's light is illuminated through you. You know what? In that waxing moon, it goes through phases, doesn't it? Yes, it does. It goes through phases. It starts out with just a little, it starts out with just a little sliver, then the next night it gets a little more of a sliver, then the next night we come to what we call first quarter, then we come a couple more nights, and then we come to third quarter, and then we come a few more nights, and then we come to a full moon. Everybody in this room is somewhere in that process. Some of you are just a little sliver. Some of you are already up to first

quarter. Every night a little bit more light of the moon shines on this planet, and in your life as you grow spiritually, every day a little more of God's light out of stroke through in this planet until you come to the place that you now are a full moon.

Ah, but then what does the antithesis to that, the waning moon? Some of God's people were once full moons, but just as the process that got them there to bring them to the point where they were showing God's light, now a process has entered into their world to take away that light, and in the waning moon, it's full and it's not so full, then it's less full, then we get less full, then we get to the three-quarter phase on the other side, three-quarter phase on the other side where it's getting less light, and then final phase, last quarter, and then pretty soon it comes right up until there's no light. You can take two applications so that it shows you the process of you building your life from one new moon when you first got saved up to becoming a full moon, and then it shows you the process by which some of God's people start to lose their light and go back to the darkness of a no moon, and that it also takes that whole concept in your life and shows you that from one point to the other, there's coming a time, and this is what Paul's talking about here, there's coming a time when there'll be no more moon. You know why? Because that moon's going to be raptured out. Oh, you talk about the incredible aspect of what's going on in the phases in the book of Ecclesiastes chapter 3, the 28 things of life that are called time that build you and me as a child of God to being a full moon in the light of the darkness where to shine. He made two great lights: the lesser light to rule the day, or the greater light to rule the day, the lesser light to rule the night.

## V. The Day of the Lord and the Day of Christ

Then the last thing he says in verse 12: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." There's two days in your Bible that your whole Bible is built around. The first one deals with Israel at the Second Coming of Christ, and that'll be the Day of the Lord. The second one will be for you and for me, and this is the one that Paul's referring to here, that'll be the Day of Jesus Christ, that's the Rapture of the Church. That day will be relegated to God's day. The Day of the Lord, you'll find it over 800 times in the Old Testament. The Day of Jesus Christ or the Day of Christ, you'll find in the New Testament.

*1 Corinthians 1:8*

*Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 5:5*

*To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

*Philippians 1:6*

*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

That'll be the Rapture.

*Philippians 1:10*

*That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;*

*Philippians 2:16*

*Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

*2 Thessalonians 2:2*

*That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.*

The Day of Christ will always be our day, the Rapture of the Church. The Day of the Lord will always be God's day, Second Coming of Christ. We're to look forward to both days, but we're to especially look forward to the day when we stand before the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's wake-up call to the church, and this is why he does what he does before he gets into chapter 14 and 15, he's telling us to wake up. He's telling us the time is at hand. The day of our salvation is nearer now than when you got saved, and we as God's people need to understand where we are at. We need to wake up to lost people that are around us. We need to wake up to the job that God has saved you for, and most importantly of all, what he focuses on in the last chapter we're looking at in 13 and the passages, we need to wake up to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

You know what? I believe 2 Corinthians chapter 5 talked about the Judgment Seat of Christ being the terror of the Lord. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 that everything that God's people do are going to be put up against the Word of God, and everything's going to be tried by fire. That's going to be the wake-up call, the final wake-up call. There will be no more snooze alarms. There won't be going to hear a message preached and God ring your bell and set the alarm off and you just reach over and put the snooze on for another 10 minutes, another 10 years, another five years, another two years. No, no, no. When the trumpet sounds and we stand before God, the wake-up call and the reality is going to be at that moment that you are going to get the slumber and the sleep out of your eyes. The reality of what God saved you for and called you to do is now going to come full force in your face, and I'm guaranteeing you there will be God's people that will stand there in that day that let every circumstance, other people, spouses, husbands, wives, kids, whatever the situation, everything they did got in the way of the single most important thing they were supposed to do, and that is stand their watch.

I guarantee you, I guarantee you at that day there will be God's people begging, begging, weeping, begging and weeping to God for just five minutes to go back to planet and to now with the revelation and the knowledge that they now have because reality has said it and they woke up, to go back and just ask for five minutes, two minutes, one minute, 30 seconds to do something for You that I don't have to stand here with nothing in my hand. But it's too late. The moon has come through its phases, and now the moon is gone, and the great sleep that we were

in as God's people and churches are in today of getting involved in everything else except what is really important and putting up with stuff that halts the work of God and putting all kinds of garbage into everything that's going on is now over with, and now the trumpet has sounded, reveille has sounded, and we as God's army are standing before our Commander in Chief, and we now are going to give an account of what we did when we were here, and boy, for some people it's going to be a wake-up. It's going to be a wake-up.

Father,