

## The Christian's Relationship to His Lord's Return

*Romans 13:11-14*

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Introduction: If you have ever stayed in a motel or hotel, you've probably noticed that they provide what is called a "wake-up service." You simply call the main desk & request that they call you at a particular time the next morning to wake you up. Paul uses the analogy of waking physically to the need of awaking spiritually. As we begin 2023, it is imperative that we have our spiritual eyes open wide. Here in Romans 13:11 is the exhortation to awake out of the sleep of spiritual **indolence** (laziness); hence, to awake to one's own condition. In I Corinthians 15:34 Paul commands, "*Awake to righteousness & sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.*" Paul warns of the sleep of spiritual **indifference** (apathy); hence, the need to awake to the condition of others. And then in I Thessalonians 5:9 Paul writes, "*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch & be sober.*" He is warning of the sleep of spiritual **inattention** (or slumber); the need is to awake to the condition of our day. Here in our text Paul gives us as believers our own personal "wake-up call." Note with me that in response to the soon return of our Lord, we need to be spiritually awake, spiritually aware, & spiritually armored.

### I. We need to be spiritually **awake** (:11) [We are to **wake up!**]

#### A. The nature of our *sleep*:

1. An insensitivity to sin? (spiritual laziness).
2. An unresponsiveness to spiritual things? (spiritual apathy).

#### B. The need to be *awake*:

1. The Lord's coming is near:
  - a. I Corinthians 15:51-58.
  - b. I Thessalonians 4:13-18.
2. The believer's death is near:
  - a. Proverbs 27:1.
  - b. Hebrews 9:27.

Note: "*Our salvation nearer...*" – our future redemption (glorification or final sanctification) is meant here; see Romans 8:23, "*the redemption of our body*" (see also I Peter 1:5, Heb. 9:28).

Application: Are you spiritually **awake**?

### II. We need to be spiritually **aware** (:12a)

#### A. The increased *darkness* > "*The night is far spent...the works of darkness.*"

1. The signs of the time – II Timothy 3:1-5.
2. The symbol of darkness – speaks of man's depravity & Satan's domain (John 3:19).

#### B. The incoming *light* > "*The day is at hand.*"

1. Christ's return & reign (James 5:8, "...*the Judge standeth before the door*").
2. Light is the symbol of knowledge, purity, & happiness.

Application: Are you spiritually **aware**?

### III. We need to be spiritually **armored** (:12b-14)

#### A. Put off (:12b-13) [We are to **clean up!**]

[Those things which are inconsistent with walking “*honestly*” – properly, becomingly, rightly]

1. Sins of intemperance (those not controlled):
  - a. “*Rioting*” – reveling, carousing, revelry (wild parties, brawls, riots; Gal. 5:21; I Pet. 4:3)
  - b. “*Drunkenness*” – drunken bouts (other addictions today?)[In contrast, there is our need for sobriety.]
2. Sins of impurity (those not clean):
  - a. “*Chambering*” – debauchery, immorality, lewdness (from the word for “bed”).
  - b. “*Wantonness*” – vice, licentiousness, lust.[In contrast, there is our need for purity.]
3. Sins of intolerance (those not content):
  - a. “*Strife*” – division.
  - b. “*Envy*” – jealousy.[In contrast, there is our need for civility or charity.]

Application: Unnecessary warnings for believers? Unfortunately we still possess a sinful nature. See I Corinthians 10:12-13. Illustrate: Email to Rand Hummel.

#### B. Put on (:12b & 14) [We are to **dress up!**]

1. The armor of light (:12)
  - a. The armor of righteousness – II Corinthians 6:4 & 7 (practical righteousness).
  - b. The armor of God – Ephesians 6:11-17.
2. The Person of Christ (:14)
  - a. Knowing Him as the Sovereign – “*Lord.*”
  - b. Knowing Him as the Savior – “*Jesus.*”
  - c. Knowing Him as the “Sent One” – “*Christ.*”

Note: We are already clothed with Christ (Col. 3:3 & Gal. 3:27), but we are still commanded to put on Christ. This entails the process of conformity to Christ (II Cor. 3:18).

#### C. Provide not (:14)

[“*provision*” – planning ahead, forethought, thinking long on wrong ideas, wicked lusts – “Do not indulge the desires of your corrupt nature”]

1. Avoid the picture (“*appearance*”) of evil – I Thessalonians 5:22.
2. Avoid the places of evil – Psalm 1:1.
3. Avoid the people of evil – I Corinthians 15:33.
4. Avoid the powers of evil – II Corinthians 10:5.

Application: Are you spiritually armed?

**Conclusion:** In light of Christ’s coming, are you spiritually **awake**? If you are not saved, heed Paul’s exhortation in Ephesians 5:14, “*Awake thou that sleepest, & arise from the dead, & Christ shall give thee light.*” For those who are saved, we must realize that the Lord’s coming is near & that the day of our home-going could be at any time. Are you spiritually **aware**? There is increasing darkness in our day. But there is also the hope of the incoming light, the return of Christ. Are you ready to meet Him? Are you spiritually **armored**? Have you cast off the sins of intemperance, impurity, & intolerance? Have you put on the armor of light & the person of Christ? Do you know Him as your Sovereign, your Savior, & as the Sent One of God? Be sure to make no provision for the flesh, do not indulge its lusts & cravings. By God’s grace, might we all wake up, clean up, & dress up! In the words of the song writer, “Will Jesus find us watching?”