

112. The Book of Romans 13:11-14

Part 2

Paul's Epistle to the Romans

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(1-21-26)

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Romans 13:11–14 (NKJV)

¹¹ And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* 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*.

This has to be one of the most critical times in our nation's history, both politically and spiritually—and yet far too many Christians are sleeping instead of watching and praying.

Paul the Apostle admonished the Thessalonian Christians along these lines when he said—

1 Thessalonians 5:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober...

The implication is that just because we are believers in Jesus Christ and have come out of darkness into His marvelous light—doesn't mean that we can't fall asleep in the light! In fact, he goes on to tell us in Romans 13 that many have in fact gone to sleep in their relationship with God and are no longer being vigilant in looking for Jesus' return.

I'd like to spend our time tonight looking at these last few verses of Romans 13 and how Paul built his comments around several vital admonitions:

1. ***“Wise up”***
2. ***“Wake up”***
3. ***“Look up”***
4. ***“Dress up”***
5. ***“Clean up”; and***
6. ***“Grow up”***

On to our first admonition:

1. **“Wise up”—verse 11a**

Romans 13:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ And *do* this, knowing the time...

Paul's sense of urgency is stressed by the word "**time**" in his opening phrase: "**And do this, knowing the time...**"

There are 2 Greek words that Paul could have used here for '**time**'—*chronos* or *kairos*.

- *Chronos* denotes *chronological* time—as measured in days, months and years—*calendar* time.
- *Kairos* speaks of the *quality* or *kind* of time—sometimes translated '*opportunities*' in the New Testament—

Galatians 6:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Here in Romans 13:11 Paul uses *kairos*, "**And this do, knowing the kind of time it is....**"

What kind of time does Paul have in mind in verse 11?

He's talking about *last days'* time—as in his exhortation to Timothy: "*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come...*" (2 Timothy 3:1)

Paul was telling his readers, that we are living in the last days and so the time has come to be vigilant. Vigilance is based on *awareness*—if we're not aware of the times, we're not going to be watching or vigilant in our walk with God.

As we said last week, the only way for us to know (understand) the times we are living in that point to the soon return of Jesus Christ is to know prophecy. Many Christians seem willfully ignorant (or amazingly indifferent) to the over 500 prophecies God has given us in His Word that point to Jesus' second coming—which means His coming is going to take them by surprise.

In that regard they are being foolish, so Paul is essentially telling them—wise up!

2. "Wake up"—verse 11b

Romans 13:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep...

If Paul could say those words two-thousand years ago—how much closer is our salvation today (speaking of the Rapture of the Church)?!

Mark 13:35-36 (NKJV)

³⁵ Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming--in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning-- ³⁶ lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 (NKJV)

¹ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at

night.⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

J. Vernon McGee—

In this closing section an alarm clock goes off to waken believers who have gone to sleep in the world and have forgotten this added incentive for yielding their total personalities to God. My friend, this is not the time for the child of God to live for the things of this world. I think many a rich Christian is going to be embarrassed when the Lord comes. [It matters not] how big your bank account will be, my friend—are you using your time and what you possess for God?"

3. "Look up"—verse 11b

Romans 13:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; **for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.**

One pastor put it well—

"We ought to be like the little boy whose family grandfather clock malfunctioned and struck fifteen times, so that he rushed wide-eyed to his mother crying, "Mommy, it's later than it's ever been before!" What sanctifying logic! We should also keep in mind that if Christ does not return in our time, he will certainly come individually for us in death. Each ache, each pain, each gray hair, each new wrinkle, each funeral is a reminder that it is later than it has ever been before."

Luke 21:28, 34-36 (NKJV)

²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near..."

³⁴ "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

In that regard, Paul admonished us in Colossians 3:

Colossians 3:1-2 (NLT)

¹ Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand.² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

The idea here is to have the proper perspective of life.

Ephesians 2:4-6 (NLT)

⁴ But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much,⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

Perspective is everything—

- *The psychologist says, "Look in";*
- *The opportunist says, "Look around";*
- *The optimist says, "Look ahead";*
- *The pessimist says, "Look out";*
- *But God says, "Look up!"*

The problem with the majority of Christians in America is that they're not looking up—their perspective is not heavenly or eternal and so they're laying up treasures on the earth instead of in heaven. That's why Paul admonished us to *"set our minds on things above, not on things on the earth."*

A person positioned and living in the Penthouse of a skyscraper has a whole different perspective of things than does the person living on the ground floor—they can see the 'big picture'.

The same is true of life in the spiritual realm.

My perspective of life, spiritually speaking, will be determined by where I am living—on earth or seated with Jesus in heavenly places.

Perspective is more important than we often think. A proper perspective of life is vital to living a fruitful life for God—as well as a satisfying and meaningful life for ourselves. The right perspective can mean the difference between victory and defeat, and between joy and depression.

The armies of Israel were paralyzed with fear as they looked at the 9 ½ ft. Philistine champion Goliath, but David ran to meet him in battle with the words, *"You come to me with sword and spear, but I come to you in the name of the living God—and it is He who will deliver you into my hand."*

The armies of Israel saw the situation from an earthly perspective, and it brought fear and defeat into their hearts—whereas David saw the situation from God's perspective, and it brought strength and victory into his heart!

**There is no truer principle for living a joyful, victorious Christian life—
than having the proper perspective of life.**

Here in Romans 13 Paul is telling us that maintaining a proper perspective based on prophecy and knowing the times with regard to nearness of Jesus' return—is the key to victorious Christian living and finishing well in our race for Jesus!

4. "Dress up"—verse 12

Romans 13:12 (NKJV)

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...

If you were invited to the White House to meet with the President of the United States—you wouldn't appear before him dressed in dirty old work clothes. You'd put off the old and put on a new set of clothes clean and appropriate for the occasion.

Warren Wiersbe—

"We do not want to be found dressed in dirty garments when the Lord returns. The Christian wears the armor of light, not the deeds of darkness. He has no reason to get involved in the sinful pleasures of the world."

Colossians 3:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him...

When Paul admonishes us in verse 8 that we are to “put off” these things—the Greek word means to “*take off like a suit of clothes*” or “*to throw off like a dirty shirt*.”

He proceeds in verse 8 to tell us what he has in mind—but Galatians 5 gives us a more complete list:

Galatians 5:19–26 (NLT)

¹⁹ When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. ²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit’s leading in every part of our lives. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

Paul prefaced this list by telling us to “*walk in the Spirit and we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*”, which then leads to “putting off”—as in “*taking off dirty (defiled) clothes*.”

One author shared this interesting piece of historical information—

“The Great Plague that hit England in the 1660’s and killed an estimated 100,000 people, wouldn’t have been nearly so bad if it weren’t for the fact that people took the clothes off the dead and gave them to their friends and family members thereby spreading and perpetuating the plague.”

If we as Christians don’t put off the defiled sins of the old life we will not only destroy ourselves—we will infect and destroy others in our families, in our church, and others we come in contact with on a daily basis.

5. “Clean up”—verse 13

Romans 13:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

You wouldn’t put on new clothes without first cleaning up (after working in the garden all day or on a car)—therefore, Paul is admonishing us to ‘**clean up**’ our lives because putting on the clean pure royal robes of Jesus Christ on the dirty body of a defiled life—is tantamount to whitewashing a tomb—it’s total hypocrisy (like the Pharisees).

The actual cleansing is done by the Holy Spirit (both positionally and practically speaking)—but we must be willing to live a holy life. We don’t want to be living hypocritical lives when the Lord Jesus comes for us—

1 John 2:28, 3:1-3 (NKJV)

²⁸ And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. ²⁹ If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him... ¹ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

6. “Grow up”—verse 14**Romans 13:14 (NKJV)**

¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its lusts*.

In other words, Paul is admonishing us to get serious in our walk with Jesus and—**grow up!**

Hebrews 5:12–14 (NLT)

¹² You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. ¹³ For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. ¹⁴ Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

1 Peter 2:1–3 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore... ² as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby...

J. Vernon McGee—

“My friend, without a hunger for the Word of God you will not grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. You will not develop as a Christian—you will always be in your babyhood. We must remember that a little baby and a full-grown man are both human beings, but they are in different stages of growth and development. The little one needs milk so he can grow up to become a man. Now, how does a Christian grow? He grows by studying the Word of God. There is no growth apart from the Word of God.”

“...and make no provision for the flesh”

One pastor put it this way—

“In light of the coming kingdom, we should grow up. That is, we are not to make any provision to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. If you struggle with alcohol and say, ‘I’m not going to drink, I’m just going to take the table closest to the bar’—you’re making provision for the flesh. You’ll get sucked back in. You’ll go down. You’re only kidding yourself. Make no provision for the flesh—and take hope. The day of His coming is nearer than when you first believed. Soon we’ll be out of here!”

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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