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Joel 1:2-8

Message title: The Wake-Up Call.

Big Idea: If you want to experience God's life, you have to wake up spiritually.

1 The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.

2 Hear this, you elders,

And give ear, all you inhabitants of the land!

Has *anything like* this happened in your days,

Or even in the days of your fathers?

3 Tell your children about it,

Let your children *tell* their children,

And their children another generation.

1. Elders need to... wake up & lead.

When we get older, it is not time to be complacent it is time to make an investment.

For Israel, the wake up call was:

4 What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten;

What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten;

And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.

Each stage was a new level of devastation until nothing was left.

Deuteronomy 28:1 Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. **2** And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God:

28:15 "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

42 Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

...If you are an elder, you should know this, wake up!

One of the spiritual problems we face is not just young people leaving the church, it is elders not leading in the church.

5 Awake, you drunkards, and weep;

And wail, all you drinkers of wine,

Because of the new wine,

For it has been cut off from your mouth.

Proverbs 23:29 Who has anguish? Who has sorrow? Who is always fighting? Who is always complaining? Who has unnecessary bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? 30 It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new drinks. 31 Don't gaze at the wine, seeing how red it is, how it sparkles in the cup, how smoothly it goes down. 32 For in the end it bites like a poisonous snake; it stings like a viper. 33 You will see hallucinations, and you will say crazy things. 34 You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. 35 And you will say, "They hit me, but I didn't feel it. I didn't even know it when they beat me up. When will I wake up so I can look for another drink?"

Any addiction or disconnection can lull us to sleep spiritually.

2. The disconnected need to... wake up & connect.

This is the most digitally connected but relationally lonely & anxious generation.

6 For a nation has come up against My land,
Strong, and without number;
His teeth *are* the teeth of a lion,
And he has the fangs of a fierce lion.
7 He has laid waste My vine,
And ruined My fig tree;
He has stripped it bare and thrown *it* away;
Its branches are made white.

God uses the godless to wake up the godly, but He will eventually judge the godless as well.

Both the vineyard and fig tree have connections w/Israel as God's people.

Hosea 9:10 "When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert; when I saw your ancestors, it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree. But when they came to Baal Peor, they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol and became as vile as the thing they loved.

Psalms 80:8 You have brought a vine out of Egypt; You have cast out the nations, and planted it. 9 You prepared *room* for it, And caused it to take deep root, And it filled the land.

3. Believers need to... wake up & bear fruit.

When we are connected to the Vine, abiding in Christ...

...we are going to bear fruit.

When we are trees planted by the waters receiving His life...

...we are going to bear fruit.

Isaiah 5:4 What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes?

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

We don't like to be responsible for our fruit much less accountable for our fruit, but we are.

8 Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth
For the husband of her youth.

They should mourn for the life you have missed & the opportunities you won't have.

Proverbs 6

6 Go to the ant, you sluggard!
Consider her ways and be wise,
7 Which, having no captain, overseer or ruler,
8 Provides her supplies in the summer,
And gathers her food in the harvest.
9 How long will you slumber, O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?
10 A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep—
11 So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler,
And your need like an armed man.

Proverbs 24

30 I walked by the field of a lazy person,
the vineyard of one with no common sense.
31 I saw that it was overgrown with nettles.
It was covered with weeds,
and its walls were broken down.
32 Then, as I looked and thought about it,
I learned this lesson:
33 A little extra sleep, a little more slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest—
34 then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit;
scarcity will attack you like an armed robber.

Message Summary

In this message, we explore the need for us to be spiritually awake. We find God sometimes uses extreme measures to get our attention because our eternal souls and His kingdom are worth it. Through the prophet Joel, we find three groups God calls to wake up from their spiritual slumber and return to Him for life.

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

5-10 minutes connecting personally with how everyone is doing.
45 minutes going over message with discussion questions and life applications.
5-10 minutes praying for each other

Discussion Questions

Look over these questions before your group time. Write down your answers or ideas for at least a few questions if not all. You may not get to every question during your time but speak up if you want to talk about one of them in particular. Always try to start with question #1.

Ice breaker: How do you usually wake up in the morning?

1. What stood out to you and/or what do you think God might be speaking about from this message?
 2. We talked about 3 groups that need to wake up and act. They were the elders to lead, the disconnected to connect, and the believers to bear fruit. Which area could most apply to you?
 3. Passing on faith stories is part of discipleship. But sometimes it doesn't happen or it doesn't happen well. How do you think elders can be more effective and intentional in passing on faith stories of how God has worked in their lives?
 3. Have you been or have you known someone who was asleep spiritually? What lulled them to sleep? Did something wake them up?
 4. Read about the vine in Psalm 80:8 & Isaiah 5:4, what can you learn and apply to your life?
 5. Joel talks about the painful reality of mourning the loss of a spouse in Joel 1:8. Why is it easier for us to mourn a physical loss but sometimes not notice our lost spiritual condition? How could this be corrected?
 6. Even though sleep can be helpful at times and seems harmless, Proverbs 24:30-31 talks about the problems of sleeping too much. What are ways to avoid these problems spiritually?
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5 Day Devotional: The Wake-Up Call

Day 1: Elders, Lead with Purpose
Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15, 42; Joel 1:1-3

God begins His wake-up call with the elders—those with history, experience, and responsibility. Age and experience are not invitations to complacency but calls to investment. The elders were commanded to remember God's faithfulness and warnings, then pass them to the next generation. Today, consider your sphere of influence. Whether you're older in age, faith, or experience, someone is watching and learning from you. What spiritual legacy are you creating? What wisdom are you sharing? God has entrusted you with resources, time, and experiences not for hoarding but for multiplying. Wake up to your calling as a spiritual leader. The next generation desperately needs guides who will point them toward God's truth and faithfulness.

Day 2: Breaking Free from Disconnection Proverbs 23:29-35; Joel 1:5

The drunkards represent anyone disconnected from reality—spiritually asleep while life passes by. We live in the most digitally connected yet relationally lonely generation. Our modern "wine" takes many forms: endless scrolling, binge-watching, shopping, busyness—anything that numbs us to God's presence and purpose. God's remedy seems harsh: cut off the supply. But His goal is not punishment; it's awakening. When our coping mechanisms fail, we're forced to confront what we've been avoiding. What are you using to disconnect from the life God has for you? Today, identify one habit that keeps you spiritually drowsy. Ask God for courage to release it and replace it with practices that draw you closer to Him and others.

Day 3: Fruitfulness Requires Abiding John 15:5-6; Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:6-7

The vine and fig tree symbolize God's people—designed to bear fruit that glorifies Him. But fruitfulness isn't automatic; it requires abiding. Jesus made this clear: "Without Me you can do nothing." When our lives lack spiritual fruit, the problem isn't God's faithfulness but our connection to Him. The locusts stripped Israel's vines bare, exposing the reality of their spiritual condition. What does your spiritual vineyard look like today? Are you producing love, joy, peace, patience, and kindness? Or has busyness, distraction, or sin stripped away your fruitfulness? Abiding means staying connected through prayer, Scripture, worship, and obedience. Assess your daily rhythms. Are they cultivating intimacy with Christ or distance? Return to the Vine today.

Day 4: The Poverty of Spiritual Slumber Proverbs 6:6-11; Proverbs 24:30-34

Solomon warns that spiritual laziness leads to devastating poverty—not just materially but relationally, emotionally, and eternally. The sluggard's field becomes overgrown with weeds; walls crumble from neglect. "A little more sleep" seems harmless, but poverty "pounces like a bandit." Spiritual complacency works the same way. We think we have time—time to get serious about faith, repair relationships, invest in our families, serve the church. But while we slumber, opportunities vanish and consequences accumulate. The ant works diligently without needing constant supervision, preparing for what's ahead. What vineyard has God entrusted to you? Your marriage? Your children? Your calling? Don't wait for the perfect moment. Wake up today and do the work that matters for eternity.

Day 5: Mourning That Leads to Life Joel 1:8; Isaiah 5:4; Romans 13:11-14

Joel calls God's people to "lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth"—to mourn deeply for lost opportunities and wasted seasons. This isn't condemnation but invitation. Godly sorrow leads to repentance, and repentance leads to life. God asks, "What more could I have done?" The answer: nothing. He has provided everything needed for fruitfulness. Now He waits for our response. Romans 13 declares, "Now it is high time to awake out of sleep." Salvation is nearer than when we first believed. This is your wake-up call. Don't minimize where you are or rationalize spiritual mediocrity. See clearly, mourn genuinely, then return wholeheartedly to the Lord. He is faithful to restore what the locusts have eaten when we come back to Him with our whole hearts.

