

A HEART THAT OVERFLOWS

God is sending awakening to His people in all nations, including those of us in America. As the language signifies, awakening means there has been a sleeping and slumbering. To the degree that we have been sleeping spiritually, is the degree and shock to our system when He awakens us. Awakening from the Lord is coming. It appears that the pressures of the culture and the pain of soul is what God is using to wake us up. Pain reminds us that we are alive. The two extremes seem to be the pain of life and the comfort of life. Too much either way will kill our souls. It is the Lord's desire and prayer that His people would be awake and filled with His presence and power in the midst of the personal and cultural pressures we face. Oh God, wake us up and fill us up!

Ephesians 5:15-18 *See then that you walk circumspectly (careful/cautious/intentional), not as fools but as wise,* ¹⁶ *redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* ¹⁷ *Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* ¹⁸ *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled with the Spirit...***

I. WALKING IN WISDOM

- A. **Colossians 4:5** *Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity.* (NLT)
- B. Paul seems to be indicating that walking in wisdom actually serves as a witness to Jesus and His Kingdom to an unbelieving world. Walking in wisdom also calls us back to our original assignment in God's creation; *"to be fruitful and multiply"* **Gen. 1:28** and *"...make disciples in all nations"* **Mat. 28:18-20**.
- C. It is no longer a luxury for just a few elite "special Christians" to understand what God is saying, doing, and how He desires to lead us. This is an invitation for us all. All of us as Christ's Followers have been given access to His mind and thoughts (**1 Cor. 2:16**).
- D. **1 Chronicles 12:32** *'From the tribe of Issachar, there were 200 leaders of the tribe with their relatives. All these men understood the signs of the times and knew the best course for Israel to take.'*
- E. God has made our lives on purpose and for purpose. We are to desire to walk in the fulness of all that God has intended us to. Don't settle for anything less.

II. REDEEMING THE TIME

- A. **Ephesians 5:16** *redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
- B. **Psalms 90:12** *So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*
 - Moses wrote this Psalm/Song as a prayer to the Lord asking for His enabling understanding and wisdom to understand just how limited his time and human strength was.
 - Wisdom and understanding are gifts from God. We must ask for them, otherwise we may live our lives in vain with nothing to show for it in the end.
- C. **Redeem (Gk. exagorazō)** - *to make wise and sacred use of every opportunity for doing good* (speaking of the time that is given us)
- D. Paul is speaking to us as Followers of Jesus about the season of life we are given, not merely the 24 hours in a day we are existing. This should give us a reflective heart as to the season we are living in. If we are possibly living in the final generation or one of the few final generations before Christ's return, what should we be prioritizing?
- E. We are to seek to bring a righteous and holy perspective into the season we are living in currently, even as there is an obvious aggression of evil in our days.

- F. **Matthew 24:11-12** *'Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.'*

III. THEREFORE, UNDERSTAND GOD'S WILL

- A. **Ephesians 5:17** *Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*
- B. **Colossians 1:9** *For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;*
- C. Paul gives us a clear picture of the will of God for us. It is our sanctification process. It is our Heavenly Father's plan to cause all our life-experiences to form in us the nature and character of His Son Jesus Christ.
- D. **1 Thessalonians 4:3** *For this is the will of God, your sanctification:*
- E. **Sanctification (Greek- hagioσmos)**- *consecration, purification; holy, set apart; surrendering our desires to receive God's desires*
- Sanctification is... *"The work of the Holy Spirit bringing the whole nature more and more under the influences of the new gracious principles implanted in the soul in regeneration. In other words, sanctification is the carrying on to perfection the work begun in regeneration, and it extends to the whole man."* (Easton Bible Dictionary)
- F. **Romans 12:2** *And **do not** be conformed (shaped/molded) to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
- Whatever we look at, we will think about. As goes our thoughts, so goes our hearts and actions. This is what Paul is saying here.
 - If we will think God's thoughts, we will begin to make God's decisions and do His actions.
 - Ultimately, we are not to seek to be like the world but like Christ. We are to yield to Holy Spirit's work in us as He helps us to love God above everything else and love our neighbors as we love ourselves (**1st and 2nd Commandments**)

IV. DO NOT BE DRUNK WITH WINE

- A. **Ephesians 5:18** *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation (riotous/unrestrained/prodigals); but be filled with the Spirit...*
- B. *"The first case of intoxication on record is that of Noah (Gen 9:21). The sin of drunkenness is frequently and strongly condemned (Rom 13:13; 1Cr 6:9,10; Eph 5:18; 1Th 5:7,8). The sin of drinking to excess seems to have been not uncommon among the Israelites. The word is used figuratively, when men are spoken of as being drunk with sorrow, and with the wine of God's wrath (Isa 63:6; Jer 51:57; Eze 23:33)."* (Easton's Bible Dictionary)
- C. Paul is specifically and literally and primarily speaking of overuse of alcohol to the point of drunkenness (*to intoxicate, make drunk*). This warning can be applied secondarily to other things that intoxicate our life as well. Other examples of drunkenness include: any illicit substance taken to escape reality, emotional over-eating of food, fearful thoughts, anything that leads us to a closed heart of love before God.
- D. **Dissipation (Gr. 'asōtia')**- *riotous/unrestrained/prodigal-lifestyle; reckless living; opposite of ordered & productive living*

- E. Our culture around us is constantly inviting and taunting us to fully surrender and yield to an unrestrained lifestyle of pleasure-seeking, sensual and sexual indulgence, and a focus on the here-and-now, rather than the focus on serving others before ourselves. As a result, we have broken families, unrestrained spending & debt, a disregard for ancient God-ordained boundary lines of morality, etc.
- F. When humanity is left with freewill and choice, apart from the intervention of God's sovereign loving restraint, we choose the poisonous sin-life. On one hand we say, "God, don't tell me how to live my life!" On the other hand, when facing extreme loss and pain, we say, "God, why did you let this happen?" Regardless, He still loves us in it all.
- G. I want to make a clear distinction for anyone who loves Jesus and desires to serve and honor Him, yet at times feels a disconnect or delay in your life-assignment. God sees and knows your heart and is working to bring you to a place of favor and fulfillment, regardless of the unseen results and delayed fruit. Jesus often works on the internal qualities of our life before producing the external fruit of results and impact.
- H. When we examine the "8 Be-Attitudes/Lifestyle Practices", we see that the first 4 are the result of God working on the inside of our character. The last 4 are the fruit of our life on those around us.

V. BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

- A. **Ephesians 5:18** *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit...*
 - a. Just as the stomach must be continually filled to be sustained and healthy, so too the spirit of a man must be filled with something to be sustained and healthy. We will always seek to feed ourselves on something. God has created us with physical and spiritual appetites.
 - b. **Be Filled** (Greek 'plēroō') - to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally; to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure, fill to the brim; to carry through to the end, to accomplish, carry out;
 - c. *"Alcohol is a depressant; it "loosens" people because it depresses their self-control, their wisdom, their balance and judgment. The Holy Spirit has an exactly opposite effect. He is a stimulant; He moves every aspect of our being to better and more perfect performance."* (BLB Commentary- D.G.)
 - d. There are two things that are being communicated to us in this Greek verb:
 - 1) This is not something that we can produce in ourselves or work for. We must position ourselves to receive it as a free gift from God.
 - 2) This is also a command from God. If we do not follow this command, we will experience the result of having an empty and disconnected heart and mind from the things of God and His Kingdom-will.
- B. **John 7:37-38** *On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*
 - a. Jesus is speaking to the audience who was celebrating and commemorating the 'Feast of Tabernacles' for 7 days and then celebrating a feast on the eighth day as thanking God for His faithfulness to them through the wilderness and into His promised land of Canaan.
 - b. Jesus here is referring to the water that flowed from the rock that Moses struck in the desert for the people of Israel to be refreshed while wandering in the wilderness/desert.

- c. Jesus is prophesying about an internal water that would flow that would prove to be greater and more lasting for all who would believe in Him. He is prophesying about the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on all flesh.
- C. **Matthew 25:1-13** *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'"*⁷ *Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*⁹ *But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*
 - a. Those who are filled in the midnight hour will shine brightly and offer hope and courage and point many to the coming Bridegroom God, Christ Jesus.
 - b. We are living in a 'midnight hour' of sorts. There are many who are crying out and searching for help and hope and even a spiritual equilibrium to be sustained. Many are also quitting the faithful lifestyle of following Jesus.
- D. Do you need a fresh filling of the presence of Holy Spirit? Do you need to reorient your life around a lifestyle of producing the oil of God's Spirit? May we repent and resubmit our hearts to Jesus in this time and season.