

OUR COOPERATION WITH GOD'S OPERATION URGENTLY NEEDED TO END THIS AGE

Message Two

Eph. 5:14; Rom. 13:11-12; Heb. 10:37; Luke 12:40

II. To cooperate with God's operation, we need to awake from sleep, and pray—Eph. 5:14:

- A. In addition to deadness, "sleep" may include indifference and routine:
 - 1. "I am concerned that many of the saints in the churches may be seeking the Lord in a superficial way; these saints may regularly attend the meetings of the church, yet they may be in oldness and indifferent toward the Lord's interest" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1993, vol. 1, pp. 329-330*).
 - 2. "I am concerned that many of the believers who are in the United States live a life of ease; such a life makes the saints indifferent toward gaining increase for the building up of the Body of Christ, and this indifference is difficult to overcome (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1993, vol. 1, p. 228*).
 - 3. To be indifferent is to be disinterested, lacking feeling, unconcerned, unmoved, to regard something as not mattering, unimportant, nonessential.
 - 4. A routine church life is one in which nothing is fresh, one which is easy to maintain, general, largely social, and not specific, one which does not require any struggle with endurance—a church life where actually the Spirit is not really needed.
- B. We can awake from sleep by cooperating with the Lord's operation through exercising our spirit to pray:
 - 1. We should have a burden to go to the Lord because we realize that we are old, somewhat dead, lukewarm, fruitless, and numb, with no feeling; if this is us, we have a need!
 - 2. Each of us needs to keep going directly to the Lord, even if nothing happens; He must be the source; eventually, maybe even after twenty times, "Christ will shine on you"—Eph. 5:14.
 - 3. Since He is the light (1 John 1:5), we will realize where we are and what we are.
 - 4. Otherwise, we might just pick up a new routine.
 - 5. The more we thoroughly confess, repent, and deal with the Lord, the more so much dirt from within us will be removed, and the more room there will be within for us to "be filled in spirit" (v. 18); we will be brought into an intimate, vital fellowship with the Lord.
 - 6. Then, without compromise, we sincerely say Amen to whatever He speaks to us.
 - 7. Without personal, thorough repenting and confessing and without having an intimate fellowship with the Lord, we will remain the same until we see Him at the judgment seat—2 Cor. 5:10.
- C. It is an urgent matter for us to awake out of any kind of sleep today, at the end of this age, and pray—Rom. 13:11-12:
 - 1. The Lord is surely coming!—Heb. 10:37; Luke 12:40.
 - 2. This should motivate us to the uttermost.
 - 3. Is the Lord employing a holding pattern in the world situation today? If so, why?
 - 4. We must pray for the Lord to raise up the overcomers, the vital groups—including us.
 - 5. We need to awake out of any kind of sleep and learn to live a life of prayer, setting aside definite times for prayer (Dan. 6:10) throughout the day.
 - 6. Many saints are spiritually weak, indifferent, and lukewarm because they are short of prayer; in order to be vital, this ongoing prayer is a necessity.
 - 7. May we choose to cooperate by praying much and praying more—1 Thes. 5:17.