

Wake Up! And Walk Properly
October 24, 2010
Pastor Sean Harris

I hope with all my heart that I can do justice to what Paul has for us today. This is really quite the text and it is a joy that God led the Holy Spirit to give it to Paul and it is awesome that He has preserved it for us for 2,000 years. We are going to be able to open the Word of God and hear the Holy Spirit speak to us. We want to hear what the Lord has to say to the church at Glensford Drive from the Word of God. I will do my very best by the grace of God to hopefully take these four verses and bring them alive. I want to get you excited about the Word of God and what it has to say to us.

Romans 13:11-14

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

The “And” reminds us of last week’s lesson. It serves as a conjunction to remind us that in addition to what we learned last week that we need to love our neighbor as ourselves, we are also to do what verse 11 says. We are also to recognize the time. Paul wrote this from the city of Corinth during his third missionary journey; so this is about 25 years after Christ ascended to be with the Lord. Since then, about 1,900 years of history have transpired. And he says, *knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep*. Paul wants us to recognize that it is time to wake up! It is the goal. It is like the teenager that you can’t get out of bed. And you wake them up and you come back 10 minutes later and wake them and 10 minutes later. And you remember this; it is high time to get out of bed. It is like the final warning. This is it. I have told you enough. The next thing coming is a bucket of water on your head. It is time to get out of bed. You say it is high time.

Paul, where did you get this idea from? I got it from the Lord Jesus Christ who told a parable that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who sowed a seed, and when the man was sleeping the enemy came in. So the church has a tendency to go to sleep. When the church goes to sleep, we lose prayer in the public schools. We could go on and on.

Jesus told a parable about ten virgins in Matthew 25. Would you take the time to turn over to the first gospel and look at this parable with me? This is about people going to sleep. Paul didn’t come up with the sleep idea by himself. He was taught from God the Holy Spirit to speak through the Lord Jesus so we have a synchronization of the message. I would like you to hear this parable from the Lord as He delivered it unto disciples 2,000 years ago. And He talks about sleep.

Matthew 25:1

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. Obviously the Lord is the bridegroom coming to get His church. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. So they don’t have a reserve. They have no back up of oil. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. So they have a container that gives them back up fuel. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. That is the current state. The bridegroom hasn’t come yet. He is waiting on the

right hand of God the Father. He is waiting for word to go get the church. *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us that sell, and buy out to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.* Do you remember the message two weeks ago? We had a door up here and the door was shut. You know, you don't decide when the door will be shut. You don't make that decision. You don't know when the door will be shut. The point of this parable is very clear. There are people living without any preparation for the second coming of Christ. They are assuming that they know when the Lord is coming again, and so they can sleep and they can slumber and they don't have to worry about being prepared for Christ's coming. The Bible calls these people foolish. These are foolish people. In the Bible a fool is probably one of the harshest things you can be called. And these evangelical Christians are going about their life as though there is no concern for the second coming of Christ, and suddenly they are surprised when the Lord comes back, they have no oil, they are ill prepared and the door is shut. The door is shut.

I want to wake you up and alert you to the reality that Christ is coming again and He could come this afternoon.

So my goal is to wake you up. My goal is to alert you to the reality that Christ could come again. My goal is to make you aware of the fact that we need to stop sleeping. We need to stop living our life as if there is no chance of Jesus coming and living as though years are going on and on and we don't have to worry about Christ coming. We don't have to think about that. But I want to wake you up and I want to alert you to the idea that He could come this afternoon. He could interrupt this preaching service and rapture the church and you would be left behind on the pew. Can you imagine what that would be like when you sit there and you go?? Wow. There is someone here and here and there are 8 people left in this auditorium and they stare at each other saying what just happened? Can you imagine that? No. We don't think about that. Let's be honest. We spend more time thinking about our 401K plan or who is going to win the ball game than the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So Paul says *for now is our salvation*. What does he mean by our salvation? Preacher, I am already saved. I don't have to worry about it. That is not the salvation he is talking about. Let me explain what salvation he is talking about. If you are born again believer, you have been saved. This is past tense. You have been saved. You are a new creature in Christ. That decisive moment happened and you were born again. The day before, you were a sinner on the way to hell. On this day, because of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the amazing work that God has done in your life, you are now on your way on a road to heaven as a new creature in Christ. And you are living that life day by day and you are being saved from sin. That is sanctification. You were saved, now you are being saved. That is not what he is talking about in this passage. Neither one of those are "our salvation." Let me tell you about this salvation. It is no more knees that hurt when you get done running. It is the full and complete deliverance from the flesh. It is the full and complete deliverance from selfishness. It is the full and complete deliverance from death. It is the full and complete deliverance from anxiety. It is the full and complete deliverance of a glorified body, and the work of salvation is now complete because what God started thousands of years ago is now full. The church is redeemed and we are with Him in His presence. Let's make sure we understand that is what he is talking about.

The salvation that Paul is talking about in verse 11 is the full and complete deliverance from the flesh.

Now, I want to say real clearly, if that is not a big deal to you, if you really don't care about that, if you are not excited about that, if you could take it or leave it, something is wrong. You are much like the virgin who doesn't really care if she has enough oil or not. You are a foolish person. You are not prepared. If you are radically changed by a new creature in wait to get rid of this don't like the fact like the fact that you that you struggle You are looking deliverance of that. your ears and they there should be a why I don't want to it? What is wrong with me? Christians long to be delivered from the flesh.

The difference between a biblical worldview and a secular worldview is the biblical worldview knows that God is orchestrating all things unto a predetermined end whereas the secular world view believes that human history is destined to continue forever.

born again, if you have been the power of the gospel and you are Christ, first and foremost you can't flesh. You despise the flesh. You that you cop attitudes. You don't are selfish. You don't like the fact with lust. You don't want that. forward to the immediate If these are words that are falling on really don't mean much to you, then concern in your life right now as to be delivered from the flesh. What is

When Paul says *nearer than when we believed*, you may have a reaction like I don't believe. That is the world. The world lives as though human history is destined to continue forever. The Christian wisely knows that God is in control, and He is orchestrating all things unto a predetermined end. God knows when that end is going to be, and He knows what that end is going to look like. He knows who will be in power on the earth. He knows what the nations will look like. He has all that predetermined and He is orchestrating all things toward that end. That is the difference between a biblical and a secular worldview. A secular world view says it is going on and on, or we need to fix it, or it is going to end. The Christian worldview says God has it all planned and under control.

Verse 12, he says *the night is far spent, the day is at hand*. This is the picture that Paul wants you to think about. He wants you to put yourself at night time and it is almost morning. Some of us have been there if you have been in the Army or some kind of occupation like that. I remember many years ago we deployed to Ft. Chaffey in Arkansas and just froze. We just died. We had no cold weather gear. It was those pre-days, back when it was hard to be in the Army. Some of you will remember those days. And we parachuted in had nothing. I not sleeping, sun come over the provide some really early -

As sure as the sun rises in the morning is as sure as the promise that the Son of God is coming again.

a little cresting of the light, you can't actually see the light, but you know that sun is coming. This is what Paul is saying. Right now we are living in the night, but I want you to know that the sun is coming and as sure as the sun rises in the morning is as sure as the promise that the Son of God is coming again. You are living in the night time, but the sun is coming up. When the sun comes up, it is going to be a glorious thing. I know that there are some skeptics assembled this morning and they say, Yeah, right. They say, sure, yeah right. I know there are some skeptics right now in the room that are saying, You Christians are so naïve. You have believed that hogwash for 2,000 years. Paul believed it 2,000 years ago and you still, you naïve knuckleheads still believe the same thing. It is true. Do you know that the Word of God speaks to those scoffers?

2 Peter 3:3. Mark this in your Bible. Every week you should be marking in your Bible. You should be learning more about where Scripture is. Christians have been talking about this idea that Christ is coming back and you have had some nuts that assemble and give dates. Some of you have gone into little compounds and you have done some crazy stuff about this. It is high time you realize he isn't coming back. Peter addresses this.

*Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? That is what they say, Where is He? You Christians have believed that for 1,000 years and it is time you wake up and smell the coffee, He isn't coming back. That is what the scoffer says. And what you say to him is this. You are exactly right. The Bible has you in mind in this chapter right here. *for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.**

Let me pause for a minute and break that down so that we all understand what he is saying. Peter is saying that these people ignore the reality that God did make the heavens and the earth and then 1,000 years or so ago Noah was saved and the rest of the entire earth was destroyed by water. So when you think the earth will never be destroyed, you are willingly ignoring the fact that God has already done it one time. So don't be so foolish as to think He can't do it again. He did it one time with water and He is currently reserving the earth to be destroyed all over again by fire. He is not going to do a re-model. He is not going to do a renovation. He is going to destroy the entire thing. It is all going to get scrapped and He will rebuild the entire thing. Verse 8. *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* Not all go to heaven. That is not what it says. He wants you to repent and turn from your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ. He is not willing to give you a buy. He is not willing to give you a pass. He is not willing to ignore your sin. He is not willing to create a plan B or plan C. He is willing for one thing, and that is for you to repent. He wants for you to turn from whatever is keeping you from trusting in Christ. What is the point of this long suffering? This is what he is saying. Instead of us complaining that He hasn't come, we are to be thankful that He is giving people another day to repent. That is the perspective we should have. Let's consider this: let's say that He would have come in Paul's lifetime when Paul penned those first words.

You wouldn't be what the Bible is copping an attitude come, we should come because it is

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here. I wouldn't be here. This is saying: Instead of a Christian about the fact that He hasn't be most grateful that He hasn't giving another day for a lost loved

one to repent and believe the gospel. When He does come, the door is not cracked open. The door is swung shut. It is swung shut. The only way we wouldn't have that perspective is if we believe there is a little door that you could slip through or it wasn't locked or you could go around or you had the key. But the Bible doesn't give any indication of any of that stuff. The Bible is very clear. The door is shut. This idea in verse 11 is how we need to base our thinking around here. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, being aware of the fact that the entire earth is going to be burnt up. There is nothing staying. Let's make sure that we understand that the White House is not getting saved. The Lincoln Memorial is not getting saved. Nothing from this earth is being saved. Our favorite camping spot is not being saved. I am helping you understand that the kitchen that you just remodeled and that you love is

not being preserved. Nothing is being saved. So based on this idea, what manner of godly people ought we to be in our conversation, in our lifestyle, in our conduct, in the way we carry ourselves, we need to change our perspective. There is something wrong when you are working 90 hours a week and you don't have a minute of time for God. There is something wrong with that. You have it backwards. You are upside down. No one is going to be in heaven saying, I wish I had spent more time at the office. I wish I had spent more time painting cars. No one is going to have that perspective. They are not going to say that. We are way too busy not recognizing that the only thing that is going to survive the global destruction is born again believers. Nothing else is being preserved.

2 Peter 3:12. *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

There is something wrong when you are working 90 hours a week and you don't have a minute of time for God.

That is the third time we have heard his promise. He keeps His word. *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.* Can you imagine being found walking in the darkness when the rapture comes? Can you imagine being with your little honey that you have a second relationship with? Can you imagine being at lunch with her instead of your wife when the Lord Jesus comes back? Can you imagine being caught watching porn when the Lord Jesus comes back? Can you imagine having that in your DVD player when the heavens open up and Christ calls you home? Can you imagine being in bed with someone other than your wife when the Lord Jesus comes? Let me tell you something that is going to happen. Most certainly, you are not getting a warning. You are not getting a heads up—clean it up in 30 minutes. That is not happening. Can you imagine getting caught cheating on a business deal when the Lord comes? That is the message this morning.

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. The encouragement this morning is to stay in the faith. Don't move away. Stay faithful. Don't leave. Don't depart. Don't go off to college and become a heathen. Don't marry an unbeliever and lose it. Stay focused. Stay faithful. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.* Commit yourself to grown in the grace. I am going to learn more about Jesus. Yes, I need to do my job, yes, I want to know my trade and yes, I want to be a professional, but at the same time I need to grow as a Christian.

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. This is a contrast between darkness and lightness. Jesus said it like this in *John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* Men don't do things that you have to do under the cover of darkness. If you are doing something in your home and you feel like you need to turn the lights off to do it, then something is wrong. If you are doing something in your home and you don't want your wife to know about it, something this wrong. If you are doing something in your home and you have to lock the door, something is wrong. That is the message. That is not my message; that is His message. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. We don't walk in the darkness. We walk in the light. He says let us walk honestly, let us walk properly, let us walk in integrity, walk in the day. Manage your small business so that anyone can inspect your books. Pay your taxes in a way that anyone can look at your tax receipts. Walk in

integrity. Conduct your email so that your wife can check your email. Something is wrong if you are afraid that she will pick up your blackberry or your iphone or your droid or whatever it is. You shouldn't have multiple email addresses. You have this one for her and another one for this little private thing going on. That is walking in the darkness. That is not walking in the light. Cast that off.

These are the areas that God wants us to be living in: living in the light, the open, the public, sober in life. Teenagers, listen to your pastor who loves you and is crazy about you. Listen to me very closely. If you are doing something in your bedroom other than changing your clothes and you feel the need to close the door, something is wrong. If you are looking at something and you feel like you have to close the door; if you are watching something and you feel like you need to close the door; if you are reading something and you feel like you need to close the door, something is wrong. He is saying leave the door open. Don't allow yourself to do anything where you feel like the door needs to be shut. Why? You don't know when the Son is coming. You don't want to be in your bedroom doing what you should not be doing when He says, Come!

Because the church is asleep, and we are sure an alarm is going to go off and wake us up when He comes. It is not happening. The alarm is not going to come on and give us a heads up to clean up our act and then we all can get ready and looking good. That is not what is going to happen. If that was the case, the five virgins would have gone and got oil and everyone would have been ready. So he says, don't do these things. Isn't it interesting how he links rioting (orgies) and drunkenness together? I wonder how many people there are that have done things in their lifetime that they would have never done if they had just stayed sober. I wonder how many people have made fools of themselves in a drunken state. I wonder how many people are acting as idiots up on a table at a ball or something, and they never ever would have acted that way if they weren't intoxicated. I wonder how many people have slept together on college campuses all over the United States in immoral relationships with multiple people doing all kinds of ungodly things because they were drunk. Think about it. Parents, you think about that when you send your children to a secular college and stick them in a dorm in which all kinds of immorality happens and there are no restrictions whatsoever. Just think about that. You have to decide. That is not my decision. You have to make that decision for your family. There is a reason he links this and this together. It is not because it was an accident. It wasn't because he was bored and couldn't think what to do. They are linked together because there is a problem.

Chambering, wantonness, immorality, sensuality: these are the words that he uses to describe what he wants us to put off. I find it interesting that six words are used. The first one is drunkenness; that leaves five. Three out of the six words relate to sexual sins. Why is that? It is because we have a problem in the body of Christ. That is why. He knows. He knows that we are tempted with those things. That is why I mention it all the time. You should not be doing something with someone at night time that you are not supposed to do. You shouldn't be meeting someone at night time. You shouldn't be watching something at night time. No. And he is not writing to unbelievers. He is writing to Christians at Rome. He is writing to the church at Berea. He is writing to us, Christians engaging in multiple relationships, threesomes and all kinds of ungodly things. It is completely unacceptable to bring someone into your bedroom through a DVD. She or he has no business being in there. It is not an accident that three of the six words all relate to this sexual appetite. It is not an accident. He knows that there will be Christians who will be caught in the Lord comes again. caught, teenagers no business watching. There will be Christians watching things that they have

Doing Two Things: 1) Striving to be like Jesus 2) Starving the flesh
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Strife, envying, quarreling and jealousy. Instead. What are we to do? We are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Every day put on Jesus. Every day get out of bed and put Jesus on. I have to go out into that world, I need Jesus. I am going to Ft. Bragg, I need Jesus. I have to run my small business, I need Jesus. I am going to a classroom, I need Jesus. I need to put Jesus on every day.

These are the two things that I think he is saying to us. Strive to be like Jesus. Work hard at being like Jesus. Think like Jesus. Read what Jesus wrote. Pray to Jesus. Take Jesus in. Renew your mind. On your way to work in the morning turn the radio off and renew your mind. I don't need to hear any more from the world today. I need to hear from the Lord. In peace in quiet, sit there and listen. God, I just want to know You. That is putting on Jesus. I need You today, Lord. Lead me today. Don't answer the phone. Focus on Him. I know You are there. You have filled me with the Holy Spirit. You are on the right hand of the Father. I want to know You. I want to think like You do. I want to run my small business like you do. I want to be guided by you. I want to be ready to share the gospel if you give me the opportunity I want to be ready. Renew your mind. Open the Word of God, do a great devotion and let the Lord speak to you. That is what he means by putting on Jesus. I am doing two things. I am putting on Jesus and I am starving the flesh. You don't get fed, flesh. What does that mean? What does your flesh eat? If you are an alcoholic your flesh is fed by drinking. So don't consume alcohol. If you are a gossip, your flesh eats on Facebook. You love Facebook. You like the information. You like to know what everyone is doing. You can't believe so and so did that. They can't afford that. They shouldn't have done that. You know what everyone is doing. Close it off. Close the account. Starve the flesh. If you are having a porn problem, throw the monitor out. I can't do that. Then get Covenant Eyes. Get something to starve the flesh. You don't get to eat, flesh. Lifetime Television is filling your mind with all these great guys and these marriages where they leave their first husband and go to the second and the third husband. Don't watch that stuff. Starve the flesh. You have no business watching reality television. It is just a big, complete waste of time. It's a bunch of half naked people running around on an island. You don't need to care about that. Who's leading in American Idol? You don't have your citizenship in this world. It doesn't matter to you. You could give a rip at who wins and who loses. You are starving the flesh. Let's talk about magazines. Ladies, don't subscribe to Victoria Secret. Don't make your husband go out to the mail box and get the Victoria Secret catalog and then wonder why he is looking at it after you sent him out to get the mail. Cut it off. Men, don't subscribe to Sports Illustrated and when you do make sure you uncheck whatever block you need to. You don't need the swimsuit issue coming into the house. Starve the flesh. How do I get rid of my porn addiction? Destroy the dvd's. Don't put them up. You don't know how much we have invested in that. Are you kidding me? These are the answers that I hear. Break them in half. Starve the flesh. Isn't it amazing how we understand this concept from an eating perspective, in order to lose weight we have to starve the flesh, so in order to live righteously we need to starve the flesh?

Let me read this parallel passage in 1 Thessalonians 4:13. I want you to feast off the Word of God in this great letter that Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica. These are familiar words, but they are words I think we could use almost every week. These are great words. You are going to love what Paul wrote to us. Let me read this and then we will close in prayer.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. What a glorious promise! Oh, I need these words. I need to know that my loved ones who have died in Christ are there with Him and when He comes again, He is not coming alone. He is bringing them back with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the

*archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; What an amazing idea. What a glorious promise. Here is what the Bible teaches. At some moment in the future, God the Father is going to look at Jesus His Son and say, Go get them, Son. And at that given moment, the trumpet is going to sound, the archangel is going to sound the alert and the dead in Christ are going to be raised. What I am saying to you is the molecular structure of the dead people is going to be instantly recreated into a glorified body and that glorified body is going to meet that soul. That is what the Bible teaches whether you like it or not. When you say, I don't believe that, you are a fool. Because according to Hebrews the entire universe is being held together by His word. And so if you think that recomposing dead bodies is a hard thing for the God of this universe, you are stupid. The same God who speaks things into existence is going to speak glorified bodies into existence, and those souls are going to descend with Him and they are going to meet a glorified body and they will not prevent us. They are going to go before us. That is what the Bible teaches. Those are His words; they are not my words. This is not my ridiculous idea. These are divinely inspired, preserved words for us. *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* Those of you that have lost loved ones, take comfort with these words. Anyone else that has a loved one that you miss, be comforted with these wonderful words. Let them speak to you.*

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. There is no heads up, no warning, or no attention sounding alarms. Get ready. Get saved. You have 30 minutes to repent and get right with God. There is nothing like that. In the same way that if you knew the thief was coming, you would lock the doors and turn the lights on and call the police, you can't do this because you don't know when the thief is coming. For when they say, Peace and safety; That is the world we are living in right now. That is all people care about is give us peace and prosperity. That is all they care about. Then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; brethren, are not in overtaken you as a light, and the

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. 5:9

the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us unto wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Those are glorious words to you. Those words don't get any more encouraging. Those are some of the greatest words in the entire Bible written for us today.