

Introduction

We have been building our new home. There are lots of different things that need to be done in the process. The first thing was to finalize the building plans for the house. Then, bulldozers were brought in to prepare the site for the foundation. The footers were laid, and then the foundation walls were poured. Then, the framing began. The floor joists were built and the floor was put in. Then, the walls were framed. Then, the ceiling joists and roof were built. Then, the roof was shingled. Next, the electricians wired the house, the plumbers roughed in the water and sewer, and the HVAC crews ran all the duct work for the heating and air conditioning. Our windows have been back-ordered and will be installed next. Once they are in, they will install the siding, and drywall the house. Then, they will prime the walls, and put in the wood floors. Then, the trim work will be installed, and then the house will be painted. At any given time, the builder knows exactly what needs to be done. Our builder knows the time, and the things that needed to be done at that particular time.

When David was made king, the sons of Issachar were men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do. They were like our builder in that they saw and understood what was going on at any point in time, and knew what needed to be done.

(1 Chron 12:31-32) “Of the half-tribe of Manasseh 18,000, who were designated by name to come and make David king. {32} Of the sons of Issachar, men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do, their chiefs *were* two hundred; and all their kinsmen *were* at their command.”

Not everyone knows and understands the time or season, and what the need of the hour is. In Matthew 16, the Pharisees and Sadducees came and asked Jesus to show them a sign from heaven. Jesus said that they recognized the weather signs, but cannot discern the signs of the times. They would not have made good contractors.

(Matt 16:1-3) “The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. {2} But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, '*It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.*' {3} "And in the morning, '*There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.*' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot *discern* the signs of the times?"

In our passage today, Paul said, “Do this, knowing the time...” The church is supposed to know the time. We are not to be like the Pharisees and Sadducees, not knowing the signs of the times. We must know the signs of the times, and most importantly, we need to know what we are to be doing at this particular time. We are to be like the builder of our house. We need to know what needs to be done at this particular time. In our passage today, Paul gives three specific things that we should be doing, since we understand the times. Because I am convinced that many do not understand the times, I am going to start with the times. Then, I will give the three things that Paul says we should do. First, he says that it is time to awaken from sleep. Second, he exhorts us to lay aside the deeds of darkness. Third, he tells us to put on the deeds of daylight.

Knowing the Time (or Three Things We Must Do Since We Know the Time)

1. Know the Time
2. Awake from sleep
3. Lay aside the deeds of darkness
4. Put on the deeds of daylight

(Rom 13:11-14) “*Do* this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. {12} The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. {13} Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. {14} But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.”

1. Know the Time

In our bedroom, Karen has a projection clock that displays the time on the ceiling or wall. When I wake up I usually take a quick glance at the time. If it is 12:30 or 1:30 in the morning, I try to go back to sleep, as it is not time to awaken, and I need to get as much sleep as I can. If it is 3:00 in the morning, I do not try to go back to sleep. I know that it is the hour for me to awaken from the sleep. Karen and I normally pray together around four so I know that I have some individual time to pray and meditate before she wakes up. The time to awaken is different for all of us. My 3:00 a.m. may be 6:00 a.m. for you, as we all have different living schedules. No matter what time you normally must get up, Paul is telling us that we have looked at God’s projection clock, and we know that it is time to wake up. This implies that we have been sleeping. The Greek word that is translated as awaken is *egeiro* (Strong’s G1453), which means to waken or raise up. It is used 145 times, and is most commonly used when speaking about raised from the dead. Our context today is not talking about being raised from the dead, but as being awakened from sleep. In verse twelve, Paul wrote that the night is almost gone, and the day is near. In case knowing the hour was not enough to know that it is time to wake up, knowing that the night is almost gone, and the day is near is a second indicator that it is time to wake up.

(Rom 13:11-14) “*Do* this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. {12} The night is almost gone, and the day is near...”

Why is it time to wake up? What is the time and hour that Paul is speaking about? In 1 Timothy, Paul said that in later times some will fall away. In 2 Timothy 3:1-2, he wrote that in the last days difficult times will come. The time that we are in is referred to as the last days, and things are going to get more difficult. The last days began at Pentecost and will continue until the coming of the Lord, known as the Day of the Lord. (See Acts 2:17-18 and Joel 2:28-29.)

(1 Tim 4:1) “But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,”

(2 Tim 3:1-2) “But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. {2} For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,”

The early church had a keen awareness of the time, and lived with a hope and expectation of the Lord’s return. In Revelation 22:20, we read, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” We also see the response, “Amen, Come, Lord Jesus.” Perhaps because it has been 2,000 years and Jesus has not come yet, we live without that keen expectation that He will come soon. But, the early church had more of an awareness that we are in the last days.

(Rev 22:20) “He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

In 1 Thessalonians 5, Paul wrote that “as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.” This is a parallel passage to our passage in Romans 13, and in verses four and five, he tells them (and us) that we are not in darkness, but are sons of light and sons of day. Therefore, we should be alert and sober. Paul told the Thessalonians to put on the breastplate of faith and love. Some scholars say that this is a military reference to the Roman soldiers. They would party at night, and in the morning, the party was over and they had to wake up, be alert, and put their battle gear on. In the same vein of thought, Christians are to be wake up, be alert, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ. The time to have lived in darkness and sin is over for Christians; it is time to put on Christ and live in the light.

(1 Thess 5:1-11) “Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. {2} For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. {3} While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. {4} But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; {5} for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; {6} so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. {7} For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. {8} But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. {9} For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, {10} who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. {11} Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”

In 1 John 2:18-28, John wrote that it was the last hour, and it was in reference to the second coming of Christ. In Revelations 1:3 and 22:10, he spoke that the time was near, and again, it is in reference to Christ’s second coming.

(1 John 2:18-28) “Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.... {28} Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.”

(Rev 1:3) “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

(Rev 22:10) “And he *said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.”

Paul also wrote that salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. That is true for all of us. The amount of time left in the last days is less each day. Our salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. Our salvation is in parts. We have been justified, declared righteous, because Jesus paid for our sins. We have been sanctified or made holy, and are being sanctified. We will one day be glorified, and will receive a glorified body. You are saved now, but our full salvation has not come yet, but it is nearer to us than when we believed.

(Rom 13:11-14) “*Do* this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. {12} The night is almost gone, and the day is near...”

2. Awaken from sleep

Since we know the time, Paul tells us it is the hour for us to awaken from sleep. Sleep often refers to someone who has died, and at other times refers to someone who is literally sleeping. At other times, sleep refers to someone who is not aware of what is going on around them. Some scholars say that this sleep in this verse is referring to our life before Christ, and that we had not been spiritually awakened. Paul is writing to the believers in Rome (and to all of us), and it does not make sense to tell a believer it is time to become a Christian, so that does not make full sense. I believe that sleep in this case means that we are not aware or cognizant of what the time is, and what is going on around us. God is telling the church it is time to wake up.

(Rom 13:11) “*Do* this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.”

When my father was teaching, when he came to an important point in his presentation, he would tell people to wake up. People may have been dozing off or daydreaming, and he wanted their full attention because he was going to tell them something important. I heard him say many times that what he was about to tell them was the most important thing they would hear in that class, and it usually had to do with a drilling operation called tripping. I believe that the church in many ways has dozed off, or has been daydreaming, and has lost its focus on what is going on, so the Lord would say to us, “Awake from your sleep. I need you to be alert and focused on what I have commanded you to do.”

In Matthew 24, Jesus said, “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.” Jesus is coming back, and we need to be alert. Jesus gave the example of a house being broken into. He said if the head of the house knew what time the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and not allowed his house to be broken into. In the same way, the church needs to be awake, alert, and ready for the coming of Christ.

(Matt 24:42-44) “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. {43} “But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. {44} “For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*.”

In Matthew 25, Jesus gave another parable. This time it was about ten virgins who were waiting to meet the bridegroom. Five were foolish and did not have oil in their lamps and five were wise and had oil with them. While the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. At midnight there was a shout, “Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet Him.” The five wise virgins had oil and trimmed their lamps and went out to meet Him. The foolish ones had no oil and asked the prudent ones for oil, but were told to go buy some. When they came back from purchasing the oil, it was too late, and the door to the wedding feast was shut. The oil represents a relationship with Christ. It will be too late when He comes; we need to be in relationship with Christ now. Jesus’ point was that we need to be alert, for we do not know the day or the hour.

(Matt 25:1-13) “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. {2} “Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. {3} “For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, {4} but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. {5} “Now while the bridegroom was

delaying, they all got drowsy and *began* to sleep. {6} "But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet *him*.' {7} "Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. {8} "The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' {9} "But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you *too*; go instead to the dealers and buy *some* for yourselves.' {10} "And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. {11} "Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' {12} "But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' {13} "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

In Mark 13, Jesus gave another parable about the appointed time. He said it was like a man who went on a journey and left his slaves in charge with assigned tasks. He told them to be on the alert, lest he come and find them sleeping. Again, the point was to be alert. In these last days, God does not want the church to be sleeping. He wants us to awaken and be alert.

(Mark 13:33-37) "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the *appointed* time will come. {34} "It is like a man away on a journey, *who* upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, *assigning* to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. {35} "Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— {36} in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. {37} "What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

David Loveless was the pastor at Discovery Church. He once told about how he had to wake up so that he could be alert. The first thing he would do is get out of bed and go to his sink, where he would splash cold water on his face. That would wake him up, or any of the rest of us. Then, he would go have his quiet time with the Lord. I am not advocating that you splash water on your face, but I believe that God does want His church to wake up and be alert.

For some people, being alert may mean that you need a more balanced work and sleep schedule. You may need to take a day of rest, like God tells us to take. Others may need to evaluate their activities. Many people live for the week-ends and they show up to work on Monday very exhausted. Their employers want them alert and ready to work, but instead they find them tired from their week-end activities. If we are not alert, we need to take a look at why we are not alert, and come up with a remedial plan to help us wake up and be alert.

3. Lay aside the deeds of darkness

Because we know the time, we must awaken from our sleep. But just waking up is just the first step. Once we wake up we must lay aside the deeds of darkness, and put on the deeds of daylight. Paul said, the night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore, let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. The Roman soldiers had to remove their regular clothing in order to put on the armor. Using that analogy, we have to take off the filthy garments of our life before Christ so that we can put on the garments of righteousness.

(Rom 13:12) "The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light."

What are those deeds of darkness that we must lay aside? We do not have an exhaustive list, but Paul mentions a few examples. We are to lay aside carousing and drunkenness, sexual

promiscuity and sensuality, and strife and jealousy. We are not just to lay them aside, we are to make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

(Rom 13:13-14) “Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. {14} But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.”

In Galatians 5, Paul gives another list of the deeds of the flesh. He said, “the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like that.” Even this is not an exhaustive list, but it is a big enough list to include and convict me of sinfulness in my own life.

(Gal 5:19-21) “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, {20} idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, {21} envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

There are two things that I commonly do with documents so that I don’t accidentally use an old or outdated file. I normally have a date at the end of the file, which may read “rev 03032022.” This is particularly helpful when working through contractual agreements between various parties. It is important to use the current document with the latest revisions. Another thing that I do is to create a folder that simply says, “Old,” or “Unused.” If I am looking at creative work, like advertisements or artwork, several different ideas may be created to be considered. While we don’t want to delete all the ideas, it is important to use the correct file, so I put the unused files in that Unused folder.

In our fight against sin and the flesh, we need to take a similar approach. We need say no to the sin, and then take proactive steps to prevent us from falling into that sin again. In prison ministry there was a saying, “Same playground, same playmates, same results.” The national rate of recidivism is around 71%, meaning that when inmates are freed, they go right back to the pattern of sin and end up being re-incarcerated. So, we encouraged inmates to make changes to protect them from doing the same things. They need a new set of friends, and a church is a great place to surround yourself with the right kind of friends. They need a new playground or place to hang out. Again, church activities are a great place to be. Living in a different place, area of town, or city can be helpful. I encouraged them to stay away from the places and people that they associated with in the past. I also gave them carefully-chosen scriptures to memorize so that they renewed their mind. These are all ways to help them make no provision for the flesh.

Why is it that we make provision for the flesh? Why is it that we continue to struggle with laying off the deeds of the flesh? I believe there are a number of reasons. We preach an easy gospel that does not include repentance. Jesus and the apostles preached repentance. In Acts 2:37-38, when asked about how to get saved, Peter said to “repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins.” Three thousand people got saved that day, and it was not from an easy gospel. We encourage people to pray to receive Christ, but we do not tell them to repent. So, we have lots of people that believe they are followers of Christ, when they are still walking in their old sinful ways and have no intention on changing.

(Acts 2:37-38) “Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” {38} Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Second, we do not have a firm and aggressive determination to stop sinning. In Matthew 18:8-9, Jesus said, if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you, for it is better to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. He continued, saying, “If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.” Notice that in both examples, Jesus said to throw it from you. He was saying that we must be aggressive in our fight against sin, and make no provision for it; throw it away from you so that you. We have to get serious about sin.

(Matt 18:8-9) “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. {9} If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.”

Why are we not more serious about sin? I believe that we need more fear of the Lord. There is a common teaching today that we should not fear the Lord because perfect love casts out all fear. They said we should be motivated by love, not fear. I believe that we should be motivated by love, but not at the expense of the fear of the Lord. The early church had a fear and reverence of the Lord, and we need more of it today. I want to take a quick look at the fear of the Lord. In Proverbs 3:7, we are told to “fear the Lord and turn away from evil.” A fear of the Lord helps turn away from evil. In Proverbs 8:13, Solomon tells us that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride, arrogance, the evil way, and the perverted mouth. In Proverbs 16:6, we learn that by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil. We need more fear of the Lord. We need more hatred of evil and sin. We need more resolve to stop sinning.

(Pr 3:7) “Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil.”

(Pr 8:13) “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate.”

(Pr 16:6) “By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.”

In my weekly prayer plan for kings and those in authority, I pray for a fear of the Lord on Fridays. I used to just pray for their families on Fridays, and I still do, but I added the fear of the Lord, and prioritized it. I regularly pray for more fear of the Lord in my own life, as this is something good for all of us.

Knowing the time, we need to lay aside the deeds of darkness. We need a firm conviction and determination to lay them aside. We need to have an aggressive attitude towards laying them aside. We need to take preventive measures and make no provision for the flesh. The night is almost gone and the day is near, so we need to behave properly as in the day.

4. Put on the deeds of daylight

Since we know the time, there is one more thing God instructs us to do, that is, to put on the deeds of daylight. The Greek word that is used twice here is *enduo* (Strong's G1746), which means to sink down into clothing or put on clothes. Paul uses the word twice in our passage. We are to put on the armor of light, which is in line with the analogy of a Roman soldier waking up and putting on his armor. The second use of *enduo* is that we are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Rom 13:12b-14) "...Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and **put on** (*enduo*) the armor of light. {13} Let us behave properly as in the day... {14} But **put on** (*enduo*) the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts."

Here are a few other examples of how *enduo* is used. In Luke 24:49, Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they were clothed (*enduo*) with power from on high. That is what they did; they waited there and at Pentecost the Holy Spirit came down upon them and they were clothed with power.

(Luke 24:49) "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

In Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:10, we are exhorted to put on the new self, which is in the likeness of God. In the passage in Colossians, Paul uses the word three times. After teaching us to put on the new self, he said to "put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." This is a more descriptive way of what it means to put on the new self. Then, Paul summarizes, saying, "beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity." When we put on the new self, the chief characteristic is love. Many people say that love is a feeling, but in this case it is an action; we put on love. It is intentional. We choose to put on a heart of compassion and show compassion. We choose to be kind. We choose to be gentle and patient. Love is not just a feeling, but something we do.

(Eph 4:24) "and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

(Col 3:10-14) "and have **put on** the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— {11} *a renewal* in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. {12} So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, **put on** a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; {13} bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. {14} Beyond all these things **put on** love, which is the perfect bond of unity."

In Ephesians 6:11, Paul instructs us to put on the full armor of God, so that we can stand firm against the schemes of the devil. The armor of light and the armor of God are one and the same. Ephesians breaks down the various components of the armor of light that our text instructs us to put on. We are to gird our loins with truth. We need to be in God's word every day; it protects our vital organs. We need to put on the breastplate of righteousness. We need to shod our feet with the preparation of the gospel. We need to be ready to make a defense of the gospel at any time. We need to take up the shield of faith, and put on the helmet of salvation. We need to take the sword of the Spirit. We need to put on the full armor of light.

(Eph 6:11-17) “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil....{13} Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. {14} Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, {15} and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; {16} in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*. {17} And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Paul tells us to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. In Galatians 3:27, Paul wrote that all who were baptized into Christ have clothed themselves with Christ. When we receive Christ into our lives, we have clothed ourselves with Christ. Baptism is a picture of us putting our old self to death and burying it, and being raised up to new life in Jesus. We get clothed with Christ when we receive Christ. Paul is writing to the saints in Rome when he instructs them to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that we are initially clothed with Christ, but on a daily basis we continue to get dressed in Christ. I believe we present ourselves to Christ as living and holy sacrifices and purposely live for Christ each day. I believe that is how we put on the Lord Jesus Christ every day.

(Rom 13:14) “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.”

(Gal 3:27) “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

Conclusion and Applications

Our text today is about waking up, laying aside the deeds of darkness, and putting on the armor of light. I want to briefly finish with one more passage that deals very effectively with this thought. In Galatians 5:16-24, Paul says that when we walk by the Spirit, we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. He then goes into detail about the various deeds of the flesh and also the fruit of the Spirit. There are two take-aways that I want to point out. First, the laying aside of the deeds of darkness and the putting on the armor of light are closely tied together. When we put on the armor of light and set our minds on the Spirit, we will not carry out the desire of the flesh. So, set your mind on the Spirit. Spend time in prayer and worship every day. Spend time in the word of God and let it richly dwell within you.

(Gal 5:16) “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”

The second take-away is in verse twenty-four, where Paul said that those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. When Christ gave an invitation to follow Him, He told people to take up their cross, deny themselves, and then come follow Him. He did not tell people to just say a prayer to ask God to forgive them and give them eternal life; He asked them to deny themselves and take up their crosses. When we put on the Lord Jesus Christ, we must crucify the flesh with its passions and desires. That is the picture of baptism that we looked at earlier. We crucify the flesh and bury it so that we can be raised up with Christ to a new life in the Spirit. We have to lay aside the deeds of darkness so that we can put on the armor of light and put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Gal 5:24) “Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

(Mark 8:34) “And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.”

There may be someone reading or listening to this message that has never put on the Lord Jesus Christ. There may be some who have prayed to receive Christ, but you did not deny yourself and take up your cross. You never put on Jesus Christ as your Lord, surrendering your life to His Lordship. If that is you, and you would like to put on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning, pray with me.

Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God and that You came to take away the sins of the world. I believe that You died for our sins and were raised from the dead. This morning, I want to take up my cross and follow You. I choose to deny myself and crucify my flesh and its passions and desires, and to follow You. I ask You to come into my life as my Lord and Savior this morning. Forgive me of my sins, and help me put on the armor of light each day. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

There may be others that have not had a hatred for sin. God wants you to have more fear of the Lord in your life. If that is you, I want to pray for you.

Father God, I want to have Your heart and attitude about sin. I know that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil and to turn away from every form of evil. I ask You for more fear and reverence of You today. Give me a more aggressive attitude in dealing with sin. I don't want to compromise any longer. I don't want to make any more provisions for the flesh. I want to lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. I want to live my life, doing the deeds of daylight. I pray this in Jesus' name.

Q & A

- What does it mean to awaken from our sleep? How do we awaken? What are things we must do to awaken?
- How do we practically lay aside the deeds of darkness?
- What are some practical ways that we can safeguard ourselves, making no provision for the flesh?
- Is accountability with others part of making no provision for the flesh?
- What are the activities in your life that have helped you put on the armor of light? What has helped you walk in the Spirit?

Introduction (1 Chron 12:31-32, Matt 16:1-3, Rom 13:11-14)

- 1. Know the Time** (Rom 13:11-14, 1 Tim 4:1, 2 Tim 3:1-2, Rev 22:20, 1 Thess 5:1-11, 1 John 2:18-28, Rev 1:3, 22:10)

- 2. Awaken from sleep** (Rom 13:11, Matt 24:42-44, 25:1-13, Mark 13:33-37)

- 3. Lay aside the deeds of darkness** (Rom 13:12-14, Gal 5:19-21, Acts 2:37-38, Matt 18:8-9, Pr 3:7, 8:13, 16:6)

- 4. Put on the deeds of daylight** (Rom 13:12b-14, Luke 24:49, Eph 4:24, Col 3:10-14, Eph 6:11-17, Gal 3:27)

Conclusion and Applications (Gal 5:16-24, Mark 8:34)