

# *Awaken the Sleeper*



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*'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.'*

Rom 13:11

*"How hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! But not with God; for all things are possible with God."*

Mark 10:24, 27

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## **Some Christians sleep**

In the Bible sleep is often seen as spiritual apathy. Sometimes spiritual sluggishness is represented as a sleep. To the brethren in Rome Paul wrote: *‘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. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.’*

Rom 13:11-12

These words were not spoken to unbelievers, but to those in the Church in Rome. So why do so many believers fail to realise the new life they have received is really the life of Christ Himself? Why is it that they don't know they are to literally walk as He walked in a life totally under the will of God, led and empowered by the Holy Spirit?

Without a clear knowledge of all God has for us, and the commitment to put on the life of Christ, many sleep in their faith. They live as sleep walkers rather than being fully awake and alive in Christ Jesus. Therefore the sleep walker is sold

short of all they could be in Christ as they continue to live as children of Adam.

A similar thought is suggested in Paul's letter to the Ephesians: *"Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you."* *Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil."*

Eph. 5:14-16

This state of affairs seriously grieves the Holy Spirit in His work of sanctification in the believer. And since the sleep walker often sees the behaviour of the flesh as only natural, he makes excuses for his weaknesses instead of casting them off.

Then the Spirit grieves the loss of opportunity to see God glorified in the believer's life, and He grieves the wasted salvation opportunity to see others bought into the Kingdom of God. *"he who does not gather with Me, scatters."*

Luke 11:23

Sleep walkers are not dumb and uneducated. They may know much about God and Church practice, and have lots of experience in the Church, but have not fully realised they are not their own, that they have died in Christ to actually live His resurrected life here on Earth. They may also be ordinary people who have not gained adequate teaching of their new life, but alas, they still sleep.

And sleeping means not living the Supernatural life empowered by the Holy Spirit to ensure the disciple is just like his Master having victory over the flesh and doing the work of God.

The sleep walker cannot quiet grasp the oneness and the unity of their life with that of the Risen Lord who said we are one with the Father and the Son, having one life, one purpose and one Spirit.

### **An Unrealised potential**

Consequently there remains a separation in their minds between themselves and who they

think Jesus is. They fail to see that His will is for them to live His life, to walk as He walked and to show His glory here on earth as they dwell with Him.

Jesus has called them to do His work as His ambassadors in the Supernatural work of being changed into His image and in doing His work of saving the lost. They struggle to comprehend what He brings to their life, so in a sense they do not know Him intimately enough and therefore who they should be.

How can we become like the master if we don't really know what He is like, if we don't really know what we are changing our life to be?

### **The fruit of the Spirit's potential is ours**

What attributes and qualities does the Spirit bring to those who live in Christ Jesus? What can we expect when we live in the River of God's Spirit?

Here are a few qualities for our consideration because our adequacy comes only from God and not ourselves. The Holy Spirit teaches us this of Christ. He is Holy. He is humble at heart. He is strong and courageous. He has great depth and character. He is gentle. He is loving and compassionate. He has quiet assurance. He has strong conviction. He is righteous. He has all knowledge and wisdom. He is faithful in fidelity. He is longsuffering. He is patient. He is kind. He is self abasing. He is passionate about the Kingdom. He abounds in joyfulness. He is endlessly hopeful and He has all Authority on Earth.

### **So in dying we live**

By faith we can claim these things for ourselves as we die to the old self and put on Christ Jesus. These qualities are the very things we need to put on as we put off the old self. And it is the Spirit's work to establish these things in our life but only as we yield to His leading and dominion.

These qualities are what makes us complete in Christ. It is the Spirit's work to show us what we need to give up, and what we need to replace it with. But He can only do this when we obey Him.

### **Instead we have Sleeping believers**

But alas, for the sleep walker, Church is where you go on Sunday to get your top up and to meet your spiritual obligation, or to carry out your spiritual work for Christ. It is a place where you go for your weekly injection of 'nice' to keep you from the clutches of the evil one, or it is the place where you do your bit of work in the ministry so as to maintain a separation between the written words in the Bible and the physical reality of Christ Himself living in the lives of His people.

Those who work in this way do not realise that they are sleep walking, and Church leaders should know that much more is required of them if they are to lead others into the Promised Land.

## **Dying in not easy**

Change is not easy. So to suggest to sleepers that they should be actually living the Christ life can be quite offensive to some, and be seen as just a bit extreme and a little crazy. However, the evidence of the sleep walker is in the excuses they make for living in the natural, regardless of how much they think they know about God.

They may want to see powerful evidence of the Supernatural work of God in their midst, to see the signs and wonders of God, but do not realise they are to be the Supernatural work of God and that the works of God are in them to do.

However, the Spirit of God can only work through us when we are truly available to the Spirit so He can do His work in us. Our obedience turns on the light.

## **By their fruit we will know them**

So how do we know the sleeper?

*By their fruit you will know them.* That fruit of the natural man is in the quality of their personal lives which does not conform to the life of Christ when they don't think anybody is around to see what they do. That fruit reveals an unwillingness to surrender all we are to all He is, for it is the lack of a commitment to be nothing so He can be everything. It is forgetting we need to die to ourselves in order live if we follow Him.

And the sleeping pill taken by the sleeper is actually unbelief. Some sad souls administer this poison more than others, and the administration is done by the flesh itself in its efforts to stay alive in them.

The evidence of the Spirit working in the woken is that they are learning to overcome the flesh and all its ability to live its life in them. They have seen that what is only natural for others is abhorrent, repugnant, and distasteful, because it opposes and grieves the

Spirit in doing the work of God to change them into the Image of Christ.

The repugnance they feel creates in them a desperation that drives them to the cross of Jesus so that the circumcision not done by human hands can be done more completely in separating them from the flesh they hate.

### **Surrender to the light**

We must ask the question; is the call to be perfect as He is perfect, to be holy as He is holy a bridge too far? It will always be too far and unobtainable if we think we have to do it in our own strength, if we don't believe He will do His work in us when we surrender all to Him. It is a bridge too far when we deny the Spirit's dominion in us, for it is our willing surrender that makes it all possible.

Without obedient surrender to the Spirit, the truth of His words cannot be heard, because the truths of these words of God are only taught to the one who is awake to the Spirit of God.

To the humble and obedient that yield their nothingness to His all, all will be given. It is they who will know His empowerment so they can abide in His life.

Anyone who thinks he can bring anything of value to this awakening still sleeps. Only the humble and empty are woken, and only the woken know they are nothing and have nothing in themselves as they stand in the presence of their awesome God. When we give ourselves totally to be a living sacrifice, God can fill us with the life of His Son to do the works He did and greater works He has for us to do. Only the fully surrendered can say *'it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.'*

Gal 2:20

So we need to encourage all sleepers to awaken. And when they wake they will not find they are a master craftsman, but the Masters apprentice. They will find themselves in the Masters hands as He moulds them into His own glorious image and likeness.

Oh, how the heart quickens when we are moulded in the Masters hands and feel His love being poured out into our heart in a way unknown before. Great is our joy when we feel our inadequacy, and then claim His adequacy for ourselves when we live for Christ alone.

Oh the sweet fellowship that awaits all who are in Him because they can ask Him to teach them and know He will not deny their requests.

They will know He personally delights to encourage and uphold them in their walk so they will not be overcome.

They will know He will take special care to fill their hearts with His love, a love which is beyond understanding when they are bowed low before Him.

Oh what joy and delight is the life lived in Him. Self is dead, long live the King.

## **Sleepers are unprepared for the Lord's return**

Being asleep suggests the impression of being unprepared to meet the Lord at the time of his return. Jesus warned: *“Watch therefore: for you do not know when the lord of the house is coming ... lest he come suddenly and find you sleeping”*

Mark. 13:35-36

When Paul wrote letters to the brothers in Thessalonica, he warned about a false sense of security. People will be relaxing in a mistaken state of “peace and safety,” when suddenly, destruction will come upon them. And so he warned them: *“While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labour pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so*

*then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.”*

1 Thess. 5:3-6

To be awake is to be vigilant, ever prepared. If a Christian is not putting on the Christ life and does nothing for Christ, he is asleep.

### **Awaken the sleeper**

God wants to walk and talk with all His beloved children. Teaching them by revelation from the Spirit into a heart that is open and empty to be taught and refreshed and nourished by Him alone. He stands at the door and knocks unceasingly, if you are asleep, will you awaken and open up for Him to enter to have divine fellowship with you? Only then can you abide in Him and have the victory over all things in Him.

*“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”*

Rev 3:20

# Living Water Resources



Come to the River

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