

Shadows Of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #44 Wake Up! Be Watchful! Nov. 20, 2024

Rev. 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;

These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;

I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. [spiritual; now growing]

God's Truth, Light, is powerful and is able to make dead things living just by shining on them.

Eph. 5:13-14 But when anything is exposed and reprov'd by the light, it is made

visible and clear; and where everything is visible and clear there is light.

¹⁴ Therefore He says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,

and Christ shall shine [make day dawn] upon you and give you light.

Prayer: May God's Light shine on me & reveal the Truth regarding my Spiritual Growth, Walk.

Note: When the Bible talks about those who sleep [*who are still physically alive*], the connotation is that their righteousness, which is received through faith, is not visibly evident, and therefore the person appears to be no different than someone who is unrighteous.

- The believer and unbeliever are sometimes indistinguishable because the believer is living a lifestyle that is no different than an unbeliever. [carnal believer = babe in Christ]
- Thus, the believer is "sleeping." While they have righteousness, and therefore are "alive" to God, they are indistinguishable from someone who is a corpse
[that is, someone who is an unbeliever, and therefore appear unrighteous].
- The living believer actually looks dead from a spiritual perspective, but since they are actually alive to God, they are called "sleeping" Christians.

Important: No one is physically unconscious [no one is literally sleeping in this imagery].

Thus the "sleeping" Christian is someone who consciously lives in darkness,

where the light does not shine. Therefore, their Christian testimony is compromised.

Danger of Compromise: Compromise is double mindedness.

Compromise stands by when sin could be prevented.

Compromise causes God's people to be indecisive and faithless.

SLEEPY SAINTS by A W Pink: What an anomaly! Drowning on the verge of eternity!

A Christian has been: 1. awakened from the sleep of death in trespasses and sins,

2. made to realize the unspeakable awfulness of endless misery in hell,

3. the indescribable joy of everlasting bliss in heaven, and

4. thereby brought to recognize the seriousness and solemnity of life.

5. He has been taught experientially the worthlessness of all mundane things and the

preciousness of Divine things. He has turned his back on Vanity Fair and has started out on his journey to the Celestial City [Phil. 3:20-21].

6. He has been quickened into newness of life [Rom 6:4].

7. He has been supplied with the most powerful incentives

to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus

Matt. 25:21, 23; II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 3:11-15; Phil. 3:14

Nevertheless, it is sadly possible for him: (1) to suffer a relapse,

(2) for his zeal to abate Heb. 6:11-12

(3) his graces to languish

(4) for him to leave his first love Rev. 2:4-5

(5) become weary of well-doing II Thess. 3:13; Gal. 6:9

Warning: Unless he is on his guard, drowsiness will steal over him, and he will fall asleep.

Slumber Spiritually: inattentive to our walk with God, lazy about our spiritual development, slack in our disciplines of prayer and Bible reading.

- Heb. 3:13 Corruptions still indwell in him, and sin has a stupefying effect.
- Gal. 1:4 He is yet in this evil world. It exerts an enervating influence on him. feel drained of energy or vitality.
- I Pet. 5:8 Satan seeks to devour him. Unless resisted steadfastly, Satan will hypnotize him. [James 4:6-7; Eph. 6:11-13]

Thus, the menace of this spiritual "sleeping sickness" is very real.

Slumbering saints! Taking their ease while threatened by danger!

- I Tim. 6:12 Lazy instead of fighting the good fight of faith
- Matt. 5:16; Col. 4:5 Trifling away opportunities to glorify their Savior.
- Eph. 5:16 Do not redeem the time.
- Rev. 14:13; 22:12 Rusting, instead of wearing out in His service.

Rev. 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect [mature; complete] before God.

Prov. 4:25-27 Let thine eyes look right on and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

²⁶ Ponder the path of thy feet and let all thy ways be established.

²⁷ Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Col. 2:6-10 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, So Walk Ye In Him:

⁷ Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. ⁸ Beware lest any man spoil [cheat] you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

⁹ For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

¹⁰ And Ye Are Complete In Him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Powerful Truth: One of the first steps towards deadness and declension is:

To Let Down Our Watch.

Beware lest any man carry you off as a captive; kidnapped converts.

Col. 2:18a "Let No Man Beguile You of Your Reward"

Beguile = declare unworthy of a prize

- athletic term: the umpire disqualifies the contestant because he has not obeyed the rules. The contestant does not cease to be a citizen of the land, but he forfeits the honor of winning a prize.
- refers to discouraging (misleading) believers, diverting them from their full potential for receiving their *unique glorification*
- *katabrabeúō* 2596 [*katá*, "down, according to," which intensifies 1018 /*brabeúō*, "acting as an umpire") - properly, a judge (*arbiter*) making the *wrong call*, *depriving* someone of their rightful prize and reward [used only in Col 2:18].

Col. 2:18-19 Let no one beguile [keep defrauding] you of your prize [reward],

Rev. 3:3a Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.

Steps To Awaken Out Of Our Sleep

1. Be Watchful: I Pet. 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
2. Strengthen what Remains: I Cor. 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
3. Remember: Ps. 77:11-12 I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.¹² I will meditate also of all thy work and talk of thy doings.
4. Hold Fast: II Tim. 1:13 Keep and follow the pattern of sound teaching (doctrine) which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
5. Repent: I John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Rev. 3b If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Strategic Location: Sardis had, at one time, been considered to be impregnable because of its ideal physical arrangement and topography for defense.

The original city sat on top of a 1,500' high plateau with one narrow road leading into the city.

The other sides of the plateau were just steep cliffs almost impossible to scale.

Yet Sardis had been attacked and conquered twice:

- first by Cyrus the Great in 549 BC and by Antiochus the Great in 218 BC.

Their enemies should not have been able to defeat them.

As a fortress with great defense, they had everything they needed for victory.

Why? Its arrogance and overconfidence manifested in failing to keep an adequate watch.

When Sardis came under attack by Cyrus the Persian, King Croesus and his people retreated to their city, put a detail at one place, and believed they were safe. One night, one of the Persian soldiers saw a Sardinian soldier drop his helmet over the wall of the city. He watched as that soldier followed a hidden path down the side of the mountain to retrieve his helmet. When nightfall came, Cyrus and his troops followed the hidden path up the side of the mountain, entered the city while the guards slept and conquered Sardis. Taken like a thief in the night.

Four Reasons For Scoffing, Apathy & Indifference Of Christians:

1. Unbelief - Many professing Christians do not believe Jesus will ever return to this earth due to a liberal view of Scripture. They spiritualize the virgin birth and miracles.

➤ His return is nothing more than a fairy tale.

2. Ignorance - Many are apathetic due to ignorance regarding His return and the marvelous future He has waiting for believers. Many discredit prophetic teaching; not important.

3. Fear - Many fear His imminent return for believers because of their lifestyle.

Many believe in a works salvation and fear He will return on one of their "bad" days.

4. Carnality - Carnal Christians cannot get excited about His return because they are in love with the world. They walk with one foot in church and one in the world. They don't want Him to return until they have experienced all the world and this life offer. Don't mess up my life!

Note: Sleep = *katheudo* = refers to spiritual lethargy and negligence with a view to Christ's return ➤ To be spiritually asleep with the result that one becomes secure and unconcerned in sin as well as indolent and careless in the performance of the call on his life and the work God has prepared for him to accomplish.

It appears evident: The People Of God Are Thus Overcome.

Each of these calls is made to the saints. Jesus is Coming! Wake Up! Shape Up! Clean Up!

Rom. 13:11 It is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. [3 tenses of salvation]

II Cor. 1:10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

I Cor. 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God:

I Thess. 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

I Thess. 5:6-11 Paul admonishes the believer to WAIT UP for Christ's return by behaving in a godly way. Don't be caught off guard. The Biblical idea of waiting is HIGHLY ACTIVE.

I Thess. 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch [alert] and be sober.

How exceedingly difficult is a Godly walk! The old habits of life are so binding; the worldly currents about us are so strong; the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil are so subtle; the fear of being considered peculiar is so gripping.

➤ To maintain a steady, sustained consistency in daily conduct is not an easy task.

It is far easier to float downstream with the tide of nominal Christianity

➤ To drift in the listlessness and lukewarmness of a worldly church...

To creep along as a spiritual babe, fed on the milk of elementary doctrines of salvation...

To drift and creep along is easier than to mount up with eagle's wing and soar to spiritual heights of sudden inspiration on some spiritual Mount of Transfiguration only to relapse into a backslidden condition when facing the stern realities of Christian living in an unsympathetic atmosphere.

It is easier to rise to some particular task such as teaching a Bible class, or leading a meeting, or preaching a sermon, than to practice consistently in the home, office, or social circle the truth preached. A daily, consistent Christlike Walk; no stagnancy, slump or sloth -- how hard!

Sleeping Believers: Stir Up The Living Spirit Of God To Come To Life.

Rev. 3:1a These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, Jesus Christ as head of the church brought HOPE in the gift of the Holy Spirit and the fullness of His power to bring LIFE.

He is ALL we need to succeed and triumph as Christians and as the church.

Paul spent Ephesians 1-3 telling believers to SIT and listen to their position in Christ before he gives any mention of how they should now WALK.

Ephesians 1-3

Ephesians 4-6

The Root	The Fruit
Spiritual Wealth	Spiritual Walk
Christian Privilege	Christian Conduct
Position of Believer	Practice of Believer
God Sees Us In Christ	World Sees Christ In Us
Doctrine; Doctrinal	Duty; Practical
Privileges of Believer	Responsibilities of the Believer
Christin Blessings	Christian Behavior
Belief	Behavior
Our Heritage in Christ	Our Life in Christ
Know Your Resources in Christ	Live by faith in light of your Resources in Christ
Finished Work of Christ	Faithful Walk of the Believer
Work of Christ In Us	Work of Christ Through Us
We are in Christ	Christ Is in Us
Word of God	Walk of the Christian
Heavenly Standing	Earthly Walk
Who You Are in Christ	Whose You Are in Christ
Identity	Responsibility
Theology	Ethics

In Ephesians 4 & 5, Paul gives us commands regarding our "heavenly calling."

➤ He uses "walk" to describe how we should walk in Christ.

Walking suggests how we are to order our behavior or conduct and implies PROGRESS in our spiritual maturity and growth.

Our Previous Walk: Eph. 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air. Our old walk is finished.

Our Present Walk: Eph. 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Live A Life Worthy of the Calling: Our Privileged Walk

Truth: How One Walks [his conduct; behavior] Reflects On His Entire Christian Testimony.

Eph. 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

➤ Therefore > because of all God has done for us > walk in a manner worthy...

Consider: To not do so, communicates to others and God that we attribute no value to our calling, to the great riches and benefits that God has so graciously bestowed upon us and that Christ has so lovingly sacrificed Himself for on the cross

- The WALK comes AFTER the believer has a firm grasp on his solid position in Christ.
- Your DO comes from living in what He has DONE.
- You can only WALK after you have learned to SIT in your position in Christ.

What is my motivation to be obedient and walk worthy?

1. Law - It is good friends with fear and guilt.

- Some think God operates on the 'shape up or ship out' principle. If they don't tidy up their act they could lose their salvation or something bad will happen to them.
- A reverential fear is critical in the Christian life.
- Fear in terms of being afraid of God doesn't provide a platform to grow as a Christian.

The guilt that comes from failing to live up to the demands of the law is not a good basis or motivation for living the Christian life. It becomes a roller coaster of emotions.

2. Love: Paul's admonition to walk worthy is based on their calling by God and His love for them. Is the love motivation enough to overcome your fleshly nature that does not like walking in God's ways?

While it is very important and provides a key part of a godly motivation, by itself 'love' is still not enough. We may be motivated because of what Jesus did for us but don't underestimate the strength of the unchanging nature within you that wants to do things your own way!

3. Life: Motivated by God's Love and Empowered by His Life:

Believers who have 'died to self' in the true sense of dying to their ability to even live the Christian life... without Him. They are motivated by what He did and strengthened by who He is! They know that even a God given command to walk in a godly manner will fail without God Himself being the source of their strength to carry out what He asks.

Attributes of A Worthy Walk: Eph 4:2 with all humility [forsaking self-righteousness], and gentleness [maintaining self-control], with patience, bearing with one another in [unselfish] love.

I John 2:6 The one who says he abides in God ought himself to walk just as Jesus walked.

None of these commands are needed or make any sense without the component of change.

God's goal in our walk is to change us from what we were into what we are.

When we receive salvation through Christ by faith, God declares us eternally righteous in spiritual standing before Him. God's purpose in the walk is to change us in daily living into what we are positionally before Him - Holy.

The Christian Walk Involves A New Way Of Thinking: Our Humble Walk

Eph. 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds; having their understanding darkened.

Eph. 4:23-24 to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness..

Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Our Christ-Like Walk: Eph. 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.
The essence of love is self-sacrifice. Continually "Walk in love" like Christ.

Our Changed Walk: Eph. 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord:
Walk As Children Of Light. [continually]

Our Wise Walk: Eph. 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

F. F. Bruce: "The reputation of the Gospel is bound up with their public behavior."

Key: See then = Look carefully; Be Watchful

The old Puritans & the discipline of watchfulness. *Thomas Brooks defined watchfulness:*

"It includes a waking, a rousing up of the soul. It is a continual and careful observing of our hearts and ways, in all the turning of our lives, that we still keep close to God and His Word."

Our Wise Walk: Eph. 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. [linked with wise walk]

In ancient Athens, there was a statue called "Opportunity." The sculpture featured a strange-looking man with a sort of reverse mullet. Long hair flowed at his bangs, but he was completely bald in the back. The Greeks designed the statue as an object lesson. You could grab hold of opportunity as he approached you, but once he passed, there was nothing to grab.

An ad in the newspaper ran: "Lost, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward offered, for they are gone forever." Time wasted cannot be recovered.

Our Wise Walk: Eph. 5:17-18 Therefore do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Note: There is an association of TIME and the difference between

WISDOM and FOOLISHNESS. Walk...as wise; redeeming the time... Be not foolish.

- To walk circumspectly is to walk in the light of our exalted position and privilege as beloved children of God.
- To walk as fools means to descend from this high plane to the conduct of worldly men.

Harry Ironside: "Time is given to us to use in view of eternity."

Adrian Rogers: To Walk Wisely: Redeem each day "buying up" every moment God gives you.

Eph. 5:16 "Redeem the time." The Promptness Principle. Use your time wisely.

Eph. 5:17 "Be... not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

Eph.5:18 "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit"

Powerful Reminder: Most of us don't need to learn to work harder—

We need to work with more power. Then we will work with more effectiveness.

Powerful Truth: Redeeming the time calls for a "supernatural Spirit controlled sense of urgency", for the time is short for each of us.

I Thess. 2:12 That you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Col. 1:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

God's commands always come with God's enablements.

Rev. 3:1 These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God...

The only way to imitate the life of Jesus: Rely on the same power Jesus relied upon to obey His Father, the power of the Holy Spirit.

William Barclay, historic commentator of the Scriptures, relates a fable in which three of the devil's apprentices were coming to earth to finish their apprenticeships.

They were talking to Satan about their plans to tempt and ruin man.

Devil #1: I will tell them, "There is no God."

Satan's reply: That won't delude anyone. They KNOW there is a God.

Devil #2: I will tell them, "There is no hell."

Satan: You will deceive no one. They know deep down there is a hell and punishment for sin.

Devil #3: I will tell them, "There is no hurry."

Satan's reply: You will ruin men by the thousands.

The most dangerous delusion is that there is plenty of time

Prayer: May God's Light shine on me & reveal the Truth regarding my Spiritual Growth.

May I be obedient to Your commands and consider the consequences for not obeying.

May I consider my evaluation at the Judgment Seat. I have an inheritance. Suffer loss.

Powerful Truth: If I am wise, I will redeem the time I have now and allow the Holy Spirit to bring me to the fullness of Jesus Christ.