

Romans 13:11 – Wake Up – 05 May 2013

And we are now at Romans chapter 13 and if you have your Bibles, you can turn with me, it's a good reference point, Romans 13:11 and a little bit of verse 12 and the whole subject, it's about waking up and in order to do that, I hope to wake you up if I can, with a little video clip and hope it would be relevant as we look at the subject, later on.

Video clip plays of Mr. Bean

(Laughter in the congregation)

Time stamp in audio 0:02:14.7.

How many of you feel like Mr. Bean, every morning when you wake up, can I see by a show of hands, how many of you, like me struggle to wake up in the morning, can I see by a show of hands? So shy, hey, don't be like that lah, how many of you, I like us Mr Bean, you struggle, you're not a morning guy, you are a night guy, you love to stay up late and you really have a difficult time waking up in the morning, how many of you are like this, can I see, a lot of these honest people in this church. (Laughter in the congregation).

Well, like Mr. Bean, I struggle to wake up early in the morning, it's terrible, and you know you should wake up, but you just can't wake up, the sun is shining bright and you wish you had the energy to, but you know, the bed is just so comfortable, it's so cold, you want to snuggle up under your bed sheet, your blanket and it's so comfortable, it's hard to wake up. And one of the most irritating sounds in the whole world, is this (sounds of the alarm clock rings). I set my phone to be my alarm clock, how many of you use your phone to be your alarm clock as well, can I see? Wow, iPhone has taken over the world, I tell you, phones have taken over, yup, that's the sound and when ever, you hear the sound, we wish it would just shut up, isn't it. And I think, one of the great inventions, innovations of the handphone is something called the snooze, it rings, and you wish you could, you could sleep a little bit more, so, instead of switching it off totally, you switch it to the snooze mode, so that every five minutes later, it will wake you up again. Okay, alright, so we all reach for the alarm clock, to shut it up, because we want to sleep further.

Time stamp in audio 0:03:54.9.

And I know how my mind works and I therefore think, this is how your mind works. It's time to wake up, you have an interview to go for, an exam to take, a wedding to go for, you know you have to turn up for work, but you want to sleep further. So, when we are sleepy, struggling to wake up, this is what goes through our minds, we think to ourselves, I can still make it. Correct ?, let me sleep five minutes more, because I think I can still make it. Or maybe, this is what you say to yourself, I think it's okay to be a little bit late, not too late lah, a little late is okay. Or, we think to ourselves, just one time. Or, maybe we rationalize, other people are late also, why can't I be late. And so, these are the clever excuses we spins for ourselves. Very hard to wake up in the morning, but the message today, it's about waking up.

You say, Jason, you mean the Bible talks about sleeping and waking? Absolutely! Today we're talking about waking up and the verses we are considering are in Romans 13. This is, this is familiar to us, Paul, the apostle, writes Romans 13, in a very familiar way, he uses the imagery of how we would struggle to wake up every single day and he says, as Christians, it's time to wake from our sleep.

Time stamp in audio 0:05:17.3.

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand.....

(Rom 13:11-12a ESV)

Time to awake from sleep. I think, when we think about people, church people, Christian people sleeping, there are a few images, that come straight into our minds. First, we look like this, now, I give you permission, to look to the left and right, if anyone looks like this, you have the right to, to rib him and say please, hey, wake up, today's sermon topic is about waking up, maybe you need to do that.

Let me ask you, how many of you have fallen asleep in church services before? Come on, come on, I don't want a dishonest bunch of church people, how many of you have fallen asleep in church services before, shoot up your hands, see. Half ah, okay. How many of you have never fallen asleep, never dozed off, not sleep as in lying across the chairs, but never dozed off before, can I see? Never dozed off before. All you dishonest people (Laughter in the congregation), I don't quite believe you. Now, we have dozed off in church before, some of us, but is that the dozing off your talking about here, not quite. But, that is the common idea people have about going to church, we sleep in church. In fact, they are jokes like this that goes, when the

preacher goes up to speak, it is the cue for the people to sleep. True, you feel that you have work from Monday to Saturday and Sunday, is a great opportunity for me to catch up with some sleep. After all, the preacher is boring, so let me just go to sleep.

Or, maybe you heard the story of how the Sunday school teacher, she came to a little girl and asks and told the girl, "Shhhhh!, You have got to keep quiet, little girl, do you know why you should be quiet in church?" The girl thought for a while and said, "Yah, because, people are sleeping." (Laughter in the congregation).

So, we struggle with that kind of a sleep. But I think, that's not the intent of what Paul is writing. He is obviously, writing to a people, who are reading, or hearing these words, they are not asleep, they are gathered to hear, gather to learn. Yet Paul says, you are guilty of sleeping.

Time stamp in audio 0:07:42.9.

You say how? I don't sleep in church. Yah, I'm not talking about sleeping in church services. But, Paul is talking about sleeping spiritually, in our lives. How, we can come to church, how we can call ourselves Christians, but really, we are pretty much asleep. We don't do very much more, than just coming to church, calling ourselves as Christians. We are asleep in a sense, we're never connected to anything. We're not plugged into ministries, we're not involved in people's lives, when we read the Bible, it is almost like going through a ritual, a routine, when we pray, it's just a laundry list of things or maybe, we don't even do that. Asleep! Oh!, Singaporeans are very alive to business and sports and entertainment. But when it comes to our spiritual lives, there's very little going on. Maybe that's a good part of all of us in this room today.

Time stamp in audio 0:08:45.0.

You would call yourself a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ, you would say, I do attend church every Sunday services, every Sunday morning, but, if you look a little bit beyond it, maybe, we look more asleep than we are alive, because, very little goes on for God, with God in our spiritual lives. That's another kind of sleeping, alright, minimal involvement. So, one kind is you sleep physically in church, another kind is, okay, you are not sleeping physically, you are trying to listen, but you are pretty much asleep, spiritually, there is nothing really going on. But there is a third kind of sleep, I think that describes someone who has a lot of things going on, but he is still asleep. There is a lot of activity, but, he's not quite awake.

Time stamp in audio 0:09:34.9.

You say, what kind of thing is this. Have you heard of somnambulism? Wah, what is a chim (colloquial word for deep) word that is, that's not from the Bible, alright. Somnambulism simply means, sleepwalking. Anyone here, has sleepwalking problems? You all won't dare to raise your hands. No one would dare to sleep beside, a lot of us, we talk in our sleep right. Some of us, how many of you have spouses, no, not about you, your spouse talks in his sleep. My wife, will raise her hands, sometimes I do, I say rubbish and she says, what are you talking about. And, sometimes in our sleep, we talk and sometimes, in our sleep, we walk and sometimes, in our sleep we can do a lot of things. I think, there is a kind of Christian sleep, that can take place, even in the midst of a lot of activities.

I learned about this YouTube sensation over sometime. This YouTube sensation, has millions of views on this, er I am not talking about Psy by the way, not about this guy. But the YouTube sensation that you will be surprised to see and let me show you what he looks like. Oh, sorry, I forgot this poem, this poem I want like to share with you, alright, this is a poem about people sleeping, it says:

Went to church on Sunday morning.
My husband by my side.
When the preacher started preaching;
My man got sleepy eyed.

His head it got real heavy like;
It nodded with a jerk.
But when I pinched him on the leg.
He sat there quite alert.

As soon as I thought all was well.
I saw he dripped some drool.
I pulled the hairs upon his arm.
He seemed to think me, cruel.

But it only cured His symptoms;
Just for a little bit.
I thought my life was over when;
His head fell with a hit.

I felt like sinkin' in my chair.
When all eyes looked our way.

After that, my husband awoke;
To hear the preacher say.

It's time to wake up Christian friend;
And listen to the Lord!
Don't let Him find you sawing logs;
Or living like the world!

Too many Christians lulled asleep;
By devil's lullabies.
Pray to the Lord and keep alert;
Beware of sleepy eyes.

Jesus left them in the garden.
He told them all to pray.
When He returned, they were asleep.
Will He find you that way?

Time stamp in audio 0:12:04.1.

I am talking today, not about you physically sleeping in church services, but, this reality, that we have somehow been lulled into a devil's lullabies. Christian living is all about sleeping, just sleep our way to heaven, nothing really going on, nothing really about serving God, nothing really about connecting with life, nothing really matters. I just need to sleep, because I am in the devil's lullabies.

Now, I skipped that, I miss that, so, I want to share with you again, they are kinds of sleeping, we can talk about, sleeping physically in church, sleeping, in a sense, we do the barest minimum and that is it a third kind of sleeping that is when you do a lot and this, YouTube sensation will tell you, what it means to do a lot and yet be still asleep.

Time stamp in audio 0:12:56.1.

YouTube sensation that shows a dog that sleeps but have a lot of activity going on.

Bizkit the sleepwalking dog.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2BgjH_CtIA

Time stamp in audio 0:13:07.1.

This dog video has millions of hits by the way. His name is Bizkit and accordingly, the scientists were thinking, he is really sleepwalking, as a dog, so he was running furiously, but actually he is what ?, asleep. When, did he wake up ? Only, after he knocked his head right. But before that, he is sleeping. And don't you realize, that we can be doing a lot, but really, still sleeping. You can be going to church a lot, you can be even praying and reading the Bible a lot, you can be even serving in the Sunday school a lot, but you're still sleeping! Whoa!. Other sleepwalking examples, this is a lady, Rachel Ward, some years ago, she was sleeping and in the middle of the night, she got up, opened the window and just walked out of the windows. She landed on her feet, on the thin shred of grass, only to wake up the next morning. She was sleepwalking. She was doing things that she didn't even realized. She was not involved, she was not really engaged.

Time stamp in audio 0:14:21.5.

Another story, is about the cook, Robert Woods, fifty-five years old man and his problem is that for forty years in his life, he has been sleepwalking. So, he wakes up, every 3 to 4 days a week, in the middle of the night, if he sleeps for more than four hours, he would wake up in the middle of the night, go to the kitchen and start to whip up a dish of omelette. Wah, it is great to stay in his house, every morning, you have breakfast. So, for him to cure the problem, he sleeps no more than three hours a day now, okay.

There is another sad story, not this guy, of course, about a man who sleeps and drives at the same time. His name is Kenneth Park's, twenty-three years old at that point of time. He drove for some 23 km, before he arrives at his in-laws house and he assaulted his father-in-law and stabbed his mother-in-law to death. Thereafter, he slit his own wrists, his tendons were severed and he woke up only to find himself in a police station, wondering what has happened to his own hands, having no recollection of anything that has transpired during his sleep walk.

Time stamp in audio 0:15:30.9.

It's amazing, sleepwalking, it's an amazing phenomenon. And then, there is this man called, Lee Hadwin. He is a nurse in the daytime, that's his job. But, he has a phenomenal ability, when he goes to sleep. When he goes to sleep at night, he would awake, not awake, that's a wrong word, he would get up, alright, get up and find, whatever canvas, paper, cloth or newspaper and be able to draw and these are some of his artworks, when he sleeps at night. He is a nocturnal artist. When he wakes up,

in the daytime, he has absolutely no interest or no ability in art; this only happens at night, so, they give him the nickname Kipasso. Not quite Picasso, but the reverse, Kipasso.

Hey, Christians, can that be us? You see, what I am trying to say here is this, the words, written by apostle Paul, can be given to people who are right now sleeping, okay, physically you are really sleeping, try to help each other out here, or it can be given to people who are just contented with being called Christians and just attending church or it can even apply to you, who are very busily involved in life, in ministries, in doing the things of Christianity. So, you can be caught up with the actions, but really, there is no passion, you can be caught up with the motions of Christianity, but there is no devotion to Christ. You can be so much involved in the labor, but you have left off your first love; you're not quite alive. You are doing all these things, on the outside, but inwardly, you are lying on your bed, sleeping with regards to spiritual realities, you're not really on fire with God, you are not on fire for God, it's time to wake up.

Time stamp in audio 0:17:34.5.

Let me tell you why you should wake up, because if you don't wake up, you are in a very vulnerable and dangerous state. If you read on in Romans 13, Paul, tells us, this might be what happens to anyone, who is not awake, not alert, not putting off the works of darkness, he would be steeped maybe in orgies and drunkenness, in sexual immoralities, sensualities, quarreling and jealousy. Why, because he is asleep. He is doing a lot, yah, but, he is vulnerable, because he is not really awake to God, he's not really walking with God, he is sleepwalking on his bed and he is vulnerable and sin will come, ruin and hurt his life. I am glad you guys are serving, hey, I am glad you are in small groups, I am glad you are reading the Bible, but is there a possibility today that you are going through all that, but still sleeping, dry, lethargic, dull, and almost trancelike and hypnotic in the way you go about, week to week life. You are all fired up for entertainment, for sports, but you are just really, going through the motions, in your walk as a Christian.

Time stamp in audio 0:19:01.1.

So, this is the message, wake up. Wake up, from our sleep, our spiritual slumber. Paul here, is helpful, he tells you why, why should I wake up, what's up, like, I mean why can I sleep? He says, the reason is because there's no more time to sleep. He says, the night is far gone, the day is at hand. He saying, the night is over, the alarm

clock is ringing, stop pressing the snooze, the day is coming. So, it's three periods being spoken off here, it's night and then, there is day and in between is what we call dawn. It's the dawn, it's the break of day when the sunlight would first shine in. So, Paul is saying, the night is gone, evening is over, morning's here and the bright noonday sun is about to arrive, so get ready. Be anticipating, the glorious Son. And Paul is saying, we need to be awake, because there is a glorious reality that is coming soon, akan datang, (meaning, coming very soon), but very, very soon.

Time stamp in audio 0:20:16.5.

What's he referring to, so, what's the son we are anticipating, what's the glorious thing we are anticipating. Well, he says here, it's about the salvation, that is nearest to us now than we first believed. So, he is saying, time to wake up, because there is a glorious salvation coming and it's really coming in fast. You scratch your head and said, pastor, I thought, I already have salvation, when I believed in Jesus Christ, and I believe in Him some years ago, I thought I already had salvation, what is this salvation that is to come to me, when I already had that salvation?

Well, to understand that, some of you may already be familiar, so please bear with me, but to understand that, we've got to understand that the salvation, salvation means the saving work of God. The salvation of God is a very complete, thorough, holistic plan. God saves us from sins, and it's so beautiful, because, when you see salvation in its holistic way, you will realize, how thorough, complete, God's work is, in our lives. You see, salvation can be seen in three different tenses, or three different periods. You can look at it in the past, present and future. What you mean by that? Well, ten years ago, when you believed in Jesus Christ, the day you believed, the moment you turn from sin and trusted in Jesus as your Savior, something amazing happens. The day you believe, Jesus, by what He has done on the cross, two thousand years ago, totally saves you, from the penalty of all sins, all your sins, whether, it was before that day, on the day, or after that day, the day you believe in Jesus, the penalty of sins, all the penalty of all your sins, is paid for by Jesus Christ, you are saved from the penalty. So, you will never be condemned. You never need to stand before God and say, "God, am I going to hell?" No, because God has already save you, from the penalty of all sins.

Time stamp in audio 0:22:34.6.

But, that's not all God is doing for your life. The salvation of God is so complete, He also saves you from the power of sins. You see, this is the beauty, Jesus lives in me.

Why?, Because He is here every single day, to help me have victory, over the power and influence of sin. In my body, there is this flesh, that, keeps drawing me, wow, that is always drawing me to sin. But, Jesus lives in me, so that He may give me power over sin. Now, there is it a third part, alright. The third part, is in the future, the salvation of God is for the future in a sense, one day, He's going to save me , totally, even from this body of sin. He's going to give me a new body, a new body that can never sin, and there He is going to save me from the presence of sin; it's future.

Time stamp in audio 0:23:38.4.

Now, all that means these three theological words, that may sound big, I hope you understand. First, Justification, the salvation of God involves, justification, means, I declare you, guiltless, I declare you, righteous, I declare you, just as if you have never sinned; justification. Wow, that's under the saving grace of God. But, more than that, God is not just working out your justification, God is working out your "Sanctification". The word means, to be more holy, to be more like Jesus and that is His work in our lives, every single day. And, besides the past, besides the present, there is a future dynamic that we all look forward to, the day when Jesus comes again and changes us, our body, replaces this body of sin, with the glorious incorruptible body and that is what we look for, "Glorification."

Time stamp in audio 0:24:46.1.

So, when you understand this, we realize now, the impetus, the motivation, to waking up to the spiritual realities of life, waking up to God, waking up from our slumber, waking up from passivity, working up from a lack of engagement to God, if, Jesus is coming again. I'm going to see my Savior and you know what, I am going to be beautifully glorified and changed. You say, what kind of change, Romans 8, has already been telling us, that will be heirs, we will inherit, we will inherit all that Jesus has. Wow, we're heirs of so God and fellow heirs. That means, we hold a joint account. I always like this illustration, it's like a husband and wife joint account, both names are qualified, to withdraw all the funds that are within this account. You know what, what Jesus has, is what I will have, because I am heir of God, I am fellow heir with Christ.

Wow, sometimes, it is so hard for us to conceptualize, if I tell you, everybody today would get a good class bungalow, you would say Wah, ha ha ha ha, you are very happy, am I not right? Or, I tell you, everybody gets a Ferrari. Wah, you are so happy about it. Because we are so dull to the spiritual realities Scripture presents to us and

we tend to grovel for the things of the world and it doesn't dawn into our hearts, there is a beautiful inheritance, an immense, immeasurable, glorious inheritance, just waiting, just waiting for you. The Bible says, you will be glorious, glory that is to be revealed to us, you don't look very glorious today, all of us, with our white hair, balding hair, crooked teeth, pimples, love handles everywhere, you wish you could change all that. Let me tell you, there would be a day when you will all be changed, not by a plastic surgeon, but by God Himself. And there will be purity in your life, sinless, perfect, being absolutely like Jesus.

Time stamp in audio 0:27:09.1.

I don't know about you, but if you are a Christian, and you truly love the Lord, you long for the day when you don't have to sin anymore. I do, I long for the day I live a pure life that glorifies my God. We are going to struggle through this life, thank God for sanctification, but there will come a day when it all ends; glorification, perfection, right there and then. The Bible tells us, we will have freedom of the glory, we will have the redemption of our body and this is nearer than you imagine. Why do I say that? Because the Bible say so, the coming of the Lord is at hand, the end of all things is at hand, for the time is near. So, Paul is saying, hey, it's time to wake up, because the sunlight is already shining, wake up, wake up, the alarm clock is ringing, stop pressing snooze. Wake up!

Penalty of Sin Power of Sin Presence of Sin

Past Present Future

Justification Sanctification Glorification

There is a story told of a, two men, who went to a shop, this is what they did, they are very mischievous, they were there to steal something, but, they eventually, didn't steal anything, they were out there for mischief. So, what they did was, they went to the shop and took all the price tags of all the items and started swapping them around. So, the cheap things, became expensive, the expensive things became cheap, and the value of every item is now reversed. When I heard that story, I was thinking, isn't this, what the devil does in our lives. He comes into our lives and into the shop of our lives and he starts to switch the value of things in our hearts, while we were sleeping. While we were sleeping, he came, he switch it and now, my HDB flat, is more valuable than Jesus Christ, now, my bank account, is more valuable than the glories that will come, now, the things of this earth look so bright, and, and attractive and the things that are to come, doesn't interest me at all.

Time stamp in audio 0:29:25.4.

So, Paul is saying, wake up, you are no more the children of the night, you can see the sunlight, you have tasted the glory of God, you have tasted the saving grace of God, look out, for even greater things to come. Cultivate that desire for the second coming of Jesus Christ, live ready for His return.

It is said, that Jonathan Edwards, would wake up every morning and spend, twenty minutes of his time, thinking, meditating on heaven. He wants to keep a proper perspective of life. You see, when we fail to think of the glories and the joys and the blessings, and the inheritance God has designed for us, destined for us, we failed then, to live a life, worthy of the coming of Jesus Christ. We become dull, we become sleepy, we become lethargic and we get disengaged from God. So, God says, folks, let's wake up, wake up, stop living for this world. Scripture says, we are strangers and pilgrims, we are set on a heavenly path, for a glorious heavenly city, for a glorious God, that is your destiny, if you have believed, the night is over, look forward to that glorious day and wake up.

Time stamp in audio 0:30:53.2.

So, pastor, so what does it look like, if I were to wake up today, alright, I, I need to wake up, I wake up, can you be a bit more practical, tell me what I should do when I wake up. Okay, let me tell you what you should do, but before I tell you that, let me tell you what you should not do. Sometime ago, two years ago, in May 21st, 2011, there was this article, I think, the new spread even to Singapore, there was this man called Harold Camping, heard of this guy, this gentleman, Harold Camping, he has been predicting, the second coming of Jesus Christ. Now, this was the date he predicted, May 21, 2011. Of course it did not materialize, all of us are still here. But, he predicted this date and because of his radio ministry, lots of people believe Harold Camping, that Jesus is coming on May 21, 2011. What is fascinating is not that he predicted, all predictions, by the way, are off, because the Bible says, no man will know. So, any predictions, if one day I predict, if one day I predict, please slap my face and wake me up, alright. Hey, pastor, you are dreaming. Okay, I am dreaming.

But, Harold Camping, predicted this. What's interesting, is not what that day was, but the report of what his followers did. So, they firmly believed on this date and so what they, a lot of them did, was to quit their jobs. They start to quit the job, why? Obvious, why do you work so hard until the last day. So, quit your job early, and then start to enjoy life, lah. And so what they, some of them did was they took trips across

the United States, they maxed out their credit card bills, they have a mountain tall pile of debts to pay, they started to give their money to promote this day and all the billboard advertisements. I read about how families would huddle on the day itself, alright, they would huddle in their apartments, gathered in a circle, opened their Bibles. Then they would watch television, CNN, switch on their computers for Google and Facebook and look for news, that the end of the world is here. Well, what happened is that they argued, they hugged, they wept, but most of all they waited in vain. Nothing happened!.

Time stamp in audio 0:33:07.0.

And so, what happened after that was, when the disillusionment came in, reality sets in, the people got angry and they say, how could you lie to us. But, from this episode, I realized, when we say, Jesus is coming again, there are some people who literally say, oh yah, Jesus is coming again, so, let me quit my job now, let me waste my, let me enjoy life since He is coming again. And, and that maybe the conclusion they end up with. But the Bible is clear, what does it mean, what does it look like for you and I to really wake up from our sleep? Paul says, when you wake up from your sleep, this is what you will do. You put off your pajamas, right. You put on what you have been wearing right. So, Paul says, when you really wake up from the sleep, this is what you will look like, you will cast off the works of darkness. What it tells me, is, when a man is really awake and alert to the realities that Jesus is coming again, he will live as holy and as purely as he can. He will cast off the works of darkness.

Time stamp in audio 0:34:18.5.

Let me tell you how I know you are asleep and how I am asleep. You know, your pastor here, can still preach every single Sunday, because that's my, some people say, job. But I can be asleep spiritually, and sin can creep into my life, you don't know. But, the dangers of having actions without passions is that we fall asleep and we ruin ourselves in sin. This is something you have to do, a self-diagnosis for, you have to check your own life, are these sins, orgies, drunkenness, sexual immorality, sensuality, quarreling, jealousy in you. That's a marker that you have cast off, the works of darkness, you have not awoken yet.

So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

(Romans 13:12-13 ESV)

Now, this is not isolated to Paul because, John, likewise say, I read this last part alright, "And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure."

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

(1 John 3:2-3 ESV)

The biblical, the truly spiritual response, to the understanding Jesus is coming again, is not a licentious, wasteful, riotous kind of a life, but a life that seeks to purify himself, because, he is meeting Jesus. This is the biblical response, because, he knows He is coming and as He is pure, you purify yourself. Hey, don't, don't keep sleeping, alright. God says, wake up, these sins, would ruin you. I am just reminded about how the dog, bangs itself, when you sleepwalk, you get in all sorts of problems. It's interesting that Bizkit, knock its own head and Mr. Bean also knocks his own head and Rachel what would jump off the second floor, Kenneth Parks would go around and hurt people and you know when you are sleep, and you do not wake up, you hurt yourself, you hurt others with the sins of your life. That's what it means, to live in the light of eternity.

Time stamp in audio 0:36:27.8.

But, let me say one more thing, besides casting of the works of darkness, to awake from your sleep, involves, loving others. You say, where did you get that in this text. I get that, because, Paul says, besides this. So, for one chapter and a half, or close to two chapters are ready, Paul is saying, in Romans 12, 13, love, love is the manifestation of the gospel centered life. You would love without hypocrisy, you would love one another with brotherly affections, you would love in a sense, you will not return evil for evil, you would feed your enemies when he's hungry, you owe no man anything except, the debt of love. So, he says, love, love, love, love, love, love, besides this, wake from your sleep. So, he says, continue to love. But, love, in a renewed passion, with a renewed urgency. Someone, who lives in the light of Christ returns is connected to people, because he wants to serve people, he loves people.

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand.....

(Rom 13:11-12a ESV)

Again, this is not isolated Paul, Peter also says,

The end of all things is at hand, is coming near. Right, he says it's coming near, so what you do, hey, Jesus is coming again, what do I do, quit my job, go on a holiday? No, he says, Above all, keep loving one another earnestly... A sleepy Christian, has no interest in others people's lives. Too comfortable, lah, don't wake me up, I want to sleep. But a Christian who is awake, is awake to the needs of those around him, because, God is with him, is in him, connected.

The end of all things is at hand;Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

(1 Peter 4:7-8 ESV)

Time stamp in audio 0:38:12.1.

Let me ask you, are you awake, or just cruising along ? Just like maybe you are in the car, just cruising along, sleeping along. What describes you, what describes us? He goes on to say, this in verses 7 and 8, when you are really awake, because, the end of all things is at hand, you know it, not only will you love one another, earnestly, but you will also show hospitality to one another, without grumbling, as each has received a gift, use it to serve one another. You see, the way we serve God, is when we serve people. Use your gift, use it.

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

(1 Peter 4:9-10 ESV)

Are you engaged, are you waking up, how's your reading, how's your praying, how's your ministry, how's your connection to one another in the church, do you see this just as a auditorium of people going for a seminar, or do you see yourself as part of the body of Christ, do you see yourself as one another in the family of God, do you see that God wants you, through your life, to love one another, serve one another? I know what you are going to say, pastor, I know this is a simple message, I get it, Jesus is coming again and I can be guilty of sleeping, and I need to wake up and for me to wake up, I need to live a life that pursues holiness, I need to leave a life that pursues people and loving them, serving, I get it. But, you know pastor, can you give me five more minutes, I need to just snooze for a while, because it's so comfortable, I am so used to this lifestyle, I'm so used to not going for this, going for that, I am so used to

just living my own life and don't have to carry the burdens and pains of people around, I am very comfortable. Five more minutes, can?

You know, that five more minutes, may turn out to be five more days, five more weeks, five more months, five more years, five more decades. I think, it's so sad, that when you know you're supposed to wake up at a particular time, that you failed to do so, and you missed your interview, you miss your exams, some of you, miss your wedding, or you miss your job appointment, you miss this thing, because you just kept pressing snooze.

Time stamp in audio 0:40:44.4.

Hey, the alarm clock is already ringing, the night is over, the day is at hand, wake from sleep. It's so sad, when I read about Samson and how he slept his opportunity and influences away. So sad, when I read about the disciples, and how they slept, and the Lord is taken away. By the grace of God today, can I ask you, may the love of God, awaken our sleeping souls, not contented, just been called a Christian, not contented, just coming to church, not contented, even doing a lot of things, but, truly awake to God, awakened by His love, living a pure life, loving the people around us. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

Time stamp in audio 0:41:32.9.

What an amazing thing, sleep is, isn't it? It's amazing, that you can be so comfortable, amazing that Christians, we are all lulled into it, even without our noticing it. So, maybe this morning, God has a message for you, this is the message for you, this is not about your husband beside you, this is not about your friend beside you, but I believe God wants to speak to you, God is speaking to me, because in my life, I have slept, I have dozed off so many times. In my spiritual journey, I kept doing what I was used to doing, it's a ritual, it's a routine, it's a going through the motions but, there has been so many periods, that I fell asleep, sins creep in, I was vulnerable and I was sucked into it. I was disinterested in life, I was more interested in myself and yet I say to myself, Jason, you are doing fine, you are still deserving, you're still doing a lot of things. Yah, until you come to the Bible and He says, I was asleep. I thank God, He was not asleep, when He sent His Son for you. I'm thankful, Jesus was not asleep when He died for you. He came with a heart full of passion and love for you and He gave His life, fully for you.

If nothing else, wakes you up, this will, the love of God in Jesus Christ. And for many months, maybe a year or so already, we have looked at the book of Romans and how

it displays the splendor of God's love and it comes to a very practical point today, will you arise, will you hear His rallying call, would you be willing to forsake the blankets of comfort and arise and awake, to pursue Jesus, pursue holiness, to pursue the service and love of the people, God has placed you amongst. That's what it looks like, when we are awake, folks, that's what it looks like.

I'm thankful that many of you are here maybe for the first time, I am really thankful for that and maybe, for the entire message, it has been really geared towards Christians, believers. But you know, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, is something you need to know. Jesus came two thousand years ago or thereabouts and He died on the cross and for the past two thousand years, He has not returned, you say why? Because He is not willing that any should perish, the gates of heaven, the mercies of forgiveness, the offer of salvation is still available to you today. But you know what, it's not going to last forever. There will be a day when He will return and when He returns, it will be a day, not of salvation, but the day of vengeance, because God is holy and He must judge sin.

Today, is the day of salvation, behold, now is the acceptable time, it is the time for you and I, to turn from our sins and believe in Jesus Christ and this is my prayer, my heartbeat for you. If you're here, would you believe in Jesus. You say why? Because He loves you, He loves you enough to give His life for you, that if you were to turn from your sins and believe in Jesus, you will be saved, not because you deserved it, not because you good enough for it, but because Jesus deserved it and He is good enough for it. He said, it is finish, I have paid it all. Whosoever believes in Me, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Would you make that choice today, to turn from sins and believe in Jesus. Father, we thank You, this morning, for the Word of God that can be declared. I ask that your blessed Holy Spirit now would, make it real, for each one of us, regardless of where we are spiritually and draw us all nearer to Yourself, Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank You for the glorious hope in us, that Jesus is coming again. For that, we give You, glory and praise, thank You, we ask all this now in Jesus name amen.