

**“AWAKE, THOU THAT SLEEPEST”**

**TEXT:**

***Ephesians 5:14-17:***

***14 Wherefore he saith, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.***



***15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,***

***16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.***

***17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”***

The very best gifts of God to us, having been touched by sin, have been tuned into the worst pictures of man’s guilt.

**A. Behold the flood** - breaking forth from its fountains.

It rushed across the fields, then over the mountains as Noah glided in God’s chariot. The beginning of sin is like the breaking forth of waters.



**B. See the fire** - How kindly God hath bestowed upon us that element to cheer us in the midst of winter’s frost. Fresh from the cold, we rush to our household fire, and there we warm our hands by our hearth.

This is also a rich picture of the divine influence of the Spirit.

The tongue is called a fire. It is set on fire of hell, when it utters blasphemy and slander. We raise our hands up and cry, *“Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”*

**James 3:5:**

***Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!***

**C. Then there is sleep** - One of the sweetest of God’s gifts. God has selected *sleep as the figure for the repose of the dead in Christ, they “that sleep in Jesus.”*

***1 Thessalonians 4:14:***

***For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.***

But, alas, sin could not let even this alone. Sin did over-ride even this celestial repose, profaning it so that it is employed in our text as a sinful condition. *“Awake, thou that sleepest.”*

**In sleep, we know nothing.**

- **There may be rejoicing in the house, but the sluggard shareth it not.**
- **There may be death, but he sheds not a tear.**
- **There may be an earthquake, and he knows nothing of reality.**

The world (those without Christ Jesus) may know of earthly things which shall pass away, but they know nothing of spiritual things. Of the sweet enjoyment of the life of piety, they cannot even make a guess. If one would speak of being “Spirit-filled” and it is a riddle to them – what is the state of their soul?

The mass of mankind is ignorant. They know not. They do not have the knowledge of this world. They march on thru paths of lust to that sure, certain, everlasting ruin of their souls. Brethren – if we be saints, let us not be ignorant as those are who are without Christ; but we saints are to search the Scriptures which shall make us wise unto salvation.

## THE STATE OF SLEEP

*Sleep* is a state of insensibility (unconsciousness). The one who *sleeps has* knowledge, but the knowledge is hidden. The robber comes and steals; a child is murdered; a fire burns down the house – but he sleeps on.



He stands on the brink of Hell but trembles not. He proceeds with the merry dance; he drinks the bowl of intoxicating pleasure; he revels – riots – and thinks it strange to expect to reap as he sows.

Behold, how many professing Christians there are that are asleep in this sense. They are spiritual mummies. Sinners are dying in the streets by the hundreds. Men are sinking into flames of eternal wrath, but they fold their arms. They go to their cushioned pew, wishing that the minister would feed them every Sunday. There is never a Gospel tract distributed; never an effort to offer salvation to the lost. There is a calling out of righteousness and goodness, but they are good for nothing.

There is hardly a man to be seen keeping watch. No sentry - - all are asleep in this time of war. Why, my friends, you would say: “Whatever is the matter here? What can it be? Has some great wizard been waving his wand and put a spell upon them all? Are they all mad? Have their minds fled?” Surely, to be asleep in wartime is outrageous!

Here – take that trumpet down close to the captain’s ear, blast and see if it does not wake him in a moment. Just take away that bayonet from the soldier and give him a sharp prick with it and see if he doesn’t awake. Surely, we can have no patience with people asleep.

Your life is a life of warfare against the world, flesh and the devil - - that hellish trinity. And your poor flesh is a wretched mud wall behind which to be entrenched.

Your life is a life of warfare  
against the world,  
the flesh and the devil - -  
that hellish trinity.

- Are you asleep, asleep, when satan has fire balls of lust to hurl into the windows of your eyes?
- Are you asleep when satan has snares into which he will trap your feet?
- Are you asleep when satan has undermined your reputation and your character?

Oh! Sleep not – soldier of the cross.

## THE PRISONER AND THE PARDON

There is a poor prisoner in a cell. His hair is all matted over his eyes. A few weeks ago the judge put on the black cap and commanded that he should be taken to the place from whence he came and hung by the neck until dead. The poor wretch had his heart broken as he thought of the gallows – of the drop – and death. Who can tell how his heart was rent and racked while he thought of leaving all and going - - he knew not where.

### You have a free pardon to share!

There is another man who is sound asleep upon a bed. He has been asleep for two days, and under his pillow **this man has that prisoner's free pardon!**

I would have horsewhipped that scoundrel for making that poor condemned man have two extra days of misery. Why, if I had that man's pardon, I would have been there as if I had ridden on the wings-of-lightning to get to him, and I would have thought the fastest train was too slow! But that man – that brute – was sound asleep with a **free pardon (the news of the Gospel)** under his pillow; while the condemned prisoner racked in pain and mental torment.



Ah – don't be too hard on the man with the pardon. He is here today. I'm standing right here with YOU - a poor repentant sinner. God had a pardon for me and he had a pardon for that man. And God intends that you should tell him the Good News. Did you see that person last week? He sat beside you last Sunday and wept all thru the sermon, feeling his guilt. If you had spoken, who

can tell – he might be rejoicing in Christ this morning. Oh awake, the Bridegroom cometh.

### Parable of the Ten Virgins

**Matthew 25:**

***1 Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom.***

***2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.***

***3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:***

***4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.***

***5 While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.***

***6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him.***

***7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.***

***8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.***

***9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.***

***10 And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut.***

***11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.***

***12 But He answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."***

***13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.***



### Parable of the Talents . . . The 25<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Book of Matthew continues:



***14 For the Kingdom of Heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.***

***15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.***

**16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.**

**17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.**

**18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.**

**19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.**

**20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.**

**21 His lord said unto him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."**

**22 He also that had received two talents came and said, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them."**

**23 His lord said unto him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."**

**24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:**

**25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine."**

**26 His lord answered and said unto him, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:**

**27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.**

**28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.**

**29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.**





***30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”***

**Parable of the Sheep and the Goats – The 25<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Book of Matthew continues:**

***31 When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory:***

***32 And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:***



***33 And He shall set the sheep on His right Hand, but the goats on the left.***

***34 Then shall the King say unto them on His right Hand, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:***

***35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in:***

***36 Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.”***

***37 Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, “Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink?***

***38 When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee?***

***39 Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?”***

***40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”***



***41 Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:***

***42 For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink:***

***43 I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye***

*visited Me not.”*

*<sup>44</sup> Then shall they also answer Him, saying, “Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?”*

*<sup>45</sup> Then shall He answer them, saying, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.*

*<sup>46</sup> And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”*

***Ephesians 5:14: Wherefore he saith, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”***

IF THE LOST are to be reached by the Gospel of the Son of God, Christians must be more aggressive than they have been in the past.

We have been on the defensive long enough; the time has come for us to enter on a war of aggression.

When we, as children of God, wake up and go to work in the vineyard, then those who are living in wickedness all about us will be reached; but not in any other way.

You may go to mass meetings and discuss the question: “How do we reach the masses!” but when you are finished with the discussion, you have to go back and make a personal effort.



**Every man and woman who loves the Lord Jesus Christ  
must *wake up* to the fact that he or she  
has a mission in the world  
in this work of reaching the lost.**

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