

## MARKS OF AN AWAKENED STATE

TEXT:

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



What is implied in “being asleep”, or dead in sin.

There are two kinds of sinners – the *awakened* and the *unawakened*; the *penitent* (feeling or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong) and the *impenitent* (not feeling shame or regret).

### The Unawakened Sinner

That which will condemn men and women in the Judgment Day will not be simply that they have been sinners; but that they have been **impenitent sinners**.

We are told to “**awake to righteousness and sin not.**” **Every impenitent soul is asleep to his true condition.** He is unconscious of his real danger. Yea, he is not only asleep, but dead. He is dead to the voice of conscience and to the Voice of God!

At first thought, you may be ready to deny this. You say, “Look out upon the surging, dashing multitude as they trample one another in their rush after pleasure and gain. Are these asleep and in a state of death?” You think it better to use any other figure, but not “*unawakened*”. But God says it - - not only *unawakened*, but ***paralyzed and spiritually dead.***

**Acts 28:25b-27:**

***25b Paul had spoken one word, “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the Prophet unto our fathers,***

***26 Saying, ‘Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:***

***27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.’”***

***Mark 8:18: Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?***

The unawakened sinner is blind to his eternal danger; deaf to the wooing of the Holy Spirit from Above and the rumblings of Hell from beneath. He will not seek after God. God is not in all his thoughts.

**A Sinner’s Realization of Danger – the words of David:**

***Psalm 139:***

***1 O lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me.***

***2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off.***

***3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all *my* ways.***

***4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, Thou knowest it altogether.***

***5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me.***

***6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.***

***7 Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence?***

***8 If I ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in Hell, behold, Thou art there.***

***9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;***

***10 Even there shall Thy Hand lead me, and Thy right Hand shall hold me.***

*11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.*

*12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.*

*13 For Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.*

*14 I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

*15 My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*



*16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*

*17 How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!*

*18 If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with Thee.*

*19 Surely Thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.*

*20 For they speak against Thee wickedly, and Thine enemies take Thy Name in vain.*

*21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate Thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee?*



*22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.*

*23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:*

*24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

One of the most beloved apostles, less beautiful in soul than John or Paul, is Peter. Surely he disappoints more, chagrins more; and then blesses the heart and

gladdens us more than the others. Peter makes the most blunders, is the most wayward and child like – yet he awakens us!

## The Marks of a Backslidden State

**Proverbs 14:4: Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.**

- 1. Cessation of growth** - When vegetables cease to grow, the next stage is decay. When water ceases to flow, the next thing is stagnation. When we cease to go upstream, we start to go the other way. **Backsliding begins in the heart.**

Long before a person acknowledges he is backslidden, he has broken step with God inwardly. It may be imperceptible to his nearest friends, but God sees that he has come to a standstill and has become satisfied with present attainments.

A growing soul is like a growing boy - continually outstripping his old clothes. It is a pity for children or others to learn the prayers or testimonies of those with whom they dwell. Such prayers have evidently gone to seed and are indicative of a stagnant condition.

There is a sad passage in Matthew recording the Words of Jesus:

**Matthew 5:13: Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.**



In this chapter of Matthew, Christ has been saying “**Blessed**” . . . but when he reaches this passage, He pronounces His hearers as “**salt**”.

Notice – He does not say if the salt ceases to be salt, turn green or become rank poison. It may look the same as before, but it has lost its penetrating, preserving and purifying power.

In like manner, there are many who are outwardly religious and zealous, whose conduct and influence are not hurtful, and who pass for exemplary people; yet they have lost that peculiar life and aggressiveness of soul - - that eternal something that gets others under awful conviction and begets hunger for that which they do not possess.

These ones may not be able to point to the spot where it took place. It would be a great blessing if they could, for they would then know where to begin repenting. But they have backslidden in heart so gradually – and respectably - - that, like Samson, they have not been aware of it. **“And he (Samson) awoke out of his sleep and said . . .”**

Sometimes backsliders say long, loud prayers and are busily engaged to ward off conviction of the Holy Spirit.

## **2. Censoriousness – (one having or showing a tendency to criticize someone or something severely; very critical)**

A censorious spirit is conclusive evidence of a backslidden heart. This is the *spirit of fault finding* – of judging the motives of others. It is a disposition to hasten blame upon others and judge them harshly. It is a spirit of distrust of character and distrust of a Christian profession.

Note that this text says the backslider’s heart shall get filled with his own ways - ways of prayers, schemes and strange doctrines.

When Jesus asked His disciples in

**Matthew 16:13b: “Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”**

**In Matthew 16:16**, Simon Peter answered:

**and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”**

In contrast to Matthew 16, Peter denies Christ three times – the third being in:

**Mark 14:70b-71:**

***70b And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, “Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaeen, and thy speech agreeth thereto.”***

***71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, “I know not this man of Whom ye speak.”***

Here are two widely different statements from the same lips. A fearful change evidently transpired between the first and second utterances. When a man starts to backslide, he generally loses all grace before he fully wakes up and repents.

**Matthew 16:72:**

***And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the Word that Jesus said unto him, “Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice.” And when he thought thereon, he wept.***

A man falling out of a tree may recover himself and catch a limb on the way down – but as a rule, he keeps on falling until he strikes terra firma (dry and solid ground).



The Bible is a faithful history. It records the good deeds of men that we may pattern after them. It also records their failures and sins, that we may take warning. This is one reason we claim the Book is inspired. Had men conspired to produce such a book, they would have eliminated everything that reflected upon them - especially after they had repented. – But God said it should be reported just as it occurred.

When Peter made the first statement, he was in a good spiritual condition - on one of the top rungs of the ladder. He was living so near Heaven that he could get a clear revelation of God and the Divinity of Christ. Only a few live so close to God that they receive new thoughts and illuminations ahead of their contemporaries.

In the latter part of Mark 14, we get a pen picture, not only of the backsliding of an apostle, but the successive steps of all others who have wandered away from the Lord.

### **3. Self Sufficiency**

Jesus had just said in

**Matthew 26:31: “All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, ‘I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.’”**

When one begins to feel sufficient; when one begins to notice his achievements and take an inward satisfaction in comparing himself with others – this is what Peter did.

**Matthew 26:33: Peter answered and said unto Him, “Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.”**

Then, Christ told Peter,

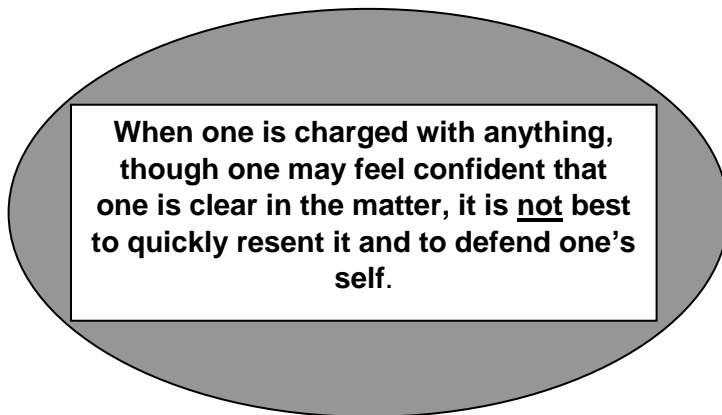
**Matthew 26:34: “Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.”**

But Peter became still more self-confident, and flatly contradicted his Lord.

**Matthew 16:35: “Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.”**

Oh if only then he had humbled himself and fallen at the feet of Jesus, no doubt special grace would have been given him, but he had too much confidence and self-loyalty.

A spirit of boasting and self-vindication paves the way to many a man’s ruin.



**Ponder it.**

There may be a semblance of truth in it; and if so, you cannot afford to miss the warning.

#### 4. Sensibilities Benumbed

It is a bad sign when a husband or wife can say cutting things or act sullen, then go to bed and sleep soundly without a word of apology or confession. It is a sign that the conscience is no longer tender and that the heart is no longer sympathetic to respond to the feelings of others.

**In short – it is a design of a backslidden state.**

#### 5. Self Defense

At this, a zealous brother feels especially commissioned to do this duty.

***Psalms 37:5: Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.***

#### 6. Cowardice

***Matthew 26:58:*** following Jesus' arrest –

***Peter followed Him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.***

Here we see the fruit of retaliation. It always reacts upon the one who thinks he has to defend himself, or the cause he represents – an example of sinful enticements.

***Matthew 26:66-67:***

<sup>66</sup> ***“What think ye?” They answered and said, “He is guilty of death.”***

<sup>67</sup> ***Then did they spit in His Face, and buffeted Him; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands,***

Peter denied Him. Oh, had he only had the courage to acknowledge it, in honor to claim his Lord!

**When a man gives way to one act of deception, he generally has to go farther in order to cover it up. It is better to frankly own up and let it appear just as it is. This will not weaken, but will strengthen character.**

It requires no brains and little grace to shout out an opinion – but **God is pleased to overrule the blunders of one who humbles himself.**

It is said even of wicked Ahab,



**1 Kings 21:25-29:**

**25 But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.**

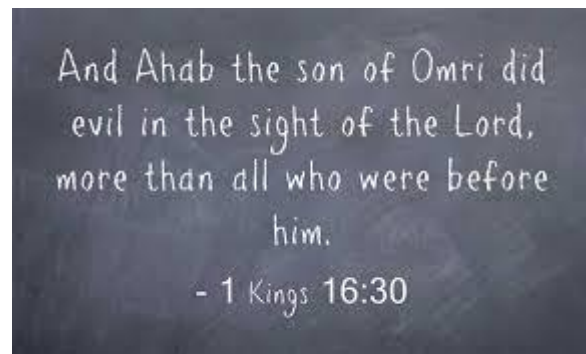
**26 And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the Children of Israel.**

**27 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.**

**28 And the Word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,**

**29 "Seest thou how Ahab**

**humbleth himself before Me? because he humbleth himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."**



## **7. Blasphemy**

*Peter's second denial:*

**Matthew 26:72: And again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man."**

Now he is beyond all restraint. He not only gives way to lying, but to cursing as well in verse 74. He could go no further except to commit murder or suicide – a sad picture.

Peter, one who walked upon the water – cast out demons – and saw the Lord transfigured. It remained for a chicken to preach him unto conviction. God can use roosters better than some preachers to start a revival.

**Matthew 26:74-75: Then began he [Peter] to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not the man." And immediately the cock crowed.**

**75 And Peter remembered the Word of Jesus, which said unto him, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice." And he went out, and wept bitterly.**



## PETER'S RESTORATION

Some men go down and never rise again, but Peter was too big to stay down.

Some men are so sin conscience when they finally collapse there is nothing left from which to build a strong, symmetrical character. They may repent and be saved, but their influence and forcefulness will never be as though they had not deliberately sinned against the Great Light.

Peter's sin was unpremeditated, and not the outburst of pent-up animosity. The moment he came to himself, instead of excusing his act, he bitterly repented. **You may know his restoration was complete, or he would not have been chosen to be the mouthpiece on the Day of Pentecost. Lead by the Spirit of God that day, Peter's fiery message resulted in 3,000 souls being saved.**

### Peter's repentance embraced at least three things:

#### 1. **He thought thereon.**

His reclamation was not a spasmodic handshake, but the result of deliberation and anguish of mind.

#### 2. **He went out and broke company with all Christ-rejecters.**

He chose to be alone and in the cold, rather than enjoy earthly comforts and be under condemnation.

#### 3. **He wept bitterly.**

Not dry eyes and card-signing for him. Men do not like to show emotion, but Peter so felt the heinousness of his sin that **the only way he could find relief was to weep bitterly.**

**Oh, brother and sister are you on the verge of despair  
as you view the dark past?**

**The very fact that you can weep implies there is hope.**

**If so, remember Peter.**

**If you will retrace your steps as thoroughly as Peter did,  
you may be as fully restored as he was.**

**IMAGINE** - what it meant to encounter the manifest power of Pentecost and the fullness of Christ.

**IMAGINE** - Peter on the way to prayer meeting.

### **Just a word relative on the UNPARDONABLE SIN:**

Many super conscientious [principled, diligent, dedicated, careful] souls are harassed over this subject. Such souls could get help from Peter's sad experience. As great as was his offence, he did not blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. Those who commit this sin are seldom alarmed – if ever – over the fact.

It is the same with those who have crossed the deadline and grieved the Holy Spirit away for the last time. They became hard and unfeeling, though they are aware, they are doomed.

**Unconverted men can sin away their day of grace when the Holy Spirit leaves them forever; but none can commit the unpardonable sin except those having tasted of the heavenly gift, and then have fallen away and go so far as to declare - there is nothing to it!**

**Moreover, to attribute the workings of the Holy Spirit to that of Satan - - this is terrible indeed, but some do it to their everlasting undoing.**

**If you have broken step with Jesus, do as Peter did. Fly back to the Savior immediately, lest you get farther and farther from Him.**

After Christ's resurrection, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James came and to the sepulchre to anoint Him. And the angel appeared to the woman . . .

***Mark 16:5-7: And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.***

***<sup>6</sup> And he saith unto them, "Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified: He is risen; He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him.***

***<sup>7</sup> But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you."***

Does this take you in? Believe that it does! **Rise up and declare that you will yet be a man or woman who will profit by the checkered past. You can profit, if you will humble yourself.**

**John 3:14b-18:**

<sup>14b</sup> . . . even so must the Son of Man be lifted up:

<sup>15</sup> That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Eternal Life.

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten Son,



that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life.

<sup>17</sup> For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

<sup>18</sup> He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the Only Begotten Son of God.

**Revelation 22:17: And the Spirit and the Bride** [all who has Everlasting Life through Faith in God's Son, Jesus] **say, "Come." And let him that heareth say, "Come." And let him that is athirst. "Come." And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.**

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