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WAKE UP; CLEAN UP; DRESS UP

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Romans 13:11-14

In Romans, Paul turns his attention to the believers' duty as they live out their daily lives. Christians have a duty to live out the life of Christ as they pass through this world. If you were observant as we read the text, you noticed that Paul uses the language of haste and urgency. He is telling us that the duties mentioned here are not to be put off for another day, but are to be carried out every day as the believer lives his or her life in the world.

Over and over in the Bible, Christians are exhorted to be on the alert, to wake up and warned against apathy, drowsiness and being unprepared. Christians are to live in light of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our love for our Lord and certainty of His return is to motivate our faithfulness to Him so that we are ready for His coming. Our readiness for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ will affect how we live in this world.

In [Romans 13:11-14](#), the apostle Paul exhorted the Christians in Rome to wake up, clean up, and dress up because of the certainty of the return of Christ and their love for Him for saving them. We are to wake up, clean up, and dress up because of the return of Christ and our love for Him for saving us.

First, we are to WAKE UP because the return of the Lord is nearer than when we first believed ([Romans 13:11](#)). God has set the date for the return of Christ, and God is the only one who knows when that day is. But this one thing is for sure – since the return of Christ is a certainty set on God's calendar, each passing day brings us one day closer to that day. Our text says, "Salvation is nearer to us than when we believed." The opportunity for us to express our love for our Lord through our faithfulness to Him is passing away with each passing day.

So what should we do to express our love for our Lord? The Bible says, do [Romans 12:1 – 13:10](#) which is summed up in loving the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength by presenting your bodies to Him as living sacrifices and loving your neighbor as yourselves, loving your enemies, and by being the very best citizens this world has ever seen.

Why should we "do this"? We should do this "knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep, for now salvation is nearer to us than when

we believed.” Paul tells us that the time for slumber has long since passed. The words "high time" mean that a specific hour has arrived. Too many of the people of God are sleeping on the job this morning, living their lives as they please without any thought for the will of God or the return of the Lord Jesus Christ! We should love God and love others because the return of the Lord is closer now than ever. Because His return is drawing nearer and nearer, we are to awaken from sleep. We are to wake up!

Check in on your pew neighbor and say – WAKE UP.

Every day the forces of evil are growing stronger and working harder in the world. There is a tremendous need for believers everywhere to wake up from their slumber to recognize the seriousness and the lateness of the hour and to get busy serving the Lord with all of their might. If you are planning to tell your neighbors about Jesus, the time is now! If you are going to tell your family about Jesus, the time is now. If you are going to go to work for the Lord, the time is now! May we recognize the crisis of the hour and dedicate ourselves to being all God wants us to be in these days.

Those who are asleep are not alert, they are not expectant, and they are not ready for the return of the Lord. It is our love for the Lord Jesus Christ and His coming that will wake us up. When we are excited about and anticipating the Lord’s coming, we will wake up.

Second, we are to CLEAN UP because the return of the Lord is nearer than when we first believed ([Romans 13:12-13](#)). [Romans 13:11](#) is speaking of our need to wake up because of the Lord’s certain return. [Romans 13:12-13](#) is speaking of our need to clean up because of the Lord’s certain return so that we are prepared when He gets here. Have you ever noticed that getting out of bed before daybreak and getting ready for something or someone you are excited about is much easier than waking up and getting ready for something or someone you don’t really care about? We are to wake up and clean up because we are excited about the Lord’s coming and we do not want to disappoint Him. Jesus said that we are to be alert (awake) and ready for His coming (see [Matthew 24:42 – 25:13](#)).

Paul tells us that while we are waiting in this world for the Lord to return, we should be careful that we act the right way. He tells us to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." Here, he means that we are to clothe ourselves in all that Jesus is! We are to adopt His character as our character. We are to adopt His lifestyle as our lifestyle. He is truth; we are to walk in truth. He is light; we are to walk in light. He is faithful; we are to be faithful. He is holy; we are to be holy. He loves God; we

are to love God. He walked in total obedience to God; we are to walk in total obedience to God.

Part of our cleaning up is taking off the garments in which we were sleeping – “Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness.” ([Romans 13:12-13](#)). Before we dress up, we are to clean up. We are not to put on clean clothes over dirty clothes. The logical order for dressing up is to clean up first. We get prepared for the Lord’s return by waking up and taking off the deeds of darkness. The deeds of darkness (garments of the night) are improper behavior such as carousing and drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, strife and jealousy.

To still be wearing the garments of darkness means that Christians still haven’t woke up because they still haven’t seen the need to clean up. We are to wake up and then clean up by laying aside the deeds of darkness.

Third, we are to DRESS UP because the return of the Lord is nearer than when we first believed ([Romans 13:14](#)). We wake up, we clean up by taking off the deeds of darkness, and then we dress up by putting on the armor of light ([Romans 13:12](#)) or by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ ([Romans 13:14](#)). To put on the Lord Jesus Christ means to become more like Him. To put on the Lord Jesus Christ means that we walk in truth and love. Then verse 1 says, “Behave properly as in the day.” Put on your day clothes and act like you should act when everybody can see you. Put on the armor of light. Clothe yourselves. Light represents purity; light represents holiness; and light represents righteousness, virtue. Peter said, “*Put on your armor.*” You’re going into battle. This is serious. Put on the breastplate of righteousness, put on the helmet of the hope of salvation, put on the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, take the shield of faith, get the sword of the Spirit, get your armor on, you’re about to do battle. Walk becomingly as in the day. Conduct should be holy. Live like the spiritual soldier of God you are. Be properly adorned in holy array, in full view of everyone. Be the soldier you were saved to be and act like it.

Knowing as Believers that our time is short and Jesus may come at any time.

We MUST be found ready,
we MUST be found serving,
we MUST be found loving,
we Must be found obedient,
we Must be found faithful.
...and to do any of that,
we MUST be found AWAKE! We MUST be CLEANED UP! And
finally, we MUST be DRESSED UP!