**Lesson 37: It is Time to Wake Up!**

Text: Romans 13:8-14

**Introduction**

How many of you have a hard time waking up? Some people are much easier to rouse than others. There are some who could sleep soundly through multiple alarms. Paul said it was “high time to awake out of sleep” (Romans 12:11). We use that terminology to convey the urgency of a moment. A parent might say to a child, “It is high time that you get out of bed and get ready for school!” A business leader might say to an employee, “It is high time that we move on that project.” Since Jesus is coming again, it is high time that we live a godly life and proclaim the gospel.

1. **Paul described a debt that never goes away, regardless of how much you pay toward it. (v. 8-10)** 
   1. Paul transitioned from the believer’s obligation to respect governmental authorities to the obligation to show love to all people. (v. 8a)
      1. Paul’s reference to avoiding debt does not prohibit having a mortgage on a home or other forms of financial obligation. However, we do need to recognize that many believers are not living financially responsible. Too many are weighed down with debt and unable to give faithfully and sacrificially. The Lord’s work suffers as a result. What could be accomplished for the cause of Christ if the members of His church lived more simply?
      2. In the financial realm, it is best to avoid debt or pay it off as quickly as possible (Proverbs 6:1-5). It is a great relief to be debt-free!
      3. There is one debt that never goes away. Paul said that believers are obligated to show love to all people. You never reach a point where you have shown enough love. You do not get a day off from this obligation. You must pay on this debt everywhere you go. Situations at home, work, school, church and other public places require you to show love.
   2. Love fulfills the law. (v. 8b) Freedom from the law does not mean that believers may do as they please. It means that everything you do is to be based on love for God and man. Jesus indicated that loving God and man summarized the entire Christian life (Matthew 22:34-40).
   3. Paul referred to five of the Ten Commandments to demonstrate that love fulfills the law. (v. 9) Love leads to a proper esteem of marriage, life, the property of others, and truth. Love prompts you to take care of others the way you take care of yourself.
   4. Love keeps you from mistreating others (v. 10). It manifests the life of Christ to others.
2. **We ought to manifest the life of Christ because evil is advancing and time is short. (v. 11-14)** 
   1. Paul described the type of life a believer ought to live in Romans 12:1-13:10. Verse 11 provides the motivation.
   2. There is a shift in focus that occurs in the closing verses of this chapter. “The earlier text encourages Christians to look at the present in light of the past…The text now before us shifts the perspective, encouraging Christians to look at the present in light of the future” (Douglas Moo). Jesus is coming again! In the meantime, we are being changed into His image. His imminent return should motivate us to live for Him today.
   3. Knowing the time should affect how we live. (v. 11) It is high time to wake out of sleep.
      1. Sleep describes a time of inactivity. When you are asleep, you are not responsive to that which is going on around us.
      2. While physical sleep serves a healthy purpose, spiritual slumber is detrimental to the cause of Christ. Too many Christians are inactive in their service to Christ. Are you responsive to that which is taking place around you?
      3. The moral decay of our society should rouse us to action. It is high time because it is the only time many will have to trust Christ. We cannot afford to snooze when it is time to act.
      4. Our “salvation” (final deliverance) is nearer today than when we believed. If you have trusted Christ, you are saved (justified). This will not change. Paul has our final deliverance from this earth in mind.
   4. Paul uses the metaphor of night changing to day to illustrate the coming of Christ (v. 12)
      1. Just as night turns to day, Jesus will come again and establish a new day (era). It will happen! We should live in anticipation of this great event.
      2. Night represents evil activity. Most crime is committed under the cover of darkness. Thus, the night is associated with sinful living.
      3. Believers should not be associated with a sinful lifestyle. Instead, we are to “cast off the works of darkness”. Your life is not to be characterized by the present evil age (Romans 12:2).
      4. Instead, we are to “put on the armor of light.” We must be suited and ready for spiritual battle. Just as light is the opposite of darkness, your life as a believer is to be characterized by that which is the opposite of sinful living.
   5. This should be a way of life for the believer. (v. 13a) The believer’s walk has to do with his daily conduct. Our conduct is to be described as “honestly.” According to Gingrich, this word is defined as, “decently, becomingly, properly.” Our life should fit who we are in Christ.
   6. To live like Christ, we must avoid alcohol and sexual sin, as well as strife and jealousy. (v. 13b)
      1. *Rioting* refers to “drinking parties involving unrestrained indulgence in alcoholic beverages and accompanying immoral behavior” (Low/Nida).
      2. *Chambering* describes “promiscuity, illicit affairs, and sexual immorality” (Friberg).
      3. *Wantonness* denotes “living without any moral restraint ,licentiousness, sensuality, lustful indulgence”(Friberg).
   7. You should live a life that is pleasing to Christ by putting on His characteristics. (v. 14)
      1. Putting on Christ means that His way of life should be evident in the way we live.
      2. You cannot follow Christ and fulfill the desires of the flesh. The word “provision” comes from a word that means forethought. Don’t look ahead to see how you might fulfill the desires of the flesh.
3. **Central Idea: Paul exhorted the believers in Rome to demonstrate the love of Christ to others because they had only a short time to make a difference.**
4. **Application: We should demonstrate the love of Christ to others because we have a short time to make a difference.**

**Conclusion**

It is time to wake up! Too many Christians are snoozing while the lost are perishing. It is high time for those who name the Name of Christ to live like it. It is high time to show love to those God brings into your path. It is high time to cast off the works of darkness and to be clothed with the armor of light. Show others Christ’s love while there is still time!