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To put it in Texas terms, “You’re mighty welcome to use any and all of my ingredients; just make your own chili!”

For the Joy...
Pastor David Dykes

INTRODUCTION

Open your Bibles, please, to Romans 13, verse 11. Today I want to talk to you about “Wake Up and Get Dressed!” So you won’t have to keep looking at your watch, I’m putting a clock up here for you.

I know for some of you, when you come to church and the preacher stands up to talk, it is your cue to go to sleep. You might want to hear this story before that happens. I heard about a guy who went to sleep every time the preacher preached. One day the preacher got tired of it so he decided he would play a trick on him. Halfway through his sermon, he stopped and said in a very soft voice, he said, “Everybody who would like to go to heaven when you die, stand up.” Everybody in the church stood up except for that one guy who was back there sound asleep. The pastor said, “You may be seated.” Then he said in a very loud voice, “Now everybody who wants to go to hell when you die, stand up!” That guy jumped to his feet. He looked around, and didn’t know what to say, but he looked at the preacher and said, “I don’t know what we’re voting on preacher, but you and me are the only ones for it.”

I’m not talking about real slumber, of course. Today we’re going to be talking about waking up from spiritual slumber, and hearing God’s alarm to wake up. I want us to begin reading in verse 11 of Romans 13. Paul has just been telling us how to live, how to behave. “Don’t owe any man except love. Love covers all the commandments.” Then he says, “There’s a sense of urgency to do all this.”

Verse 11. “And do this, understanding the present time.” What time is it? That’s what we’re going to talk about. “The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, (and then he lists some things here that you shouldn’t be a part of) not in orgies, and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ (one of the few times we find all three titles, Lord Jesus Christ) and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”

I. WAKE UP FROM SPIRITUAL APATHY!

Today as we talk about what this passage is trying to teach us, let’s learn the four things it tells us to do. Number one, we are to wake up from spiritual apathy. Wake up. There’s God’s alarm clock. Do you hear it? God is saying, “It is no longer time to sleep, it’s time for you to wake up.” Now I don’t know how you wake up every morning, but I am one of those people who jumps up out of bed. I don’t use an alarm. I wake, wide awake; ready to go. It drives my wife crazy. There are some people who don’t wake up that quickly. There may be some in this room who use the snooze button. I’m of the opinion that whoever invented it is of the devil. Some lazy guy who wanted to keep rolling over and over again invented the snooze button. I know some people who set their alarm an hour and a half before they get up. When it goes off, they hit the snooze; it goes off, they hit the snooze. The sad thing is, when God calls us to wake up spiritually, you hear a call, a wake up call like I’m giving you this morning you might try to do the same thing in

church. You might stir for just a moment, but you reach over and you punch the spiritual snooze button and said, "It's okay. I'll stay spiritually asleep."

What does it mean to be spiritually asleep? What does it mean to have apathy? Let me read you the dictionary definition of sleep. Then we'll apply it spiritually. This is what sleep is according to the dictionary. It is "a state of inactivity with a loss of consciousness and a decrease in responsiveness to the events taking place around you." In other words, when you're asleep, obviously you are sort of unconscious. You don't know what's going on around you. The truth is, there are a lot of you in this building today, you're sitting here, your eyes are open, at least most of you, you are watching me, listening to me, but you are spiritually asleep. In other words, you are not sensitive to what is going on around you spiritually.

If you are the kind of person who never brings your Bible to church and you claim to be a Christian, you are probably asleep. If you are the kind of person who claims to be a Christian, but you never share your faith or never want to share your faith with anybody, my friend, you are spiritually asleep. In other words you are just totally unconscious to the activity of God in this world and in this church. God says, "Wake up. The alarm has gone off." You need to wake up.

Some hotels have little signs you can hang on the doorknob that say, "Do not disturb." I can look out at the congregation, and see people sitting there with a big "Do not disturb" sign around their necks. They are saying, "I'm content to come to church, to sit, to stand, to watch what you're doing, hear what you're saying and go home totally unchanged. Do not disturb me."

Sometimes people are so content, they just get into a spiritual rut, where nothing ever changes. A rut is nothing but a grave with both ends kicked out. God is trying to say to every one of us today, "Hey, wake up! The alarm has gone off." I know that part of the problem is with us preachers. There is so much Sermonic Sominex dispensed in churches today, it lulls people to sleep. Today, God is trying to say to Green Acres Baptist Church, "Wake up from your apathy."

Do you know what apathy is? Do you *care* what apathy is? Maybe you heard about the survey that asked, "What is the number one problem, ignorance or apathy?" The number one answer was, "I don't know and I don't care." Apathy is when you don't care what is going on in the world, in your church, spiritually. You are just content to do your little thing, go home and continue your life. That is spiritual apathy.

Verse gives the reason it is time to wake up. It says, "Look at it understanding the time. The hour has come. (It's talking about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.) It is near and you need to be awake." Look what Jesus said in Mark 13:35-36, "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows or at dawn. (This is what Jesus says to you today) If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you asleep."

Now Jesus Christ may come back before I finished this message today, a lot of you in this room are saved, and you say, "I will be all right." But the truth is, you can be saved and you can be asleep. Just like you can be alive and you can be asleep every night. You can be saved, but you

can be so unaware and insensitive to what is going on spiritually, that you are in a spiritual slumber.

We need a great awakening. How many of you think that America needs a great awakening? I agree. How many of you would say that Tyler, Texas, needs a spiritual awakening? How many of you say that Green Acres Baptist Church needs a great spiritual awakening? Hold up your hand. If I were to ask you, how many of you would admit *you* need a spiritual awakening? When you look at the history of America, it is interesting because America has been in existence for over 200 years but during three centuries. During the 1700s, the moral climate of America declined to the point where there were more taverns than there were churches. God raised up Jonathan Edwards to preach a message of sinners in the hands of an angry God, and although he was a small man who spoke in a monotone voice, with never any gestures, when he read that sermon, men and women literally clutched the pillars inside the church, in fear that they would fall into the pit of hell.

God used him and a man like George Whitfield, an English evangelist, to come and preach here. Benjamin Franklin went to hear George Whitfield preach one night and reported there were over 30,000 people gathered to hear George Whitfield preach. Benjamin Franklin said he could hear the voice of George Whitfield preaching one mile away, calling the colonies to Christ, "You must be born again." A great spiritual awakening swept through the nation. Today we look back into the 1700s, and we call that the first Great Awakening.

After the Revolutionary War and the development of America, the moral climate of America declined again. In the 1800s, there was need for another spiritual awakening. It started with a group of lay people who decided to pray every day at noon. Something called the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting in New York City, just a very small group, a handful, started praying. Then more people started praying in more locations around America. There were no preachers, just lay people praying, "God, we need a spiritual awakening." God began to send revival.

Charles G. Finney, an agnostic attorney, was saved at one of these lay-led prayer meetings. He put aside his law practice and started preaching. He was never ordained, but became an evangelist, and the hand of God was so strong upon him, he would walk into factories to preach to the workers and as he walked in on one side of the factory, workers on the other side would fall to their knees in repentance and didn't even know he was in the building. That's how strong the power of God was on that man.

Historians look back on that revival that started in 1847 in America and they label that as the second Great Awakening. Let's fast-forward over a hundred years. Here we are in the 20th Century, the 1900s, and we don't have years left in the 1900s, we don't have many months; we just a matter of a few days left. There has not been a great spiritual awakening in America in the 1900s.

Today, the church in America reminds me of the Old Testament character Samson. He was a great, strong man. His strength came from God, but for some reason, Samson thought he had to relate to Delilah and had to romance her. He got involved in an illicit relationship with her. To us, she represents the customs and cultures of our world. While Samson, this strong man slept in

Delilah's lap, people came in and cut off his hair, and he lost his strength. The Bible says he woke up and he shook himself from sleep, and said, "I'm going to fight these guys" but his power and strength was gone.

Do you know what has happened in America today? The church of the Lord Jesus Christ has gone to sleep in the lap of a cultural Delilah. We have thought we must marry the world and its customs and attitudes and mind set. We've got to relate to the world in such a way to make our gospel more attractive and we've gone to sleep in the lap of Delilah. Today, when a cry goes out, "Wake up church!" the church shakes itself, but the power is gone. God help us, we need to wake up. That's what this passage of scripture is telling every one of us today: Wake up!

II. WISE UP TO THE TIME!

This passage tells you to do more than wake up. It says wise up to the time. Look at verse 11 again. It says, "Do this understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up." Why? Because, in verse 12 it says, "The night is nearly over, the day is almost here."

Do you know what time it is? I'm not talking about our clock. Do you know what time it is according to God's clock? In the New Testament, there are two words for time. One is the word *chronos*. We get our word chronology from that. That would refer to a specific time. That's not the word here in Romans 13. It is the word *kairos*, which means a season of time, a period of time, in which we find ourselves. Let me illustrate that. If I were to say to you, "It is almost time for cooler weather," I'm not talking about a certain date and time. I'm not talking about September 29 at 2:00 in the morning. When I say it's almost time for cooler weather, I'm talking about a season of time that's coming. That is the word used here. When it says know the present time, it is not talking about a date on the calendar or a time on the clock. It is talking about a season of time. Do you know what time it is? Does anybody really know what time it is? Does anybody really care what time it is? I'll tell you what time it is. It is time for God to do something like we've never seen before.

I heard about a group of guys who used to play dominoes at night. His wife warned, "Don't stay out past midnight." They happened to be playing dominoes in the house of a man who repaired old grandfather clocks. This guy who was anxious about going home, kept counting the chimes of a grandfather clock the man was repairing. Late in the evening he started counting the chimes, one, two, three, four, all the way to ten, 11, 12, 13 chimes. The guy jumped up and headed for the door. They said, "Man, where are you going?" He said, "I've got to get home. It has never been this late before."

Folks, I'll tell you what time it is spiritually speaking. Are you ready for this? It is later than it has ever been before. Now listen to me. Paul wrote these words 2,000 years ago. If he thought Jesus was coming back soon 2,000 years ago, hadn't we better believe in a more intense way that Jesus is going to come back soon?

Sometimes people mock and say, "Well you talk about Jesus coming back. He's been gone for 2,000 years and for 2,000 years everybody has been saying Jesus is coming back. Ha. Where's

the promise of his coming?” I’ll tell you what it says in 2 Peter 3:8, “Don’t be deceived, with the Lord, a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like one day.”

We think Jesus has been gone back into heaven for 2,000 years, but in God’s accounting, it’s just a couple of days. This is talking about knowing Jesus is going to come back soon. What time is it? According to this passage, there are two things you need to understand.

1. Your salvation is nearer than ever!

That’s what it says in verse 11. Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. You may be a little confused there. You may think, “I thought I was saved in the past. I thought my salvation was in the past, and now you say that my salvation is nearer than it has ever been before. Which one is it?” The answer is “Yes.” You’ve got to understand the three tenses of salvation that we learned in Romans 8. You have been saved, past tense. That’s justification. You are being saved, that’s sanctification, and one day you will completely be saved, and that’s glorification. That’s the thing you’re nearer to today than you were yesterday or last year or a month ago. It is closer than ever before.

Philippians 1:6 says, “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on until completion until the day of Jesus Christ.” What day? The day he comes back, or the day that you go to meet him.

2. Your faithfulness is needed more than ever!

Your faithfulness is more needed than it was a year ago or five years ago or last week. Look at what it says in Hebrews 10:25, “Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see (there it is) **the day** approaching.”

Do you know why you are spiritually asleep? Because the level of your faithfulness is so poor. How do you decide whether you’re going to come to church or not? On Saturday night, you think bit, “Well, if I don’t have anything else to do tomorrow, if I don’t have a headache, I may go.” You wake up on Sunday morning and say, “If I don’t have anywhere else to go, and if the weather’s good, and I don’t have a headache, or something else to do, I guess I’ll go to church.” That’s the level of your faithfulness, and Hebrews 10:25 says, “Don’t forsake gathering together, don’t forsake encouraging one another.” That’s what we do in church, that’s what you do in your Sunday School class, encourage each other. You need to be more faithful as you see the day approaching—the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Nobody knows the day or the hour, that’s *chronos*. But the Bible says we can know the *kairos*, the season. I believe we are living in that season. Have you read the novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, the *Left Behind* series? Those are good books. I am glad people are reading them. I am glad those books are on the New York Times best-seller list, because it shows people in the secular world are buying and reading those books and I hope it brings them to Jesus. But you must understand something about those books. They belong to the genre of writing called Christian fiction. That’s an oxymoron, isn’t it? An oxymoron is two words that cancel each other

out, like cold heat or something like that. Like humble Texan, jumbo shrimp. One cancels out the other. Smart Aggie. Christian fiction. There’s really no such thing as Christian fiction. Think about it. Now, you’ve got to understand, those guys who are writing those books, I happen to agree with their theological approach to eschatology or the Second Coming but as you read those books, remember it is a novel. Don’t read those books more than you read the Bible because this is not fiction, this is the absolute infallible truth of God. Both this book and those novels that they are writing tell us that Jesus is going to come back soon.

There are three signs happening right now that let us know His return is near. Remember in 1948 when Israel became a nation again? 1948, just a little over 50 years ago. The Bible says Jesus said when you see the fig tree putting forth its leaves; you know the time is near, even at the door. It happened in 1948. The second sign occurred 1967 when Israel regained control of Jerusalem again. It is obvious they are going to have to be in Jerusalem during the time of tribulation and they are there now but they weren’t until 1967. The third sign is the Jews are working to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Some believe they have already rebuilt it underground, under the dome of the rock. The temple will have to be rebuilt in the tribulation. Those are three signs you cannot ignore. Nobody knows the date or the day, the hour, but you can know the season and the Bible says the day is approaching.

Let me ask you, in the morning when you wake up, what do you do? You wake up and the first thing you do is look at the clock, what time is it? This morning God is trying to say to you, “Wake up. Look at the spiritual clock.” What time is it? It is closer than it has ever been before to the Second Coming of Jesus.

III. CLEAN UP FROM YOUR DEEDS OF DARKNESS

Let’s follow this analogy. What do you do when you wake up in the morning? You wake up, look at the clock, get up and go into the bathroom. You are going to go in the bathroom and take off your nightclothes; you are going to wash your face and are going to shower. You don’t just go out into the world looking exactly the way you look when you got up that morning do you? I’m looking at this crowd and I don’t see anybody who looks like they did when they woke up this morning. Well, there is one up there in the corner of the balcony, but that’s all.

No, you’re going to clean up. Good for you. The Bible says spiritually speaking that’s what you ought to do. Look there what it says in verse 12. “The night is nearly over, (here is that phrase) the day is almost here, so put aside the deeds of darkness.” That is a picture of taking off your old nightclothes, putting them in the dirty clothes hamper (or guys, throwing them on the floor).

Actually Paul gets very specific and mentions three pairs of unacceptable behavior, three sets of sins. If you claim to be a Christian, these things will not be a part of your life. You don’t refrain from doing these things to be saved, but, because you are saved, you just don’t do these things

1. Public sins: “orgies and drunkenness”

Have you studied history and read about all the orgies the Romans used to have, the parties of excess? Isn’t it interesting that today on a lot of college campuses, fraternities have toga parties

to imitate these Roman orgies? You don't have to go on a college campus. It grieves my heart to see teenagers and adults who live to party. Their mentality is “Let's go to a party and let's get smashed. You're not having a good time unless you really have a wild party.” I'm just here to tell you, friends, the Bible says if you're a Christian, you don't act that way.

Some of you are saying, “That sounds like you old fuddy-duddy Christians, you don't have any fun.” If you think that, you don't know what the Christian life is all about. We have so much fun it is unbelievable. We just don't have a hangover in the morning. Once you're a Christian, you don't want to do that stuff. The sad thing is, there are some people who name the name of Jesus who are still wanting to party. The Bible says that's not part of your life.

Several times the Bible drunkenness is a sin. If you don't believe drunkenness is a sin, you are disagreeing with the word of God. It is plain, straightforward. So you say, “I'm okay because I drink, but I don't get drunk.” What you mean is you don't get falling down drunk. What you mean is you don't get passed out drunk. What is the definition of drunk or intoxicated? I will tell you the State of Texas just lowered the percentage of alcohol in the bloodstream to constitute legal intoxication.

Today, for most people after only a couple of drinks, you probably qualify as being intoxicated if the police stop you. I'll tell you what it is: Toxin, poison. You are intoxicated any time you consume alcohol that causes you to act, think or speak differently than you would had you not consumed that alcohol. There are not levels of falling down drunk, passed out drunk, mildly intoxicated. It is just drunk. If you are having a hard time knowing what is or what isn't, I have a great solution for you. Just don't drink at all and you won't have to worry because you won't ever be drunk.

2. Private sins: “sexual immorality and debauchery”

That constitutes all kinds of sexual sin, whether it is premarital sex, extramarital sex, pornography, it covers them all. The word debauchery means the kind of personal activity that should cause you shame but it doesn't. Did you know it is possible for a person to become so deep into sin they do shameful things, but it doesn't bother them? Do you know how bad it has become in America when it comes to sexual immorality and how used we've gotten to it? I want to ask you this: How many of you can say that in the last month you have blushed because something embarrassed you? Most of us have become so accustomed to every kind of sexual immorality around us; the things that used to cause us to blush with shame just don't bother us anymore. That is the kind of sin talked about here.

3. Personality sins: “dissension and jealousy”

Dissension is gossip and rumors, splitting people up, any kind of behavior that serves as a wedge to drive people apart. The Bible says it is ranked right there with these other sins. The problem is if you are a Christian, this should *not* be a part of your life. It is an old part of your life, like old nightclothes, deeds of darkness that you throw off.

C. S. Lewis wrote:

“We are all halfhearted creatures fooling around with drink and sex and ambition when God offers us infinite joy. We are like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because we cannot imagine what is meant by God’s offer of a free luxury cruise at sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

IV. DRESS UP IN THE ARMOR OF LIGHT!

Verse 12, “Put off these deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.” Here again, I’m looking at you, everyone in this room. You’ve done this already today: You woke up, you got out of bed, you cleaned up, and look at you. You put on nice clothes. Good for you. The Bible says that’s what we are to do spiritually. What does that mean? First of all it says, “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

1. That means to be covered by the Lord Jesus Christ

Let his forgiveness and his righteousness and grace cover you. You notice it says, “clothe yourselves.” Put it on yourself. In other words, it’s not something Jesus is going to come and do to you, and say, “I want to put this on you; I want to drape this over you.” We have a choice in the matter. He says, “I want you to choose to put me on,” to be clothed and covered by Jesus. It says “armor of light.” What does that mean? It means that there is a battle going on out there. If you are going to be defending against the darts of the devil, if you are going to be in the battle, you must put on the armor of light.

You say, “Does that mean I need to shine for Jesus?” You can’t shine for Jesus. I can’t shine for Jesus. We can reflect the light of Jesus. Have you ever been outside on a dark night, no artificial lights, no clouds in the sky, full moon? Is there enough light to see? With full moonlight, you can read, you can see shadows. You call that moonlight. That’s a misnomer, because the moon doesn’t shine. The moon is a dead, dull hunk of matter orbiting the earth. It doesn’t shine; it merely reflects the light of the sun. That’s like us. We can’t shine. We don’t radiate for Jesus. What we do is reflect the light of Jesus who is the Light of the World. We reflect His personality, we reflect His character, we reflect His power. But it is something we choose to do. Let me give you an example from Isaiah 61:3.

Jesus provides a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair

Think about that. Some of you may have walked into this room, wearing a spirit of despair, despondency, discouragement. You are wearing a coat that is weighing you down and hurting you. Jesus says, “I want you to clothe yourself with my character. I want to give you this garment of praise. I want you to take off your spirit of heaviness, spirit of despair, put on this garment of praise.” You know what some of you do? You say, “That’s nice, Jesus, but you know what? Frankly, I just don’t feel much like praising right now. If I felt like praising, I would put it on.”

That’s wrong, folks. When you put it on, then you will praise. It is kind of like if you were standing outside on a cold morning shivering, and I offered you a nice warm coat to put on, how

many of you would say, “No, I don’t want to put it on until I can get warm. When I get warm, I will put that coat on.” That is so stupid. You put the coat on, *then* you get warm. Jesus says, “Here’s the garments of praise.” You say, “I don’t feel like praising.” Put it on. Put on the garment of praise, and you will start praising God, and your spirit of despair and despondency will be removed. The Bible says,

2. You are careful to remove all opportunities to sin

Look at the last line in chapter 13. “Do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” The King James Version says, “Make no provision for your flesh.” That means once you put on this Lord Jesus Christ, the righteousness of Jesus, you must be careful, because if you are not careful, you will get dirty.

Kids, when you put on those nice clothes today, your mom might have said, “Be careful. Don’t get those clothes dirty.” That is why it says in Jude 23 that we are to hate even the garment spotted by the flesh. Let me tell you specifically what “make no provision for your flesh” means. If you have been delivered from a problem with alcohol, you need to make sure there is no alcohol in your house. You need to pour it down the drain and throw the bottles away. As long as they are underneath the cabinet, you are making provision for the flesh. You still have an opportunity to sin. If you have been delivered from the sin of pornography, you need to burn those magazines and those tapes, because as long as they are in the bottom of that drawer, you are still making provision for your flesh. If you have been involved, in the past, in an adulterous relationship with somebody, you need to make sure you never have anything to do with that person anymore. You take their phone number out of your little black book; you delete their e-mail address from your computer. You have nothing else to do with them. As long as you have a connection, you are making a provision for the flesh. That’s what it says. Be careful you don’t allow that to happen. The Bible says we are to get dressed up and stay dressed up in the righteousness of Jesus. Why? Because He is coming back soon.

On June 1, 1974, a little over 25 years ago, I was so excited. I woke up that morning in the hotel where my parents were staying in Montgomery Alabama, knowing that evening I was going to marry Cindy Chafin. I hung around in the morning, didn’t shave, didn’t shower. I just hung out. Toward the afternoon I got a little uptight so I decided to go running. I ran around the eastern bypass. I probably ran three or four miles. I ran and ran to clear the cobwebs out of my mind. My dad was back at the hotel watching television. I came back in, unshaven and hot sweaty with my hair messed up. He looked at me and said, “You don’t look like somebody ready for a wedding. You look terrible.”

I said, “Give me a few minutes.” I went into the bathroom of that Holiday Inn, took a shower and even used some of that Herbal Essence shampoo. I even rinsed and repeated I want you to know. I shaved, slapped on some Brut and finally figured out how to put on the tuxedo. It was still two hours before the wedding when I walked out. My dad said, “Now you look like somebody ready for a wedding.” I got dressed up, and I stayed dressed up until our wedding took place that night.

Jesus is going to come back real soon to take His bride home to the wedding feast of the Lamb, the Bible says. And there is a great hymn that says, “When He shall come with trumpet sound,

oh may I then in him be found. Dressed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne."

Revelation 19 says the bride of Christ has made herself ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Let me ask you, folks, "Are you ready?" Are you ready for Jesus to come back? I'm not just asking you, "Are you saved?" That's the first thing I'm asking you. If you're not saved, you need to be saved today. I'm asking Christians, "Are you ready?" Are you dressed up? Are you still wearing some of these old dirty clothes from your past life, some of these old habits, old attitudes. The Bible says you need to get dressed up and you need to stay dressed up.

A daddy was teaching his little girl how to say a bedtime prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep." She was just learning it, so she still got a little confused. One night she was praying and said, "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep." This is where she got messed up. "If I should wake before I die," then she said, "Oh, daddy, I got that mixed up." This very wise father said, "No sweetheart, what you just prayed was a very profound prayer." If I should wake before I die.

How about it? What would be different in your Christian life if you were to wake up spiritually before you die? Some of you without Christ, need to wake upright now to the fact that you are lost without Jesus, and you need to get saved today. He is coming soon. Some of you Christians who are spiritual sleepers walking around in a spiritual slumber need to wake up and get in on what God is doing. There needs to be a spiritual awakening take place and it happens one person at a time. "If I should wake before I die" there would be a great difference in all of our lives.

OUTLINE

I. WAKE UP FROM SPIRITUAL APATHY! (11)

"Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping." *Mark 13:35-36*

II. WISE UP TO THE TIME! (11)

Your:

Salvation is nearer than ever!

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. *Philippians 1:6*

2. Faithfulness is needed more than ever!

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see **the Day** approaching. *Hebrews 10:25*

III. CLEAN UP FROM YOUR DEEDS OF DARKNESS! (12-13)

1. Public sins: "orgies and drunkenness"
2. Private sins: "sexual immorality and debauchery"
3. Personality sins: "dissension and jealousy"

IV. DRESS UP IN THE ARMOR OF LIGHT! (14)

1. Covered by the Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus provides: ... a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. *Isaiah 61:3*
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2. Careful to remove all opportunities to sin

... hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. *Jude 23 KJV*