

Wake Up

Sunday, July 26, 2020

Mark 14:32-42 (NIV)

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.”

³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour^(D) might pass from him. ³⁶ “*Abba*, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus took his disciples to Gethsemane and asked them to keep watch with him as he wrestled in prayer and prepared for the things to come. Three times he prayed to the Father and three times he found the disciples sleeping.

As we read this text, we can seemingly hear the disappointment in Jesus voice as he speaks to his disciples and says, “Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour?” and “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough!”

I believe that we too are at a critical time in the plan of God. The question is, will we too be found sleeping when Jesus returns, or will we WAKE UP and take an active role in what is taking place in these last days?

In Matthew 24 Jesus speaks a great deal about the coming of the Son of man. I encourage you to spend a great deal of time in Matthew 24 right now. After telling us that there will be signs pointing to his return, he says that while we cannot know the day or hour, we can be awake and ready. He says in verse 46

Matthew 24:46 (NIV)

⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.

And in his revelation to the Apostle John, Jesus says

Revelation 16:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ “Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed.”

For us, in these days in which we are living, I believe there are three things we need to wake up to.

Wake up...

1. To your spiritual responsibilities

At Gethsemane, Jesus called his disciples to join him in the spiritual battles of the hour. The church has too been called to join with the Spirit of God in the battles of this hour. But in order to do that we must wake up to our spiritual responsibilities.

Responsibilities like

- Prayer
- Evangelism
- Discipleship and Spiritual Growth (Preparing our own hearts)

Jesus said, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Let’s admit it, we are tired. Like the disciples, who had been through much that week, we have grown weary of the battle. We would rather go to sleep than face the continuing struggles. But the truth is, we have work to do. There are spiritual battles to be fought and Jesus has called us to wake up and engage in those spiritual responsibilities. We cannot just give up and bury our heads in the sand. There is work to do

We don't just go through this and wait for Jesus to return; we work our way through this and prepare ourselves and others for Jesus return.

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7

⁶And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

Through all this, I still don't see national repentance and concerted prayer. Calls for revival have long since waned and been replaced with secularism in the church and man centered church growth strategies. The moving of The Spirit of God has been replaced with high tech special effects and entertainment

As Ken alluded to last week with the story of Elisha and the ax head from 2 kings 6 - we are working with a dull ax. We need the spirit of a God once again to empower us to do the work. For it is not by might not by power but by my spirit says the Lord Almighty (Zechariah 4:6)

Dream about church

- Change clothes
- Not where it had been
- Not easily accessible
- Under construction torn up
- Under the leadership of a frail old man who had some form of dementia or Alzheimer's
- Being helped by an elderly woman who had health issues herself
- A third person, a healthy woman who was trying to help the situation by taking care of the old pastor but who had other commitments and couldn't stay but could only come and go
- The church was supposed to be a place where I could change and get my clothes clean, in fact it had washers and dryers on site. but it was in disarray, dirty, full of urine and excrement. The old man told me that the construction workers had gone to the bathroom in the washers and dryers

2. The enemy is at hand

Even as the disciples slept the enemy approached. Jesus finally had to wake them and tell them that the enemy was there

1 John 2:18

¹⁸ Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.

1 John 4:1-3

⁴ Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

Do you recognize the spirit of the antichrist that is already at work? Don't forget the, one who betrayed Jesus was one of the 12. We see the spirit of the spirit of the antichrist at work in the church as well. That's why John warned us to test the spirits

More than ever before we should be able to recognize the tools that the antichrist will use along with the reasonings that will cause most people to accept those tools without question. And most of this we have asked for

- a cashless society
- No buying or selling without a mark

Revelation 13:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶ It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.

- Tracking of all individual activities
- Governmental control of our lives
- Anarchy that requires someone to offer leadership that brings peace
- Bullying and shaming people into conformity with the majority of the population
- A concern for health and safety that drives us into submission soon and relinquishing our rights

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)

¹¹in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

3. Gods plans are just beginning

We may be tempted to see what is happening and what may happen in the days to come as defeat and the end of Gods plan. I'm sure that's what the disciples felt about the night that Jesus was arrested and certainly what they felt after he was crucified. But it is just the beginning of God's plan and it is a plan full of the victory of The Lord.

Listen, those who follow Jesus are not the losers in this battle. Do not be discouraged, the battle belongs to the Lord and he has already triumphed over the enemy at the cross. The devil thought he had won, but the cross was not victory for the devil it was victory for Jesus Christ, and he proved it three days later when he rose from the grave.

The last days are not victory for the devil, but victory for the plan of God to complete the outpouring of The Spirit of God, to fulfill his promise that the gospel would be preached in all the earth, that a last days revival would accompany a last days falling away, that the enemy of our souls would once and forever be defeated.

We are not defeated; we are more than conquerors through Christ who loved us
(Romans 8:38)

So, wake up church! There is much for us to do.