

Romans 13:11-14 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. (12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. (13) Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. (14) But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof

All of us are slaves to time. Some wear watches with beepers to keep us on schedule. We have digital clocks in our car and alarm clocks on our nightstands. Many have Blackberries or Palm Pilots or some other high-tech computerized personal assistance. Lots of people keep a day-planner so they can keep track of their appointments and responsibilities.

You spend time watching people and you will observe that at least half the people have cell phones glued to their faces, and some people who appeared to be talking to themselves have a Bluetooth for hands-free conversation.

Economist tell us that time is money. For many, time is more important than money. People will spend money to save time whereas an earlier generation raised during the depression would spend time to save money. In a world where most of us feel stressed out, we value our free time more than a few extra dollars in our pocket.

How much time do you have left? No one knows. A man once said that a person is born to die, and that's right. Life is so uncertain. No one knows how long they have to live; so we should live as if today was our last day. That's the idea David put forth in Psalms 90. **Psa 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.**

Martin Luther said *“We should live with the day of our death constantly before our eyes. It keeps us from the ultimate folly—thinking we will live forever and therefore giving us excuses to put off doing what we know we ought to do.”*

Our passage forces us to face this issue head-on. Paul challenges his readers to *“understand the present time” Rom 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is*

high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. Do you know what time it is? It's time to wake up! Why? ***“Because salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed”***. That's a reference to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus is coming, and each day brings us closer to that great world-ending event.

In light of that, Paul tells us to wake up, put off the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. The long night is fading away, the sun is peeking over the eastern horizon, and one day Jesus will come again. In light of the return of Christ and the uncertainty of the hour, how should we then live? Our text suggests three answers to that question.

1. Something We Must Know

Rom 13:11-12 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. (12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand: The “time” Paul is talking about in verse 11 means that this present age. It is a time that is sinful and dark and ultimately passing away. This is why Jesus came, to deliver us from this evil world. ***Gal 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*** Time, as we know it, won't last forever. ***1John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.***

Colossians 1:12-14 uses the imagery of darkness and light to explain what happens when someone becomes a Christian. ***Col 1:12-14 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*** There is a transformation from the power of darkness into the kingdom of light. When you became a Christian, you came out of the darkness of sin into the light of righteousness. People sleep at night; they sleep in the darkness. You don't sleep during the day. Rom 13:11 says it's time to wake-up out of the sleep. Day is for waking and working; night is for sleeping and dreaming.

Now in our text, Paul in essence is saying the night is coming to an end; it's time to wake because the day is coming. He is talking about preparing for the second coming of Jesus. Many have speculated when that date will be but fact is no one knows. But we can safely say that we are closer today than we were yesterday. Or as our text says: *now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*

2. Something We Must Put Off

Rom 13:12-14 *The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. (13) Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*

Those who understand what time it is will put off the deeds of darkness. He compares that with the "armor of light" - a reference to the new life that Christ gives us. It's like taking off your pajamas in the morning and putting on fresh clothes before you go to work. In the same way, as a Christian, you don't "wear" the dirty clothes of the old life. You cast off the works of darkness when you became a NT child of God.

Six Deeds of Darkness Our text specifies six particular "deeds of darkness" that the believer should put off.

The first is wild parties described as rioting. Some versions use the word "orgies." That should be self-explanatory, but perhaps it will help to know that originally this word was used for public parties given in honor of someone who had won a great victory. Later the word referred to all-night parties that included drunkenness, sorcery, and every form of sexual immorality. These things are forever "out of bounds" for the Christian.

The second deed of darkness is "drunkenness," a sin that even the heathen abhorred because it showed a lack of self-control. How many people have fallen prey to the lie that they need alcohol to relax, or forget their problems, or loosen up? Alcohol is a tricky liar. Sometimes people drink because they feel they have to fit in or prove they belong to the group. I've even heard of Christians who drink in order to help them reach people for

Christ. There are many scriptural references condemning drunkenness; so Christian, you need to put it away.

No. 3 Paul mentions “chambering.” This word comes from the Greek word *KOY-TAY* and literally means “beds or couch.” Chambering carries the idea of cohabitation – living together and sharing the bed/couch outside of marriage. It refers to the immoral activity that takes place in the bedroom.

The fourth deed of darkness is called “wantonness.” It’s the idea of “*shamelessness.*” Scholars call this one of the ugliest words in the Greek language. It refers to brazen, shameless sin. The word is *AS-ELG-I-A*. The person who commits this sin has a seared conscience. He not only sins but he does it publicly and then brags about it. This term especially applies to those people who parade their immorality down Main Street. Who in the name of “freedom” and “tolerance” brag about their perversion?

Then Paul mentions “strife (quarrelling).” This speaks of unhealthy desire to have your way at all costs and shows little or no concern for the feelings of others. It’s centered around power, position, and prestige. It is the opposite of Christian love.

The final deed of darkness is “envying (jealousy),” Anger at the success of others or anger at your failures when compared with others are two sins of the hearts. While they may be hidden from others, they have no place in the Christian life. They belong to the darkness you left behind the moment you came to Christ. Most of these are mentioned in Gal 5:19-21 as lust of the flesh and it tells us there that those that do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The night is fading away, and with it the rags of the old life. Christian, it’s time to change your clothes. Throw away those deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light!

3. Something We Must Put On

(14) But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Well-dressed Christians wear (put on) *the Lord Jesus Christ*. What should you wear to work/school tomorrow morning? The answer is Jesus! After you put on your outward clothes, make sure you put on Jesus! How about what you wear to the store

or to the prom or on vacation or while you are just hanging around the house? Jesus is always appropriate for every occasion. Clothe yourself with Jesus early in the morning and you will be well-dressed all day long.

QUESTION: How does one put on Christ? ***Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*** When one obeys the gospel and has his sins removed, he is clean and at that point to embraces a new lifestyle; his behavior and conduct is different because he is now a child of God; an heir to heaven. Once you are baptized, then you cloth yourself with Christian values and principles. ***2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.***

Are you a new creature spiritually? Invitation