**STAY WOKE!©**

**Romans 13:11-14**

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is **now the moment for you to wake from sleep**. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, **the day is near**. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness **and put on the armor of ligh**t; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, **not in quarrelling and jealousy**. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

**Matthew 24: 36-44**

The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

The Necessity for Watchfulness

**36**“But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son,[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A1-44&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-23991h)] but only the Father. **37**For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. **38**For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, **39**and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. **40**Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. **41**Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. **42**Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A1-44&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-23997i" \o "See footnote i)] your Lord is coming. **43**But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. **44Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.**

This is the first Sunday of Advent. It is a time of expectation, of hope, of joy –a time when we want to feel peaceful and loving.

Advent is that special time of year when we need to take stock of our current state of wakefulness…to look at who we are and where we are and what is important to us as believers...

It is a time to dream wide awake and begin to come into the power that God has deposited in us.

It is time to come out of our complacency, step out of our comfort zones, and stop resting on our privilege. It is time for us to wake up!

There is so much about our world that we just don’t know or understand, so many ways in which we are ignorant, intentionally or unintentionally. There is so much misinformation and disinformation fake news, and busy-ness and going hither and yon as my momma would say… and all of it is designed and intended to keep us asleep.

But in this text Jesus is clear,

Jesus says **Keep awake! therefore, for you do not know on what day[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A1-44&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-23997i" \o "See footnote i)] your Lord is coming**.

Paul says: You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep.

We have to wake up and lay aside the works of darkness **and put on the armor of light.**

And as I looked at these texts, I saw some things differently:

**When Jesus said Keep awake, I think what he is really saying is this:**

**Stay awake to who you really are, stay awake to the signs of the movement of God in your own life. Wake up to the subtle or not so subtle signs that you personally need to make some important shifts in your own life to be closer to God.**

**You may need to improve your prayer life, your study time, your alone time, you may need to take better care of your body or to play more or to be with a different set of people for your own good. Staying awake may mean that you have to spend more time in nature, or shift jobs or careers to pursue what God has in store for you.**

**Staying awake may mean you have to pay attention to your dreams, your longings, that still small voice within you that says God is near, the Christ is coming, the Christ Consciousness is at hand in your own life…and in our community. Those dead things are passing away, will you let them? It may be the end of something –a relationship or a friendship or a job—a political system …and God is making way for a new thing—it is now at hand---do you not perceive it? Wake up! And let the new thing arise within you.**

**Stay awake to imagine and create, to envision and enliven yourself and this world as you and it should be, not as it is.**

**When you look at all that is happening in our communities, our nation our culture, in our world… you see the necessity of watchfulness.**

**Sure, it would be nice to know when the time is coming that we would need to be awake, that is because it is easier and more convenient to stay asleep most of the time, and we get sucked into being asleep…but Jesus was very clear that ONLY God knew, he did not know and the angels did not know when the time would come.**

**When will it be Lord??? Jesus said essentially, I don’t know! BUT**

I tell you this,,,you better be ready! Cause trust me when I tell you.

**43…** if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have **stayed awake** and would not have let his house be broken into. **44Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.**

As Christians in the 21st Century we know what Advent is about. We know that we are to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming Christ, the bringing in of a new season, a new year, new possibilities and new hope.

And we have to balance ourselves between two worlds, two sets of emotions, two polarities: Remembrance and anticipation. The first two Sundays in Advent (through December 16th) look forward to Christ’s second coming, and the last two Sundays (December 17th – 24th) look backward to remember Christ’s first coming.

Today we are called to look forward to the next coming of Christ.

The Second coming has a long tradition, and most of us grew up believing it. I would say it is a misunderstood tradition in the faith. Many believe in the Parousia, the second coming of Christ, or what is called the rapture where Jesus will come back to earth and some, **not all,** will be swept up in a great cloud and taken into heaven.

But in light of the Advent season, I want to offer you a different interpretation of this text:

Remember when Jesus said, the Kingdom of God is within you? Well, the Kingdom the Power, the Spirit of God IS within you! It awakens in you every day that you arise to meet the new day. It blooms within you every time you see a child or give a smile.

So, I started to look at this text more closely, and when I went into a word study of this text, God opened my eyes as to what the deeper meaning of it is.

The scripture says, some will be taken, and others will be left behind. Well in the Greek, that word taken---is “**paralambano”** it’s actual meaning is to receive something transmitted, or to receive with the mind....in other words to understand. **It is the enlightenment, the AH HA moment.**

**You will be there working, praying, worshiping, serving, doing… and BAM a revelation of God’s presence in you and in the world will hit you, that you will receive in your spirit and in your mind, You will be enlightened….and you look around, you want to talk about it, share about it, shout about it….**

**But your neighbor will just not get it. Your fellow church members may not see it or perceive it. And the text that says your neighbor will be “left behind: Well that word for left behind in Greek is Aphemi and really translates as “will be forgiven”. So, you will receive the divine revelation, and your neighbor will not, and your neighbor will be left in a state of ignorance but that since that word really means forgiven---your neighbor will STILL receive the forgiveness of a gracious God..**

**There will be a moment when you recognize the signs and movements of God –a moment when it all becomes clear to you, a moment when you connect deeply with the God in you and you will Access the inner resources of Divine power and your neighbor will not. But, your neighbor will be forgiven for their ignorance or lack of understanding.**

I don’t know about you, but I would rather receive the Divine revelation than be forgiven for not receiving it….that’s just me…some people think ignorance is bliss…I do not. I want to know God intimately. I want to be given Divine revelation and walk in God given power. I want that in my spiritual life not just for me, but so I can help to change the world.

But if you are like me and you want it, the Bible says:

Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A1-44&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-23997i" \o "See footnote i)] your Lord is coming.  You don’t know when your awakening is coming, you don’t know when your enlightenment and revelation of the God in you that wants to fight for justice, work for peace, struggle for the liberty and human rights of others is coming.

But, If you are awake, If you are ready, if you are in tune with the movement and the signs and symbols of God you will know that within you is the Living God, the God of power and of peace, the God of love and of light..you will not be unaware of the thief that comes in the night to steal your dreams, to shatter your self-esteem and to smash your possibilities..to tell you that you are NOT a child of the most High God.

If you are awake No force will break into your house, where God abides and try to steal your joy, hijack your jubilation, or ambush your ambition!

Stay awake and be ready because one day and it may be today, you are going to awaken to your full potential, smell the aroma of your limitless potential, realize that God is in you and around you and moving through you with power and in love, and the Son of Man….your true self, your true humanity, your authentic God filled self will be revealed and your Divinity…your oneness with God will be revealed and made manifest by your true humanity..

It is the revelation of your power as the Children, the heirs and joint heirs with Christ that will embolden you and motivate you be the real church.

Church,together, let us tap into the deepest of God within us and let us manifest the power of God so that we can resist those forces that go counter to our mission as disciples of the risen Christ. Amen? Amen!