

# Romans 13:10-11 Commentary

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Modified from Irving L. Jensen's excellent work " <a href="#">Jensen's Survey of the NT</a> "				

**Romans 13:10** [Love does no wrong](#) to a [neighbor](#); [therefore love](#) is the [fulfillment](#) of the [law](#) ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [e agape to plesion kakon ouk ergazetai](#); (3SPMI) [pleroma oun nomou e agape](#).

**Amplified:** Love does no wrong to one's neighbor [it never hurts anybody]. Therefore love meets all the requirements and is the fulfilling of the Law. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** Love does no wrong to anyone, so love satisfies all of God's requirements. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Love hurts nobody: therefore love is the answer to the Law's commands ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** The aforementioned love does not work evil to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of law.

**Young's Literal:** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

**LOVE DOES (absolutely) NO WRONG TO A NEIGHBOR (literally "one who is near"): e agape to plesion kakon ouk ergazetai (3SPMI):**

- **evil** Mic 2:1
- 1Co 13:4-note, 1Co 13:5, 6-note, 1Co 13:7, 8-note
- [Romans 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Romans 13:11-14: Your Present Walk and the Coming Day](#) - Steven Cole
- [Romans 13:11-14 Putting On The Lord Jesus Christ, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11-14 Time to Wake Up](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11-12 Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:12-14 Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11-14 Do You Know What Time It Is](#) - Ray Pritchard
- [Romans 13:11-14 Responsibilities Under Grace 12](#) - Wayne Barber

**Love (26) (agape [word study]** from **agapao** = love) means unconditional, sacrificial love. **Agape** is the love that God is and in that sense is divine love. It is the quality of love that is commanded by God, empowered by His Spirit, activated by personal choice of our will, not based on our feelings toward the object of our love and manifested by specific actions (see esp 1Cor 13 - see notes 1Cor 13:4; 5; 6; 7; 8)

As noted previously, it is easy to "**love**" in an abstract way, but Paul wants his readers to love the people they actually meet day by day (with all their faults). Love is something that takes effect in the home, in the marketplace, in the workshop, on the village green, wherever people are met. God's love manifests itself through the loving acts of His children. Where it is absent, any claim to a family relationship is merely pretense.

**William Barclay** writes that **agape** is - "Unconquerable benevolence = nothing the other person can do will make us seek anything but their highest good. Though he injure us and insult us, we will never feel anything but kindness towards him. That quite clearly means that this Christian love is not an emotional thing. Agape is not only not of the emotions, but it is of the will. It is the ability to retain unconquerable goodwill to the unlovely and the unlovable, towards those who do not love us, and even towards those whom we do not like. Agape is that quality of mind and heart which compels a Christian never to feel any bitterness, never to feel any desire for revenge, but always to seek the highest good of every man no matter what he may be. ([The Daily Study Bible](#))

**Agape** love is not sentimental or emotional but is obedient, being an manifestation of the act of one's will that desires another's highest good.

**Agape** is unconditional so that if given and not returned then you don't stop giving it.

**Agape** gives and gives and gives.

**Agape** takes slaps in the face and still gives even as Jesus did saying Father forgive them.

**Agape** is not withheld.

**Agape** is the badge of discipleship, the landmark of heaven, for Jesus clearly declared that "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have **love** (agape) one for another." ([Jn 13:35](#))

**Tertullian** described the love of the early church writing that "It is our care for the helpless, our practice of lovingkindness, that brands us in the eyes of many of our opponents. 'Look!' they say, 'How they love one another!' Look how they are prepared to die for one another."

The old adage really is true...

**People do not care how much we know  
Until they know how much we care.**

Here Paul "personifies" **love** as that which does no harm to its neighbor. An understatement! But this in a sense restates the

prohibitive commands ("shall not's") in Ro 13:9. It is a sin not only to devise evil against your neighbor, but also to withhold good from those to whom it is due [cp Pr 3:27] Who is our "neighbor"? According to Christ, any other man irrespective of race or religion with whom we live or we chance to meet & especially anyone in need (Lk 10:36, 37)

**Does** (2038) (**ergazomai** from **érgon** = work) means to engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort. Note **present tense** indicating love continually does no wrong. The NT uses **ergazomai** in a literal (to do manual labor) and figurative (especially spiritual - see below) sense. To labor, do work. **Ergazomai** speaks of "an action as something that stands in contrast to inactivity or talk." (Richards)

**No** (3756) (**ou**) signifies no, and expresses full, absolute and objective negation.

**Wrong** (2556) (**kakos** related word = **kakia**) is a word which basically denotes a lack of something so that it is "bad" or "not as it ought to be." **Kakos** means not meeting accepted standards of behavior, and thus worthless, bad or inferior. **Kakos** then speaks of lack of goodness, of a bad nature, evil, destructive, damaging, unjust. **Kakos** describes something as it ought to be. Morally **kakos** describes a person characterized by godlessness or evil.

**Neighbor** (4139) (**plesion** from **pélas** = near, near to or from **plesios** = close by) literally means near (literal use only in Jn 4:5), quite near, nearby = position quite close to another position.

Figuratively, **plesion** means to be near someone and thus be a neighbor. Generally, **plesion** refers to a fellow man, any other member of the human family. **TDNT** explains that "Ho plesion" is the "neighbor," the person next to one" then more generally the "fellow human being."

Eight of 17 uses of **plesion** occur in a citation of or allusion to Leviticus 19:18: "You shall love your **neighbor** (**plēsion**, Septuagint) as yourself" (Mt 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mk 12:31; Luke 10:27; Ro 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8). It should be noted that the **TDNT** entry states that "there is allusion to Lev. 19:18 in 12 instances."

**Lawrence Richards** - Jesus told of the good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37), who, upon passing a Jewish stranger who had been stripped and beaten by robbers, took pity on him. The Samaritan stopped, helped him to the nearest inn, and took responsibility to pay for his care. After establishing the fact that the neighbor was one who had mercy on the needy stranger, Jesus told his questioner, "Go and do likewise" (Lk 10:37). The story extends rather than narrows the concept of neighbor. In the story, the injured man was a Jew, someone traditionally hostile to Samaritans. There was no bond of personal relationship between the two. They were simply two human beings, one in need and the other able to meet the need. Jesus' message was clear for those who heard him then, and it is clear for us today. Our neighbor is any person we may come in contact with who has a need. And to love one's neighbor means to be moved by compassion to reach out and seek to meet that need. (Expository Dictionary)

**Webster** (1828) - **Neighbor** - 1. One who lives near another. In large towns, a neighbor is one who lives within a few doors. In the country, a neighbor may live at a greater distance; and in new settlements, where the people are thinly scattered over the country, a neighbor may be distant several miles. Such is the use of the word in the United States. 2. One who lives in familiarity with another; a word of civility. Shak. 3. An intimate; a confidant. [Not used.] Shak. 4. A fellow being. Acts. 7. 5. One of the human race; any one that needs our help, or to whom we have an opportunity of doing good.

**Youngblood** - The Abrahamic Covenant (Ge 12:1-3) established moral obligations among the Israelites. They were commanded to show concern for their neighbors. The ninth and tenth commandments (Ex 20:16-17; Dt. 5:20-21) prohibited the defaming or slandering of a neighbor and condemned the envying of a neighbor's wife, servant, livestock, or other possessions. (Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

**Freedman** - A "neighbor" may simply be another person (Gen. 11:3), friend (or co-conspirator, 2 Sam. 13:3), an apparent rival (1 Sam. 28:17), lover (Jer. 3:1), or spouse (v. 20). Usually, the word does not describe one's immediate family (however, cf. Jer. 9:4) but someone who lives or works nearby (Prov. 3:29). In many instances the word acquires the specific meaning "fellow Israelite" or "member of the covenant" (Jer. 31:34). (Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible: W. B. Eerdmans)

**American Tract Society** - At the time of our Savior, the Pharisees had restrained the meaning of the word "**neighbor**" to those of their own nation, or to their own friends; holding, that to hate their enemy was not forbidden by the law, Matthew 5:43. But **our Savior informed them that the whole world was neighbors**; that they ought not to do to another what they would not have done to themselves; and that this charity extended even to enemies. See the beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan, the real neighbor to the distressed, Luke 10:29 . ([Neighbor - American Tract Society Bible Dictionary](#))

**ISBE** - In the New Testament, this limitation of moral obligation to fellow-countrymen is abolished. Christ gives a wider interpretation of the commandment in Leviticus 19:18 , so as to include in it those outside the tie of nation or kindred. This is definitely done in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), where, in answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus shows that the

relationship is a moral, not a physical one, based not on kinship but on the opportunity and capacity for mutual help. The word represents, not so much a rigid fact, but an ideal which one may or may not realize (Luke 10:36 , "Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved (literally, became , not was ) neighbor," etc.). This larger connotation follows naturally as a corollary to the doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God. The commandment to love one's neighbor as one's self must not be interpreted as if it implied that we are to hate our enemy (an inference which the Jews were apt to make); human love should be like the Divine, impartial, having all men for its object (Matthew 5:43ff). Love to one's fellow-men in this broad sense to be placed side by side with love to God as the essence and sum of human duty ( Matthew 22:35-40 parallel Mark 12:28-31). Christ's apostles follow His example in giving a central position to the injunction to love one's neighbor as one's self (James 2:8 , where it is called the "royal law" i.e. the supreme or governing law; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14). ([Neighbor - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#))

**Vine** - the neuter of the adjective *plesios* (from *pelas*, "near"), is used as an adverb accompanied by the article, lit., "the (one) near;" hence, one's "neighbor;" see refs. below. This and Nos. 1 (*geiton*) and 2 (*perioikos*) have a wider range of meaning than that of the Eng. word "neighbor." There were no farmhouses scattered over the agricultural areas of Palestine; the populations, gathered in villages, went to and fro to their toil. Hence domestic life was touched at every point by a wide circle of neighborhood. The terms for neighbor were therefore of a very comprehensive scope. This may be seen from the chief characteristics of the privileges and duties of neighborhood as set forth in Scripture, (a) its helpfulness, e.g. Proverbs 27:10; Luke 10:36; (b) its intimacy, e.g., Luke 15:6,9 (see No. 1); Hebrews 8:11; (c) its sincerity and sanctity, e.g., Exodus 22:7,10; Proverbs 3:29; 14:21; Romans 13:10; 15:2; Ephesians 4:25; James 4:12 . The NT quotes and expands the command in Leviticus 19:18 , "to love one's neighbor as oneself;" see, e.g., Matthew 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31,33; Luke 10:27; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8 . See also Acts 7:27 . ([Neighbor - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#) )

**Plesion** is used 17 times in the NT - Usage: near(1), neighbor(16).

Matthew 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** and hate your enemy.'

Matthew 19:19 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF."

Matthew 22:39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF.'

Mark 12:31 "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

33 AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE'S **NEIGHBOR** AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Luke 10:27 And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF."

29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my **neighbor**?"

36 "Which of these three do you think proved to be a **neighbor** to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?"

John 4:5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, **near** the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;

Acts 7:27 "But the one who was injuring his **neighbor** pushed him away, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND JUDGE OVER US?'

Romans 13:9 For this, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF." **10** Love does no wrong to a **neighbor**; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Romans 15:2 Each of us is to please his **neighbor** for his good, to his edification.

Galatians 5:14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF."

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS **NEIGHBOR**, for we are members of one another.

James 2:8 If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR **NEIGHBOR** AS YOURSELF," you are doing well.

James 4:12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your **neighbor**?

**Plesion** - About 225 uses in 145v in non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Ge 11:3, 7; 26:31; Ex 2:13; 11:2; 12:4; 20:16f; 21:14, 18, 35; 22:7ff, 14, 26; 32:27; 34:3; Lev 6:2; 18:20; 19:11, 13, 15ff; 20:10; 24:19; 25:14f, 17; Num 33:37; Deut 1:1; 4:42; 5:20f; 11:30; 15:2; 19:4f, 11, 14; 22:24, 26; 23:24f; 24:10; 27:17, 24; Josh 8:30; 12:9; 15:46; 19:46; Judg 6:29; 7:13f, 22; 10:18; Ruth 3:14; 4:7; 1 Sam 10:11; 14:20; 15:28; 20:41; 28:16f; 30:26; 2 Sam 2:16; 5:23; 12:11; 1 Kgs 8:31; 12:24; 20:35; 2 Kgs 3:23; 7:3, 9; 1 Chr 14:14; 2 Chr 6:22; Esth 9:19; Job 16:21; Ps 12:2; 15:3f; 24:4; 28:3; 35:14; 38:11; 45:14; 101:5; 122:8; Prov 9:12; 26:27; Song 1:9, 15; 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:2, 16; 6:4; Isa 3:5; 5:8; 19:2; 41:6; Jer 5:8; 6:21; 7:5; 9:4, 8, 20; 19:9; 22:8, 13; 23:27, 30, 35; 34:15, 17; 36:16; 46:16; Ezek 18:6, 8, 11, 15; 22:11; 40:9; 41:16f; Jonah 1:7; Mic 7:2; Hab 2:15; Zech 3:8, 10; 8:10, 16f; 11:6, 9; 14:13; Mal 3:16; 4:6;

**Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary** - Ordinarily the Hebrew counterpart is a form of *rēa'* (from a verb meaning "to have dealings," "to associate." *Rea* = covers the friend, lover, companion, neighbor, or fellow human being.), "neighbor, friend, companion." But there are nine other expressions it replaces as well. The classical adverbial sense is reflected in some texts (e.g., Exodus 34:3). Most often, as a substantive *plēsion* refers to "the neighbor." Of course the neighbor becomes an important figure in Israel's legal codes (e.g., Exodus 20:16,17; Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 22:24; 24:10). Fichtner notes the absence of precision in *plēsion's* meaning. It could describe a "friend, associate, lover, companion," or simply a "fellowman" (Fichtner, "plēsion," Kittel, 3:313). However, he points out that *rēa'* especially stood for the fellow member of the community, the fellow participant in the covenant relationship with God. "Strangers," therefore, would not have been regarded as "neighbors" by the Israelite community; thus they would not have fallen under the covenant stipulations or safeguards. He notes further that the Septuagint translators were not bound by this feature of the Hebrew. Instead, they chose a term so broad and general as to not restrict *plēsion* to members of the ethnic covenant community (ibid., 3:315).

- [Neighbor - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Neighbor - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Neighbor - Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature](#)

**Hodge** - That is, as love delights in the happiness of its object, it effectually prevents us from injuring those we love, and, consequently, leads us to fulfill all the law requires, because the law requires nothing which is not conducive to the best interests of our fellow men. He, therefore, who loves his neighbor with the same sincerity that he loves himself, and consequently treats him as he would wish, under similar circumstances, to be treated by him, will fulfill all that the law enjoins; hence the whole law is comprehended in this one command, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. ([Romans 13 - Hodge's Commentary on Romans](#))

**Who is your neighbor?  
The person who is near!  
Are you treating them with love?**

**LOVE THEREFORE IS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW: *pleroma oun nomou e agape***

- Ro 13:8; Mt 22:40
- Romans 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Romans 13:8-10: The Debt You Always Owe](#) - Steven Cole
- [Romans 13:8-10 Love: The Key to Obedience](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:8 Love Fulfills the Law, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:8-10 Love Fulfills the Law, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11 Putting On The Lord Jesus Christ, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

**Therefore** ([3767](#)) (**oun**) introduces a logical result or inference from what precedes. In the present context it introduces a consequence of loving one's neighbor.

**Fulfillment** ([4138](#)) (**pleroma** from **pleroo** = make full, fill, fill up) means fullness, full measure, abundance with an emphasis upon completeness. **Pleroma** what is fulfilled or is completed without any gap. **Pleroma** was a recognized technical term in theology, denoting the totality of the Divine powers and attributes. (Lightfoot)

Loving your neighbor is the fullness of the Law. This love is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22note) Love for God and for your neighbor

is the highest motive for obedience. Love does what is right and just and seeks the best for others. By nature, we do not have this kind of love (Titus 3:3-note); the Lord gives it to us (Ro 5:5-note) (Paul prayed for this righteous "seed" of "love" which all believer's possess positionally to bear fruit experientially when he prayed for the Philippians in (Php 1:9, 10, 11-see notes). To love others with the love that Christ exhibited (Jn 3:16) is His new commandment (Jn 13:34). And when His love in us in present and dynamic, we are enabled to keep all of the other commandments (Jn 14:15). Love promotes obedience from the heart (Ro 6:17-note).

**Henry Morris** - True love—for God and man—fulfills Christ's two great commands (Mark 12:30-31), and thereby fulfills also the ten commandments inscribed by God on the two tables of the law. ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

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**G Campbell Morgan** - Here again is a simple statement of a most profound truth, and its apprehension will correct many mistakes. Man is at least inclined to think of law and love as being antagonistic. We have heard John's Words, "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ," (Jn 1:17) so recited as to give the impression that there was radical difference between them. Indeed, over and over again a "**but**" is introduced between the two parts of the one declaration. There is no difference. The only distinction is that

**Law tells us what to do,  
and  
Grace enables us to do it.**

Thus not only is there no antagonism between love and law, there is no separation between them.

**Law is an expression of love.**

To understand that, is to realize that love is also the fulfilling of law. Paul's method of showing this is most simple and most conclusive. It is impossible to sin against our fellowmen if we love them; or we may say that every sin we commit against them is due to some cooling or failure of love.

**Love is the most vigilant and severe sentinel  
of all our actions.**

It is the only motive strong enough to make us true under all circumstances and at all times. Fear will carry us far, but under stress of fierce temptation it will break down. Love will carry us all the way, and leave us still desiring better things than we have ever attained. ([Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible](#)).

**Romans 13:11** *Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.* ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Kai touto eidotes \(RAPMPN\) ton kairon, hoti ora ede humas](#) ex [hupnou egerthenai](#). ([APN](#)) [nun gar egguteron hemon e soteria e hote episteusamen](#). (1PAAI)

**Amplified:** Besides this you know what [a critical] hour this is, how it is high time now for you to wake up out of your sleep (rouse to reality). For salvation (final deliverance) is nearer to us now than when we first believed (adhered to, trusted in, and relied on Christ, the Messiah). ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**GWT:** "You know the times <in which we are living>. It's time for you to wake up. Our salvation is nearer now than when we first became believers."

**NLT:** "Another reason for right living (**Ed:** "and radical loving") is that you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for the coming of our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** "Why all this stress on behaviour? Because, as I think you have realised, the present time is of the highest importance - it is time to wake up to reality. Every day brings God's salvation nearer." ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** And this, knowing the strategic season, that it is an hour now for you to awake out of sleep, for now our salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.

**Young's Literal:** And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.

## THIS DO: Kai touto:

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- [Romans 13:11 Putting On The Lord Jesus Christ, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

## CHRISTIAN MOTIVES TO INCITE MORAL DUTIES

**Do what?** In **context** Paul is referring to what he has just emphasized. We are called to **Love** because it fulfills the Law (Lev 19:18, Ro 13:8-note; Gal 5:14, Jas 2:8, Mt 22:37, 38, 39, 40, cp Jn 13:35).

*Do this* - Literally the Greek reads "**and this**". Notice that the verb "*Do*" is not in the original Greek but has been added by the translators. "

**Wuest** - Paul urges the importance of the foregoing exhortations in view of the imminency of the Rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

**Pulpit Commentary** - Christian motives are brought forward to incite to moral duties. We are called upon to do right, not only by the voices of expediency and of authority, but by the voice of revelation. Christians are addressed as those who know the seasons, who discern the signs of the times, who regard the present as a period of probation, of discipline, of education, and whose gaze is ever forwards, whose hope is in their Lord's return to judge and to save. ([The pulpit commentary](#))

**Steven Cole** - Paul's phrase, "Do this" is literally, "And this." It gathers up all that he has been saying and sets it before us in one collective package before he adds something else. Paul uses the same phrase in Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ...." "And that" refers back to the entire package of being saved by grace through faith. Paul gathers it into one phrase so that he can say, "That salvation by grace through faith is not of yourselves. Rather it is God's gift so that no one can boast." So here Paul is saying, "All that I have been saying about presenting your bodies to God as a living sacrifice and not being conformed to this world and being transformed by the renewing of your minds, and all that I've been saying about living in love, do all of this in light of the time in which we live. The day of the Lord is near." And so as those looking forward to that great day, we should be distinct in our behavior from those who live with a temporal viewpoint only. Paul uses several metaphors to make his point: Unbelievers are sleeping and walking in the darkness of night. Believers are supposed to be awake and walking in the light of day, because we are looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. ([Your Present Walk and the Coming Day Romans 13:11-14](#))

**H C G Moule** - In this last section of the chapter, Paul enforces all the preceding precepts (of Romans 12, 13) by the solemn assertion of the approach of the eternal Day of Resurrection and Glory. Then all that was painful in effort would be over, and the results of "patient continuance in well-doing" (Ro 2:7KJV-note) would be realized for ever. Language such as that of this passage is often taken to prove that Paul expected an imminent return of the Lord, and taught it as a revealed truth. ([Romans 13:11-14 Cambridge Bible Commentary](#))

**J B Phillips** paraphrases it this way - "Why all this stress on behaviour? (**Ed:** e.g., why "love"?) Because, as I think you have realised, the present time is of the highest importance - it is time to wake up to reality. Every day brings God's salvation nearer."

**Amplified Version** - Besides this you know what [a critical] hour this is, how it is high time now for you to wake up out of your sleep (rouse to reality)...

Loving and living wholeheartedly for Christ should be our primary objectives in view of the brevity of our remaining time on earth (especially when compared to the "length" of eternity to come).

**See Scriptures that allude to the shortness of our lives on earth** Job 7:6, 7 9:25, 26 14:1, 2 Ps 37:2 Ps 39:5, 6 Ps 90:4, 5, 6, 9, 10 Ps 102:3, 11, Ps 103:15,16 Ps 144:4 Isa 38:12,13 40:6,7 Jas 1:10, 11 Jas 4:14 1Pe 1:24 2Ki19:26

**James Denney** -In the closing verses of the chapter Paul enforces this exhortation to mutual love as the fulfilling of the law by reference to the approaching **Parousia**. We must all appear (and who can tell how soon?) before the judgment-seat of Christ, that

every one may receive the things done in the body (2Co 5:10-note): if the awe (an emotion combining dread, veneration and wonder which is inspired by the certainty of our future appointment at the **Bema Seat**) and the inspiration of that great truth descend upon our hearts, we shall feel how urgent the Apostle's exhortation is "**Do this**". ([Romans 13 Commentary - Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

#### Related resources:

- Imminency of Christ's Second Coming

#### Imminency

We are never to stop offering our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God (Ro 12:1-note). While Paul is calling for a once for all time offering in Romans 12:1, there is also a sense in which this offering should be our daily "sacrifice" to the Lord. Before we put on our clothes, we should offer ourselves to God and put on His clothes (put on Jesus) and then go forth with eyes wide open and ready to recognize the opportunities our Father has prepared for us even before the foundation of the world (see Eph 2:10-note).

**Bob Deffinbaugh** feels that Ro 13:11-14 were written **"to bring us back to the bedrock basis for walking in love.** Paul's words turn our attention both to the motivations which inspire love and the means which help it function. Paul's teaching in these verses is predicated upon that which he has already taught us in chapters 1-11. There are two principle themes dealt with in Romans 13:11-14 whose foundations have been laid in the earlier chapters of Romans. These two themes are salvation and love... What Paul describes in verses 11-14 has happened to me all too often. I go to bed at night. Then in my first waking moments I become increasingly aware of the light. Suddenly it dawns upon me. It is morning! Good grief, what time is it? I grab the clock. Oh no! I have overslept. The day has begun, but I have not. I shed my bed clothes and hastily dress, running from my bedroom to get to the day's duties. I think this is the picture Paul is painting. We have been oversleeping. We need to wake up. The night has passed. The new day is dawning—the day of our Lord's return. We must get about doing those things which remain to be done. We must put off our night clothes and put on clothes appropriate for the work our Lord calls us to do. ([Love, Law, and the Last Days](#))

**Calvin** comments that Paul "enters now on another subject of exhortation, that as the rays of celestial life had begun to shine on us as it were at the dawn, we ought to do what they are wont to do who are in public life and in the sight of men, who take diligent care lest they should commit anything that is base or unbecoming; for if they do anything amiss, they see that they are exposed to the view of many witnesses. But we, who always stand in the sight of God and of angels, and whom Christ, the true sun of righteousness, invites to his presence, we indeed ought to be much more careful to beware of every kind of pollution.

**Ray Stedman** - A Christian faith that doesn't change your life isn't worth a 'snap of the finger,' (cp 2Co 5:17-note, 2Co 13:5-note, 1Co 6:9, 10, 11, Gal 5:21-note; Eph 5:5, 6-note) but when Christ changes a heart and a life, the change that he makes is going to affect everyone around you! This is really the theme of what we have in Chapters 12-16 of Romans. It is a picture of a Christian 'up to his ears' in life. The result of a truly Christ-like life, lived out in the world, is going to be that some around you will be upset by the way you act. You will be upsetting some and comforting others. As someone has said, "The ministry of a Christian is to comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable." (Read the full sermon [The Demand of the Hour](#))

In this section (Ro 13:11, Ro 13:12-note) notice how Paul "piles" up **time phrases** (see **expressions of time**) to emphasize the "time sensitivity" of his message .

the **time**... already the **hour**... now salvation is **nearer**... **night** is almost gone... **day** is at hand

Clearly Paul is seeking to convey to his readers (and us) a strong sense of urgency. Time is running out! Now is the strategic season! Beloved, do you feel his urgency? Time is limited, opportunity is fleeting, life is short! The time to heed and to obey is *now*.

**What has God equipped you to do** (no excuses please - you have at least one spiritual gift regarding which you are called to be a good steward! 1Pe 4:10, 11-note) **or told you to do regarding which you are resisting or procrastinating?** There is no time for apathy, complacency, or indifference. I have a plaque over my desk which my wife had made for me several years ago that is always visible and which reads...

**Tempus fugit**

**Carpe diem**

**Coram Deo**

**Time flies**

**Seize the day**

**Before the face of God**



## KNOWING THE TIME: eidotes (RAPMPN) ton kairon:

- Isa 21:11,12; Mt 16:3; 24:42, 43, 44; 1Th 5:1, 2, 3-note
- Romans 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Romans 13:8-10: The Debt You Always Owe](#) - Steven Cole
- [Romans 13:8-10 Love: The Key to Obedience](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:8 Love Fulfills the Law, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:8-10 Love Fulfills the Law, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11 Putting On The Lord Jesus Christ, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

### PROPER PERSPECTIVE PRECEDES PRACTICE

**Knowing the time** is a truth that we can all identify with because many of our daily, secular activities are based on time - time to get up, time to eat lunch, time to pick up the kids from school, and on and on. **Knowing** (the time) is thus intimately linked with doing. We see this association in the letter to the Hebrews where the writer exhorts his readers not to forsake their...

own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. (Heb 10:25-note)

**Comment:** Observe that **encouraging one another** (in context made possible by being in proximity = "assembling together") is linked with **the day drawing near**, the **day** referring to Christ's **Second Coming**. And so in this passage we see that **knowing the time** serves as a stimulus for spiritual activity (in this case, encouraging one another).

**Joseph Parker** (1886) expresses it eloquently "The day is at hand, already the silver light is on the eastern hills; an hour more and the King will be here. This was the apostolic music always. They all expected the Lord coming instantaneously as it were. There are annotators upon the Scriptures who want to make out a contrary view, and I cannot follow them; and I make no attempt to represent them, but to represent my own thought. It seems to me that the **Apostles expected the Lord every moment**—he will be here presently, so let all little subjects alone, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" (Romans 13:13), but let us get our clothes on, the robe of beauty, for the Lord has already taken the first step out of heaven, and he will be here before you get your garments on if you do not make haste. "But put ye on the Lord Jesus": garb yourselves in the raiment of heaven, for Christ will be here presently to claim us and to announce the festival. The Apostles were, in detail, wrong; they were, in principle, right. ([Romans 13:11-14 Commentary](#)) (Bolding added for emphasis).

**Ray Pritchard** writes that...

**All of us are slaves to time.** We wear wristwatches with quarter-hour beepers to keep us on schedule. We have digital clocks in our car and alarm clocks on our nightstands. Many of us have Blackberries or Palm Pilots or some other high-tech computerized personal assistant. Lots of people keep a Daytimer nearby so their can keep track of their appointments and responsibilities...

**How much time do you have left?** No one knows for sure. I spoke with a friend whose cancer is in remission, but the doctors told him that his cancer would almost certainly come back. They planned to do a bone marrow transplant but they won't unless the cancer does come back, which it probably will but they can't be sure. So my friend doesn't know whether he is living or dying or both.

#### How Much Time Do You Have Left?

**Life is so uncertain.** No one knows how long they have to live... 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. At least once a week I receive an email that has this statement at the bottom:

**Life is short.  
Eternity is significant.**

How true that is!...

25% of Americans believe there is a good chance that Jesus will come in 2007...

**Christian, do you know what time it is?**

It's later than it's ever been.

The death clock is ticking for all of us.

**Christian, do you know what time it is?**

It's the dawning of a new day.

It's time to put off the deeds of darkness.

It's time to put on the armor of light.

It's time to take Jesus with you everywhere you go.

It's time to get serious about your faith.

It's time to stop sleepwalking though life.

Look! Do you see the first rays of dawn? The night is almost over, the sun is rising. Jesus is coming soon.

Have patience, child of God. Your Savior is on the way.

Take hope, defeated Christian. The Lord is at hand.

Be encouraged, suffering believer. The trumpet will soon sound.

Keep believing, struggling saints. Your salvation is nearer than when you first believed.

Christian, do you know what time it is? It's time to wake up and get dressed! [Do You Know What Time It Is?](#)

**Brian Bell** has an excellent discussion of **time**...

We are obsessed with time! – I believe it is the very 1st cognitive thought in our mind every morning! (What time is it?) Ever count the number of clocks you have in your house? (I counted 36 last night in mine). I mean think of your Kitchen: coffee makers, oven, microwave,...we even have a bird clock? [Cell Phones, laptops, decorative, VCR/DVD players, every bedroom; watches...extra watches] We are fixated with time! – Question: But are we measuring time correctly? We seem to be most concerned with what time is it now? God seems to be more concerned with what time is drawing near! Jn.9:4 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work." And here in Ro 13:11.

Back in 1964 Mick Jagger sang "Time is on Our Side"...40 years later, I'm not sure if they still sing that on tour today? – Jesus always taught the opposite. He taught "Time is ticking away, tic, tic, ticking away!" We focus on minor measurements of minutes – God focuses on Epochs and Era's. (**Ed: note**)

Man has at least one eye on the future...but it is in the negative! It is called the [Doomsday Clock](#)! Since its inception in 1947, the Doomsday Clock has signified the level of threat posed by nuclear weapons and other changing factors in international security. As the state of international security has changed, the Doomsday Clock has been moved 17 times to reflect the danger level of the period. The Doomsday Clock was last moved on February 27, 2002 and currently stands at seven minutes to midnight.

So Paul says, open your eyes! - Wake up to what time it really is! - And then explains there is a new way to live in light of the dawning of the eternal day! Oh, if every one of our clocks would scream God's sense of time! But just like talking to a youth about their dying one day...it just seems so far away to them. So, with us...Christ's return? – Oh, I know it's coming...but it often seems so far away! The world lives as though human history is destined to continue forever. The Christian knows however that God is in control of people and nations, and is directing history to a predetermined end! History is..."His-Story!" ([Romans 13](#))

Gregg Allen - I once heard about a man who took to heart what it says in Psalm 90. Perhaps you know that psalm; it says that God gives a man seventy years - or, if by reason of strength, perhaps eighty; and it encourages us to "number our days" so we may gain a heart of wisdom (Ps 90:10, 11, 12). And so, starting with his current age and computing how many days he had left, this man filled a jar with marbles - one marble for every remaining day of life, according to this Psalm. Every day, he took a marble out of the jar - a marble that represented one day spent; and put it into another jar. For years, he faithfully transferred marbles from one jar to the other - progressively emptying one jar, and filling the other. And then, one day, he called his wife up and said, "Honey, let's go out to dinner tonight. This is an important day for me. Today, I have taken the last marble out of the jar." Can you imagine what an impact a daily habit like that would have on the way you live each day of your life? When you put things into perspective, you and I really only

have a short time on this earth - even in the case of what we call a 'long life'. Each day is going by for us; and we will not be able to retrieve it. You could say that we are, each one of us, slowly losing our marbles! And these relatively few years are all that's given to us by God to prepare for eternity. These few years - and what we do with them - will determine the character of our eternity. And yet, we're here right now. This day, God has given us the invaluable grace of "time" - time right now to do the work He has given us to do in His service, and to prepare for eternity. What are you and I doing with the time we have - while we still have a few of our marbles left? ([Romans 13:11-14 Now's the Time!](#))

**Knowing** (1492) (eido) literally means perception by sight (perceive, see) as in Mt 2:2 where the wise men "saw His star". The meaning of eido is somewhat difficult to convey but in general this type of "knowing" is distinguished from ginosko (and epiginosko, epignosis), the other major NT word for knowing, because ginosko refers to knowledge obtained by experience or "experiential knowledge" whereas eido often refers to more intuitive knowledge, although the distinction is not always crystal clear.

Eido is not so much by experience as an intuitive insight that is "drilled into your heart" so to speak. Eido is that perception, that being aware of, that understanding, that intuitive knowledge that only the Holy Spirit of God can give - He has given us as believers a spiritual sensitivity to the shortness of this present life in comparison to eternity, and it is a sensitivity that unbelievers do not possess (certainly not in the same way). This knowledge of "time" is an absolute knowledge, a knowledge that is without a doubt, and ultimately a knowledge that should spur us on to redeem every moment in marked contrast to the lost world which wastes every moment of their allotted time (in the sense that they are incapable of bearing any fruit that will endure eternally - Jn 15:5).

**Barclay** - Like so many great men, Paul was haunted by the shortness of time. Andrew Marvell could always hear "time's winged chariot hurrying near." Keats was haunted by fears that he might cease to be before his pen had gleaned his teeming brain. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote:

"The morning drum-call on my eager ear  
Thrills unforgotten yet; the morning dew  
Lies yet undried along my fields of noon.  
But now I pause at whiles in what I do  
And count the bell, and tremble lest I hear  
(My work untrimmed) the sunset gun too soon."

But there was more in Paul's thought than simply the shortness of time. He expected the Second Coming of Christ. The Early Church expected it at any moment, and therefore it had the urgency to be ready. That expectancy has grown dim and faint; but one permanent fact remains--no man knows when God will rise and bid him go. The time grows ever shorter, for we are every day one day nearer that time. We, too, must have all things ready. The last verses of this passage must be forever famous, for it was through them Augustine found conversion. He tells the story in his Confessions. He was walking in the garden. His heart was in distress, because of his failure to live the good life. He kept exclaiming miserably, "How long? How long? Tomorrow and tomorrow--why not now? Why not this hour an end to my depravity?" Suddenly he heard a voice saying, "Take and read; take and read." It sounded like a child's voice; and he racked his mind to try to remember any child's game in which these words occurred, but could think of none. He hurried back to the seat where his friend Alypius was sitting, for he had left there a volume of Paul's writings. "I snatched it up and read silently the first passage my eyes fell upon: ' Let us not walk in revelry or drunkenness, in immorality and in shamelessness, in contention and in strife. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, as a man puts on a garment, and stop living a life in which your first thought is to gratify the desires of Christless human nature.' I neither wished nor needed to read further. With the end of that sentence, as though the light of assurance had poured into my heart, all the shades of doubt were scattered. I put my finger in the page and closed the book: I turned to Alypius with a calm countenance and told him." (C. H. Dodd's translation.) Out of his word God had spoken to Augustine. It was Coleridge who said that he believed the Bible to be inspired because, as he puts it, "It finds me." God's word can always find the human heart. ([Romans 13 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Wuest** translates this as "knowing the strategic season".

### **IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME!**

The time - Whenever you encounter a time phrase in Scripture (see expressions of time) always stop and ask "What time is it?" (Ask as many of the 5W/H questions as you can muster - as you utilize this technique, you are beginning to practice how to meditate on the Scripture, a most blessed activity - cp Josh 1:8-note, Ps 1:1-note Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note) In this context this expression refers to the specific time when the Father says to the Son, "Arise, it is time to go for Your Bride, the Church." (see tabular comparison of the Rapture versus the Second Coming)

**Time**(2540) (**kairos**) means a point of time or period of time, time, period, frequently with the implication of being especially fit for something and without emphasis on precise chronology. It describes the period as especially appropriate and favorable (the right

time). Stated another way **kairos** is distinguished from *chronos* (time) because **kairos** views TIME from the aspect of the strategic opportunity it provides, and not simply a change from the past into the present into the future, not mere duration. ([Trench](#)) Something that lasts for a season and so is transient, temporary or enduring only for a specific period of time. Kairos is a period which is especially appropriate - a favorable time (at the right time).

Here's a good song by Robin Mark to play in light of the length of eternity and the brevity of our life...

### [When It's All Been Said and Done](#)

When It's All Been Said and Done

There is just one thing that matters.

Did I do my best to live for Truth?

Did I live my life for You?

When It's All Been Said and Done

All my treasures will mean nothing.

Only what I've done for love's reward,

Will stand the test of time.

#### **Related Resource:**

- Redeem the Time
- [Redeem the Time \(blog\)](#)
- Ephesians 5:16 Commentary
- Trench's Synonyms - see entry on TIME below

Derivatives of *kairos* include: *Akairos* (adverb) - unseasonably, inopportunistically (2Ti 4:2); *akaireomai* (verb) to lack opportunity (Php 4:10); *eukairos* (adverb) - well-timed (Mk 6:21, Heb 4:16); *eukairoes* (adverb) - opportunistically, in season (2Ti 4:2, Mk 14:11); *eukaireo* (verb) - take advantage of or have an opportunity (Mk 6:31, 1Co 16:12); *proskairos* (adjective) - for a season, temporary (Mt 13:21, Mk 4:17, 2Co 4:18, Heb 11:25).

*Kairos* can refer to a fixed and definite time, the time when things are brought to crisis, the decisive epoch waited for or a strategic point in time.

*Kairos* speaks of a limited period of time, with the added notion of suitability ("the suitable time", "the right moment", "the convenient time"). *Kairos* refers to a distinct, fixed time period, rather than occasional moments.

*Kairos* is not so much a succession of minutes (Greek [chronos 5550](#)), but a period of opportunity. *Chronos* refers to chronological time, to clock time or calendar time, to a general space or succession of time. *Kairos*, on the other hand, refers to a specific and often predetermined period or moment of time and so views time in terms of events, eras, or seasons, such as the times of the Gentiles ([see below](#)) In other words, *kairos* defines the best time to do something, the moment when circumstances are most suitable, the psychologically "ripe" moment.

### **ETYMOLOGY OF OPPORTUNITY: OB PORTU**

*Kairos* is occasionally translated opportunity in the NAS. (See also related word *eukaira* translated "good opportunity" in Mt 26:16, Lk 22:6) The English word opportunity has a fascinating origin. Hundreds of years ago when living by the sea was critically important to everyday business and industry, the word opportunity was first coined. Time-tables for everything from commerce to transportation depended on the rise and fall of tides. The specific time when the water was deep enough to sail out to sea was known as *ob portu* - when time and tide converged. As believers, our lives are filled with God given opportunities, those moments for example when an urgent need converges with your ability to help meet that need. If you have the eyes to recognize that opportunity, you can seize the moment and redeem the time for the glory of God, joining in with Him where He is at work. As we learn to recognize and choose to join God when He presents us with an *ob portu* moment, we begin to enter into the fullness of joy He desires for our Christian life.

Shakespeare alluded to the idea of *ob portu* when he wrote these classic lines...

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
(Julius Caesar, 4.3.217)

Another source notes that our English word opportunity comes from the Latin and means "toward the port." It suggests a ship taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor. The brevity of life is a strong argument for making the best use of every opportunity God gives us.

An old Chinese adage says,

Opportunity has a forelock so you can seize it when you meet it. Once it is past, you cannot seize it again.

Some other common sayings that convey a similar thought include...

"Strike while the iron is hot"

"There is no time like the present"

"He who hesitates is lost."

Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms writes that "One of several Greek words for "time," kairos usually refers to a specific point of time as carrying crucial meaning for human life. This is in contrast to kronos (chronos), which designates the chronological passing of time. Hence a "kairos moment" is an event in history in which God unveils some dimension of the eternal purposes of salvation to humankind or an event that is central in God's dealings with humans. The fundamental kairos moment is the Christ event, that is, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, together with his future return (the parousia [word study] - Second Coming).

Redeem the time! God only knows  
How soon our little life may close,  
With all its pleasures and its woes,  
Redeem the time!  
—Anon.

In rhetoric **kairos** is "a passing instant when an opening appears which must be driven through with force if success is to be achieved." (E. C. White, Kaironomia p. 13)

**Kairos** -85x in 80v in NASB -(If you have the time and the inclination, a study of these uses - remembering to read them incontext - will give the reader a blessed insight into the nuances of meaning of kairos)

Mt 8:29; 11:25; 12:1; 13:30; 14:1; 16:3; 21:34, 41; 24:45; 26:18; Mk 1:15; 10:30; 11:13; 12:2; 13:33; Lk 1:20; 4:13; 8:13; 12:42, 56; 13:1; 18:30; 19:44; 20:10; 21:8, 24, 36; Jn 7:6, 8; Acts 1:7; 3:20; 7:20; 12:1; 13:11; 14:17; 17:26; 19:23; 24:25; Ro 3:26; 5:6; 8:18; 9:9; 11:5; 13:11; 1Co 4:5; 7:5, 29; 2Co 6:2; 8:14; Gal 4:10; 6:9; 10; Eph 1:10; 2:12; 5:16; 6:18; Col 4:5; 1Th 2:17; 5:1; 2Th 2:6; 1Ti 2:6; 4:1; 6:15; 2Ti 3:1; 4:3, 6; Titus 1:3; Heb 9:9; 10; 11:11, 15; 1Pe 1:5, 11; 4:17; 5:6; Rev 1:3; 11:18; 12:12, 14; 22:10

**NAS** translates kairos as: age, 1; epochs, 2; occasion, 1; opportune time, 1; opportunity, 3; proper time, 5; right time, 1; season, 1; seasons, 4; short, 1; time, 54; times, 11; while, 1.

**Kairos** - 252 times in Septuagint (LXX) -

Ge 1:14; 6:13; 17:21, 23, 26; 18:10, 14; 21:2, 22; 29:34; 30:20, 41; 38:1; Ex 8:32; 9:4, 14; 13:10; 23:14f, 17; 34:18, 23f; Lev. 15:25; 23:4; 26:4; Nu 9:3, 7, 13; 14:9; 22:4; 23:23; Dt. 1:9, 16, 18; 2:34; 3:4, 8, 12, 18, 21, 23; 4:14; 5:5; 9:19f; 10:1, 8, 10; 16:6, 16; 28:12; 31:10; 32:35; Jos. 5:2; 11:10, 21; Jdg. 4:4; 10:8, 14; 11:26; 12:6; 13:23; 14:4; 21:14, 22, 24; 1Sa 1:20; 4:20; 9:16; 20:12; 2Sa 11:1; 20:5; 23:5; 1Ki 11:4, 29; 15:23; 16:22; 18:29; 2Ki. 4:16f; 8:22; 16:6; 18:16; 20:12; 24:10; 1Chr 9:25; 11:11, 20; 12:32; 21:28f; 29:30; 2Chr 7:2, 8; 8:13; 15:5; 16:7, 10; 21:10, 19; 25:27; 28:16; 30:3; 35:17; Ezra 5:3; 8:34; 10:13f; Neh. 4:22; 6:1; 9:27; 10:34; 12:17; 13:21, 31; Est. 2:12; 4:14, 17; 8:12; 10:3; Job 5:26; 19:4; 38:32; 39:1, 18; Ps. 1:3; 4:7; 10:5; 21:9; 31:15; 32:6; 34:1; 37:19, 39; 69:13; 71:9; 75:1; 81:15; 102:13; 104:19; 106:3; 119:20, 126; Pr 5:3, 19; 6:14; 8:30; 17:17; 18:1; Eccl. 3:1ff, 11, 17; 7:17; 8:5f; 9:8, 11f; 10:17; Song 2:12; Isa. 9:1; 18:7; 30:8; 33:2; 38:1; 39:1; 49:8; 50:4; 60:22; 64:9; Jer. 2:27f; 3:17; 4:11; 5:24; 6:15; 8:1, 7, 15; 10:15; 11:12, 14; 14:8, 19; 15:11; 16:21; 18:23; 46:21; 50:4, 16, 20, 26f, 31; 51:6, 18; Lam. 1:15, 21; 4:18; Ezek. 4:10f; 7:7, 12; 12:27; 16:8;

21:25, 29; 22:3f, 30; 35:5; Da 2:8f, 21; 3:7f; 4:1, 16, 23, 25f, 32, 36; 6:10, 13; 7:12, 22, 25; 8:17, 19; 9:25ff; 11:6, 13f, 24, 27, 29, 35, 40; 12:1, 4, 7ff, 11; Hos. 2:9; Joel 3:1; Amos 5:13; Mic 2:3; 3:4; 5:3; Hab. 2:3; 3:2; Zeph. 3:16, 19f; Hag. 1:2, 4).

The first use in the translation of the OT gives us a good sense of the meaning of **kairos**...

Genesis 1:14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons (kairos), and for days and years.

Comment: Even our English dictionary definitions give us the sense of kairos in definitions of season as period of the year characterized by or associated with a particular activity or phenomenon or a time characterized by a particular circumstance or feature. When the season is past, it is over. Yes it returns the next year but for that year it is past. That is the idea of kairos - when the time has passed, one cannot go back and retrieve that time.

Genesis 17:21 "But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season (kairos) next year."

Genesis 21:2 So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time (kairos) of which God had spoken to him.

Psalms 1:3 And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season (kairos), And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.

Comment: The soil of this man's heart is prepared by his godly conduct and his continual delight in and meditation upon the Law of the Lord, so that he is ready to bear fruit when the opportunity presents itself.

Psalms 31:15 My times (kairos) are in Thy hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

Psalms 34:1 I Will bless the LORD at all times (kairos - every opportunity!); His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Psalms 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in time (kairos) of trouble.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 There is an appointed time (chronos) for everything. And there is a time (kairos) for every event under heaven-- 3:2 A time (kairos) to give birth, and a time (kairos) to die; A time (kairos) to plant, time (kairos) a time to uproot what is planted. (In verses 4-8 there are 19 more uses of kairos all for the word "time"!)

**Vincent** writes that kairos "implies a particular time; as related to some event, a convenient, appropriate time; absolutely, a particular point of time, or a particular season, like spring or winter. (Vincent, M. R Word Studies in the New Testament. Vol. 1, Page 3-70)

**TDNT** writes that **kairos**

"has the sense of a "decisive moment," again with positive, neutral, or negative implications, though the positive one of fortune is the most common. Fortune in this sense is not fate, but the chance that must be boldly grasped... a cult of the god Kairos is also found... a statue of Kairos by Lysippos, (depicted a naked young man) with winged feet poised (prepared, ready, all set)... His only attribute apart from the winged feet was a striking hair-style, a lock at the front with short hair behind." The latter characteristic confirms the fact that even religiously Kairos originally had the character of decision, since the lock of hair is a symbol that one must take the favorable opportunity by the forelock, so that even religiously a summons to action is implied." ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

**Ed note:** See the [epigram](#) below... this annotation is not meant to condone the futility of pagan mythology but I do believe that this pagan epigram conveys a reasonable portrayal of what all Christians should seek to do - [Carpe Diem](#) - Seize the day, redeem the time, take advantage of every kairos opportunity while there is yet time [*opportunum tempus* - opportunity flees] and the night is coming when no man can work (John 9:4)!

## Epigram On the statue of Kairos

Who ... was thy sculptor? Lysippos.

And who are you? Kairos (opportunity) who subdues all things.

Why do you stand on tip-toe? I am ever running.

And why you have a pair of wings on your feet? I fly on the wings of the wind.

And why does your hair hang over your face? For him who meets me to seize me by the [forelock](#). (Ed: Notice the forelock but no hair on back of Kairos' head!)

And why is the back of your head bald? Because none may clutch me from behind, howsoe'er he desire it, when once my winged feet have darted past him.

Application: As someone has well said "Seize your opportunities as they come." God presents believers with all manner of opportunities and one of the tragedies of life is that we so often fail to even see them (unconfessed sin being a great impediment to spiritual vision), much less to grasp them for our good and God's glory. (If you feel like time is flying by, first of all you are correct, but second, you can do something about it - you can seize the moments, those God ordained opportunities that come and go so quickly - if your spiritual passion is waning, let me suggest that you read John Piper's free book [Don't Waste Your Life](#))

**Only one life  
Twill soon pass  
Only what's done for (in) Christ will last**

An old adage rightly states that "There are three things which come not back—the spent arrow, the spoken word, and the lost opportunity."

John Greenleaf Whittier - Of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: "It might have been."

Life is too short for us to do everything we want to do; but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do. - Anon.

Spend your time in nothing which you know must be repented of; in nothing on which you might not pray for the blessing of God; in nothing which you could not review with a quiet conscience on your dying bed; in nothing which you might not safely and properly be found doing if death should surprise you in the act. - Richard Baxter

Time should not be spent, it should be invested in the kingdom of God. -John Blanchard [Blanchard, John: Complete Gathered Gold: A Treasury of Quotations for Christians - Recommended](#))

Time is not yours to dispose of as you please; it is a glorious talent that men must be accountable for as well as any other talent. - Thomas Brooks

There is nothing puts a more serious frame into a man's spirit than to know the worth of his time. -Thomas Brooks

We are to redeem the time because we ourselves are redeemed.-Richard Chester

Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life to save. -Will Rogers

TIME: Three most difficult things to do are: keep a secret, forget injury, and make good use of your leisure time (it's really not yours anyway but His... He's just "loaning" it to you.)

God set a goal, yet gave the choice  
To mortals how time may be spent,  
Admonishing that worth, not length,  
Values time's accomplishment.  
— Mortenson

Solomon wisely exhorted his readers "Whatever your hand finds to do, verily, do it with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going." (Eccl 9:10)

Spurgeon - Opportunities do not wait. We must seize them as they pass us. The tide remains not long at flood.

The first occasion offer'd, quickly take,  
Lest thou repine at what thou didst forsake.

Dearly beloved, making the most of your time is another way of saying you are to make the most of your opportunities—opportunities that can be passed and be your loss or can be grasped and bring God glory. O Lord,

So teach us to number our days, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom. (Amen!) (Ps 90:12)

Spurgeon comments: Instruct us to set store by time, mourning for that time past wherein we have wrought the will of the flesh, using diligently the time present, which is the accepted hour and the day of salvation, and reckoning the time which lieth in the future to be too uncertain to allow us safely to delay any gracious work or prayer. Numeration is a child's exercise in arithmetic, but in order to number their days aright the best of men need the Lord's teaching. We are more anxious to count the stars than our days, and yet the latter is by far more practical.

That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Men are led by reflections upon the brevity of time to give their earnest attention to eternal things; they become humble as they look into the grave which is so soon to be their bed, their passions cool in the presence of mortality, and they yield themselves up to the dictates of unerring wisdom; but this is only the case when the Lord himself is the teacher; he alone can teach to real and lasting profit. Thus Moses prayed that the dispensations of justice might be sanctified in mercy. "The law is our school master to bring us to Christ", when the Lord himself speaks by the law. It is most meet that the heart which will so soon cease to beat should while it moves be regulated by wisdom's hand. A short life should be wisely spent. We have not enough time at our disposal to justify us in misspending a single quarter of an hour. Neither are we sure of enough life to justify us in procrastinating for a moment. If we were wise in heart we should see this, but mere head wisdom will not guide us aright.

Ponder this quote by Horace Mann as you study the meaning of kairos...

Lost, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset,  
Two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes.  
No reward is offered,  
For they are gone forever.

Charles Hummel wisely warned that "Our greatest danger in life is in permitting the urgent things to crowd out the important."

Modern day believers need the resolve and focus of George Whitfield who when asked what he would do if he knew Christ would return in three days replied "I would do just what I have scheduled to do."

Read the following poem by Jarvis Anderson entitled "Unfinished Cathedral"...

The query comes: How long is Life?  
Threescore and ten, the Good Book reads,  
Is time enough for men to write  
The record of his life in deeds.

Threescore and ten—how fast they fly!  
Threescore and ten—they're almost gone!  
And I, who dreamed of castles high,  
Have only laid the cornerstone.

**William Manning** gives us good advice as we study kairos noting that "The chief value of an anniversary is to call us to greater faithfulness in the time that is left."

Believers need to be like the converted Hindu who upon being given a Bible and a clock said "The clock will tell me how time goes, and the Bible will tell me how to spend it."

**Paul J Meyer** declared that "Most time is wasted, not in hours, but in minutes. A bucket with a small hole in the bottom gets just as empty as a bucket that is deliberately kicked over.

### **A Tiny Little Minute**

Just a tiny little minute.  
Sixty seconds in it.  
Forced upon me;  
Didn't ask it, didn't choose it.  
Yet, it's up to me to use it;  
Must give account if I abuse it.



Just a little minute.

ANONYMOUS

**John MacArthur** - "Wisdom numbers the days, sees the limited time, and buys the opportunity. Don't be foolish—shun opportunities for evil, but seize opportunities for good." (MacArthur, J. Strength for Today. Nov 26. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books)

**Kairos** (according to Bauer and Gingrich) is one of the chief eschatological terms in the Bible - kairos is supremely God's time. For example, Luke records Jesus' prophecy that the Jews would "fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the **nations**; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the **Gentiles** until the times (kairos) of the **Gentiles** be fulfilled." ([Lk 21:24](#))

Here kairos refers to a period (the origin and termination of which are not agreed upon by all scholars) which appears to begin with the time of Nebuchadnezzar's sacking of Jerusalem and will end with the final battle against Jerusalem during Daniel's Seventieth Week (Click timeline and tabular overview of God's Plan for Jerusalem in Scripture. Note especially the chart at the bottom of the page and the section entitled "The Times of the Gentiles" that ends with "Prophetic Peak #3")

As a parenthetical comment it is interesting to note that our Lord's words will be fulfilled literally when this specific kairos time has run its course. Down through the centuries from the time of the Savior's words, Jerusalem has been largely controlled by Gentile powers. Emperor Julian the Apostate (331–363AD) sought to discredit Christianity by disproving this prophecy of the Lord. He therefore encouraged the Jews to rebuild the temple. They went to the work eagerly, even using silver shovels in their extravagance, and carrying the dirt in purple veils. But while they were working, they were interrupted by an earthquake and by balls of fire coming from the ground. They had to abandon the project. Why? It was not yet the completion of God's time (kairos)!

**Kairos** emphasizes quality or kind of time. Kairos does not refer to chronological but epochal time (an epoch is defined as an extended period of time usually characterized by a distinctive development or by a memorable series of events; applies to a period begun or set off by some significant or striking quality, change, or series of events)

For example, when Jesus came into Galilee, He came preaching the gospel of God, saying

"saying "The (appointed period of) time (kairos) is fulfilled (completed), and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." ([Mk 1:15](#)).

Jesus' announcement views time (kairos) from the aspect of the opportunity it provided, and not simply as a change from the past and so not merely speaking of duration. The appropriate season or golden opportunity for the fulfillment of God's redemptive promises had arrived including the time (kairos) for the proclamation of the gospel. The hour for the realization of the events predicted by Isaiah had arrived:

there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish. In earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them. ([Isa 9:1-2](#))

So here kairos is not so much time in a chronological sense, but the time for decisive action on God's part. With the arrival of the King, a new "epoch" in God's dealings with men had come.

**Wuest** adds that kairos can refer to "seasons" which

represent the critical epoch-making periods (fore-ordained of God) when all that has been maturing (slowly, often without observation, ripening) through long ages comes to a head in grand decisive events which constitute at once the close of one period and the commencement or beginning of another.

(Kairos speaks of) those strategic times in the calendar of God during which events come to a culmination and ripen to usher in a new age... (kairos is) a strategic time, a time determined by a set of circumstances which make that particular point of time part of the efficient working of an action or set of actions.

In another use Paul in discussing the fate of Israel, most of whom had rejected their Messiah, writes that

"there has also come to be at the present time (kairos) a remnant (of believing Jews) according to God's gracious choice." (see note Romans 11:5)

The **kairos** time to which Paul was making reference was a strategic one, a time period marked by the inclusion of the Gentiles together with the Jews in the one Body of Christ, a time at which, while the Gentiles gladly received the Word, Israel was apostate, a time during which in spite of the apostasy of most of Israel, there was still a remnant of Israel who was being saved by the sovereign grace of God. In another use of kairos by Luke (with a meaning similar to Paul's in Romans 11), Peter exhorts his Jewish listeners at

Pentecost to

"Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times (kairos) of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you." ([Acts 3:19-20](#))

**Paul** encouraged the saints at Galatia to

not lose heart in doing good, for in due time (kairos - at the appointed season, when the time/fruit is "ripe") we shall reap if we do not grow weary (becoming exhausted and giving up). So then, while we have opportunity, (kairos) (Ed: "While we have" is a time phrase indicating we will not always have the opportunity - this is the essence of kairos) let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Gal 6:9-note, Gal 6:10-note)

**Comment:** Paul is encouraging his readers and us who live in the last days, that in the spiritual realm, rewards surely follow faithful sowing in due season. This encouraging word about a "kairos" time to come, reminds me of John Wesley's exhortation to

"Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can,  
to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

Since there is no good English equivalent to kairos, the essence of it's meaning can be somewhat difficult to grasp. Study the following verses and see if you can discern the "window of opportunity" aspect in each verse to help give you a "feel" for the meaning of Kairos

Mt 13:30 'Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."

Mt 21:34 And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce.

Mk 11:13 And seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs

Mk 13:33 Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is (Ed: referring to Christ's **Second Coming**).

Lk 4:13 And when the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

Lk 19:44 and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

Comment: This refers to Messiah's first advent, which the Jews failed to recognize and acknowledge.

Acts 17:26 and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation,

2Cor 6:2 for He says, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you"; behold, now is "the acceptable time," behold, now is "the day of salvation "

Colossians 4:5-note Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

Revelation 2:9-note Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

**William Mounce** writes that "unlike chronos, which is more focused on chronological time, kairos is time as significant events. This term frequently designates events in salvation history, such as the "time" of the birth of Moses, who led the Exodus from Egypt (Acts 7:20), as well as "the appointed time" for Christ to lead the second "exodus" (Mt 26:18; cf. Mk 1:15; Lk 19:44; Jn 7:6, 8; Ro 5:6; Eph 1:10). Thus, Peter states that the coming of Jesus marked "the time" of which the prophets inquired and predicted (1Pe 1:10, 11, 12). Furthermore, kairos is used to designate the second coming of Christ (1Ti 6:15), including the end judgment ("the time is near," Rev 1:3; 11:18; 22:10; cf. Mt 8:29; Mk 13:33; 1Cor 4:5). ([Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#))

The following quote from **Napoleon** illustrates the idea inherent in kairos:

There is in the midst of every great battle a ten to fifteen minute period that is the crucial point. Take that period and you win the battle; lose it and you will be defeated.

Paul uses **kairos** to exhort the saints at Ephesus to be "making the most (exagorazo = means to completely redeem, to buy in the marketplace) of your time (kairos), because the days are evil. (Eph 5:16-note)

**Comment:** God has set boundaries around our lives, and our opportunity (a state of affairs or combination of circumstances favorable to some end) for service exists only within those boundaries. We are to make the most of our relatively brief time on this earth seeking to fulfill God's purposes, "buying up" every opportunity for useful worship and service.

**Richard DeHaan** - If we had to buy time, would there be any difference in how we would spend it? Would the days of our lives be used more wisely?" That's what time management consultant Antonio Herrera asked the participants in a seminar he conducted on the subject. Then Dr. Herrera became more specific. He asked, "What if you had to pay in advance \$100 an hour for the time allotted to you? Would you waste it?" The answer should be obvious. Of course, we can't put a price tag on the minutes and hours we possess. They are given to us freely. But that doesn't excuse us from using them conscientiously, carefully, and wisely. The giver of time is God Himself, and that places a far greater value upon it than any monetary figure could suggest. We must therefore use our time intelligently, taking advantage of opportunities it provides for us to serve the Lord and to do His will. - R. W. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Redeem the time! God only knows  
How soon our little life may close,  
With all its pleasures and its woes,  
Redeem the time!  
— Anonymous

Although not using the word "kairos" in (Eph 2:10-note) Paul clearly alludes to the idea that believers now are God's "workmanship (Greek = poiema = "masterpiece") created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

Comment: Our goal as believers is to enter into those works that He has already prepared for us, for those are the only eternally lasting and "good" works. The idea of kairos is that God gives each believer opportunities - each new day brings its opened doors, its vast potential. It behooves believers to live in such a way that we are sensitive to when God gives us one of those "kairos" opportunities, because when it passes, it is gone. We can achieve our potential in His service only as we utilize those opportunities He has given us. If this admonition was urgent during Paul's day, how much more urgent today!

This is not just a New Testament idea -- during the time of David,

the sons of **Issachar** "knew the time" being described as "men who understood the times with knowledge of what Israel should do (1Chr 12:32).

Similarly **Daniel** in describing a difficult time in Israel's history (times of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees) writes that...

the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. (Da11:32KJV)

**Comment:** Dear believer, are you so intimate with your God, that when difficult times come for Christianity in America, you will be strong and do exploits. Stay in His Word. Obey (by grace and His Spirit) the Word. Fight to keep your conduct holy and godly (2Pe 3:11-note) and you will be strong and do exploits for the sake of His Name and His glory.

The **Geneva Study Bible** gives us some sage advice...

### **Spiritual discernment is rooted in the apprehension of divine revelation.**

In other words, when we are continually conducting our day to day affairs with a sense that we could meet Jesus in the sky at any moment (See **imminency**), this truth radically transforms our thinking!

Needed: Followers of Christ living with a sense of imminency and urgency, redeeming the time in the work of and in the Lord! Read, memorize, meditate on, and be motivated by 1Corinthians 15:58 - see commentary

We know Winter is near when the Fall comes. John wrote "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time (kairos) is near. (Rev 1:3-note)

Beloved, the next great **epoch** (kairos) of God's redemptive history is imminent. Sadly, although Christ's coming is the next glorious event, it has been delayed so long that many, even in the church, have begun to question whether He will ever come and to live like it!

**Harry Ironside** once wisely said that "Time is given us to use in view of eternity."

Given the preciousness of each new day in light of the truth of about kairos, ponder the words of the following hymn that speaks of beginning each new day "with the sun" and "with the Son"...

**AWAKE, MY SOUL,  
AND WITH THE SUN**

[Click to play](#)  
by Thomas Ken

Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
Thy daily stage of duty run;  
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise,  
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

**Thy precious time misspent, redeem,**  
Each present day thy last esteem,  
Improve thy talent with due care;  
For the great day thyself prepare.

By influence of the Light divine  
Let thy own light to others shine.  
Reflect all Heaven's propitious ways  
In ardent love, and cheerful praise.

In conversation be sincere;  
Keep conscience as the noontide clear;  
Think how all seeing God thy ways  
And all thy secret thoughts surveys.

Wake, and lift up thyself, my heart,  
And with the angels bear thy part,  
Who all night long unwearied sing  
High praise to the eternal King.

All praise to Thee, Who safe has kept  
And hast refreshed me while I slept  
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake  
I may of endless light partake.

Heav'n is, dear Lord, where'er Thou art,  
O never then from me depart;  
For to my soul 'tis hell to be  
But for one moment void of Thee.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew;  
Disperse my sins as morning dew.  
Guard my first springs of thought and will,  
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest, this day,  
All I design, or do, or say,  
That all my powers, with all their might,  
In Thy sole glory may unite.

I would not wake nor rise again  
And Heaven itself I would disdain,  
Wert Thou not there to be enjoyed,  
And I in hymns to be employed.

Heaven is, dear Lord, where'er Thou art;  
O never then from me depart;  
For to my soul 'tis hell to be  
But for one moment without Thee.

Praise God, from Whom all blessings  
flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

In this closing section then Paul sets off an alarm clock to waken believers who have gone to sleep spiritually.

The world lives as though human history were destined to continue for ever.

The Christian knows that God is sovereign and in control of all events, not only in the lives of individuals but also in the rise and fall of nations. Our sovereign God is directing history to a predetermined end.

Phillips paraphrases Paul's charge to believers as "It is time to wake up to reality."

Believers are to wake up from spiritual lethargy and love their neighbors while they have opportunity (time) (Col 4:5, 6see notes; 4:6, Eph 5:16-note, both use "kairos" see below). Show love while you can.

God set a goal, yet gave the choice

To mortals how time may be spent,

Admonishing that worth, not length,

Values time's accomplishment.

The emphasis by Paul is on the brevity of our life on earth and the eminency and hope (certainty) of Christ's appearance should motivate us to pursue godliness & purity (1Jn 2:28 3:2, 3, Jas 5:8, 9, 2Pe 3:11, 12, 13-see notes, 2Pe 3:14-note).

**Kent Hughes** says that believers...

ought to be like the little boy whose family clock malfunctioned and struck 15x so that he rushed wide-eyed to his mother crying,

"Mommy, it's later than it's ever been before!"

What sanctifying logic! We should also keep in mind that if Christ does not return in our time, He will certainly come individually for us in death. Each ache, pain, gray hair, new wrinkle or funeral is another reminder that it is later than it has ever been before. It is time to love our neighbors as ourselves. IT'S LATER THAN YOU THINK. Redeem the time!" ([Hughes, R. K. Romans: Righteousness from heaven. Preaching the Word. Crossway](#) or [Wordsearch](#))

**William Newell** writes:

This verse sets before us the awful tendency to sink down (as did the ten virgins! [Mt 25:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13]) into slumber & sleep, —into a state of spiritual torpor in which no Christian duties are effectively done. Believers are to "know the season." Our Lord sternly arraigned the Jews of His day for their ignorance concerning "the time"; "When ye see a cloud rising in the West, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it cometh to pass. And when ye see a south wind blowing, ye say, There will be a scorching heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time (same Gk word "kairos" as in Ro 13:11)? And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? (Luke12:54, 55, 56)

There their Messiah was, in their midst, and they knew Him not! Why? Because they did not apply themselves to know the time they were in, although they could have known it, both from the prophetic Word which was being fulfilled before their eyes in Christ; and also "of their own selves, " if they had set themselves to judge truly of the moral conditions about them and the necessities of action involved therein. If the Jews even then were called by our Lord "hypocrites, " for applying their God-given discernment to the signs of the weather, and neglecting to apply it to spiritual things, and so going on blindly to judgment; how much more this should arouse us who have so much greater light and knowledge, in view of Christ's death and resurrection, and the presence of the Holy Spirit; and the certainty of our Lord's coming, and our uncertainty as to the day and hour! " (Bolding added) (Newell, W: Romans: Verse by Verse)

The idea is not to make best use of time as such, which is what we should do in the sense of not wasting it, but of taking advantage of the opportunities that present themselves. One who lives life carelessly and without forethought would be walking foolishly. One who doesn't use his time wisely obviously would be unwise. Finally, one who isn't following God's will would be most foolish.

May God help us to love with a sense of urgency and selflessness

- Let us cultivate a sense of debt. Just as when we owe someone money and our debt is the first thing we think of when we see him, so may it be with our debt of love.
- Let us enlarge our definition of neighbor as, "My neighbor is not necessarily someone like me. It is any person God has put in my way whom I can help."
- Let us cultivate a sense of the time—"It is later than it has ever been before."

**Adoniram Judson** (his [challenging/motivating biography is worth taking a moment in time to read!](#)) alluded to making the most of your opportunities when he wrote that "A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated through eternity... the same may be said of each day. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever... each day will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny... How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness... ! It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, resolve to send the day into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more day is irrevocably gone, indelibly marked."

Many years ago when the great missionary **Adoniram Judson** was home on furlough, he passed through the city of Stonington, Connecticut. A young boy playing about the wharves at the time of Judson's arrival was struck by the man's appearance. Never before had he seen such a light on any human face. He ran up the street to a minister to ask if he knew who the stranger was. The minister hurried back with him, but became so absorbed in conversation with Judson that he forgot all about the impatient youngster standing near him. Many years afterward that boy—who could never get away from the influence of that wonderful face—became

the famous preacher Henry Clay Trumbull. In a book of memoirs he penned a chapter entitled: "What a Boy Saw in the Face of Adoniram Judson." That lighted countenance had changed his life. Even as flowers thrive when they bend to the light, so shining, radiant faces come to those who constantly turn toward Christ! Over 3000 years ago Moses prayed a prayer (see Ps 90:12 in next note below) that is reflected in the life of Adoniram Judson and might well be an appropriate prayer of every saint who loves "His (Christ's) [appearing](#)" (2Ti 4:8-note) ([Spurgeon's devotional](#))

Kent Hughes adds this encouraging thought...

May God help us to love with a sense of urgency and selflessness. Let us cultivate a sense of debt. Just as when we owe someone money and our debt is the first thing we think of when we see him, so may it be with our debt of love (Ro 13:10). Let us enlarge our definition of neighbor as,

"My neighbor is not necessarily someone like me. It is any person God has put in my way whom I can help."

Let us cultivate a sense of the time—"It is later than it has ever been before." Let us consciously put off the deeds of darkness (we individually know what these are) and put on Jesus—every day! Let us not be planning out in our mind beforehand how we will carry out the sinful desires that deceptively, continually emanate from our old nature (which will constantly wage war with us until we are home). ([Hughes, R. K. Romans: Righteousness from heaven. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books](#))

Tony Evans- This question of what we are doing with our salvation is one that all of us need to ask ourselves. We're secure in Christ, but what are we doing for Him in gratitude and love for what He has given us? If you are a spiritual dropout, then get back in the race. Pick up the pace to make up lost ground. Every day you delay is another day of lost opportunity. "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary" (Galatians 6:9-note). (Totally Saved)

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**LOST OPPORTUNITY** - In her classes on the history of missions, Yvonne Wood of the U. S. Center for World Missions, describes what she calls

### **“THE BIGGEST LOST OPPORTUNITY IN MISSIONARY HISTORY.”**

There was a thirteen-year-old in Mongolia who inherited a bit of land from his father. This boy was a precocious warrior with instinctive brilliance as a military strategist; he was also ruthless, and he formed fighting bands that went from village to village until he was ruling over two million people in a Mongolian Empire that stretched from China to India, and from Siberia to edges of Western Europe. They gave this young man the title of Genghis Khan and he ruled over more territory than any man has ever ruled. Meanwhile, at the same time in Western Europe, a great revival was occurring under the preaching of men like St. Francis of Assisi, and thousands were becoming Christians.

Following Khan's death, the bulk of his empire eventually went to his grandson, Kublai Khan, who established his capital city in Beijing. He had two Italians in his court named Polo, the father and the uncle of famed explorer Marco Polo. They began to tell Kublai Khan about Christianity, and the great ruler became very interested. He sent the Polo brothers back with a request for 100 missionaries to tell the Mongolians and the Chinese about Christianity.

"When we learn about Christianity, there will be more Christians in my empire than in all Europe," he said.

The Polos returned with the message, but no one was interested in going. Finally two friars agreed to go with the Polos (and Marco Polo accompanied them) but along the way the friars got fainthearted and turned around and went home.

When they got back to Kublai Khan, he said, "Where are the missionaries?" No one came. Eventually the church did send a small handful of missionaries, but by that time (you guessed it)...

### **THE OPPORTUNITY HAD PASSED!**

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**LOST OPPORTUNITY** - The permanent truth is this. It is one of the great basic facts of life that time and time again an opportunity comes to a man—and does not come back... This happens in every sphere of life. In his autobiography, Chiaroscuro, Augustus John tells of an incident and adds a laconic comment. He was in Barcelona: "It was time to leave for Marseilles. I had sent forward my baggage and was walking to the station, when I encountered three Gitanas engaged in buying flowers at a booth. I was so struck by their beauty and flashing elegance that I almost missed my train. Even when I reached Marseilles and met my friend, this vision still haunted me, and I positively had to return. But I did not find these gypsies again. One never does." The artist was always looking for glimpses of beauty to transfer to his canvas—but he knew well that if he did not paint the beauty when he found it, all the chances were that he would never catch that glimpse again. The tragedy of life is so often the tragedy of the lost opportunity.

(William Barclay)

Lord, help us to redeem the time  
You give us every day,  
To take each opportunity  
To follow and obey.  
—Sper

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Alexander Maclaren, the noted Baptist preacher from England, said

Every moment of life is granted us for one purpose: becoming like our dear Lord. That ultimate, all-embracing end is reached through a multitude of near and intermediate ones.

God can turn any difficulty  
into an opportunity.

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**MISSED OPPORTUNITY-** Dr. Jimmy Allen writes: We missed him. Our chance to change things came and passed and we did not know it was there. A dark-skinned little boy sat through Sunday School classes for three years at a great Baptist Church (First Church, San Antonio) but someone missed him. His name was Sirhan Sirhan, and at age 24 he shot and killed Senator Robert Kennedy. In a welter of words and the shudder of grief throughout our nation, the persistent thought keeps recurring—someone missed him. (Dr. Jimmy Allen, former pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas in Pulpit Helps, May, 1991, from [10000 Sermon Illustrations. Dallas: Biblical Studies Press](#))

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At [Kadesh-Barnea](#), on the border of Canaan, the people of Israel foolishly forfeited their opportunity to enter the Promised Land and claim their inheritance. This tragic failure has made the name "Kadesh" a synonym for defeat and lost opportunity. Israel's downfall at Kadesh is a reminder to us today that it's a dangerous thing to trifle with the will of God. You may end up spending the rest of your life wandering around, just waiting to die. (Warren Wiersbe - Be Counted - Numbers)

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**LOST OPPORTUNITY** - During the first three days of July 1863, in the midst of America's great Civil War, the armies of the North and South clashed decisively at Gettysburg. For the first three days of the battle the fighting was inconclusive, but then the tide began to turn against General Lee and the Confederate forces. The northern troops under General G. G. Meade were winning. Lee began to retreat southward on the night of July 4, while storm clouds drenched the east coast with rain. When Lee reached the Potomac, he found that the river was swollen with rain. He could not cross it. Behind him was the victorious Union army. Before him was the river. He was trapped. Here was the great, golden opportunity for General Meade. Meade could have attacked immediately, destroying Lee's army and, in effect, ending the Civil War. President Lincoln actually ordered him to attack. However, instead of attacking, Meade delayed. He held a council, then delayed again. Eventually the water of the river receded, and Lee escaped over the Potomac, from which ground he was able to extend the war by two more years. Meade never regained his lost opportunity, and it was to General Grant that Lee eventually surrendered on April 9, 1865. This story shows us the tragedy of having missed a great opportunity. But if this principle is true in the physical realm, as we realize, it is certainly more true spiritually. (James Boice - The Gospel of John: an Expository Commentary)

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### Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament - Time

- **chronos** ([5550](#)) Time
- **kairos** ([2540](#)) Season, Opportunity

Chronoi and kairoi occur together several times in the New Testament, always in the plural ( Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1), as well as in the Septuagint and in the Apocrypha. Grotius thought that the difference between **Chronos** and **kairos** was that the chronoi were longer than the kairoi. According to him: "Chronoi are larger divisions of time as years, kairoi are smaller divisions as months and days." This distinction, if not inaccurate, is certainly insufficient and fails to touch the heart of the matter.

**Chronos** is simply time as such or the succession of moments. Plato called it a "moving representation of eternity," and Philo called it a "dimension of the movement of the heavens." According to Severianus: "Chronos is length, kairos is favorable opportunity." Kairos is time as it brings forth its several births: "the time [kairos] of harvest" ( Matthew 13:30), "the season [kairos] of figs" ( Mark 11:13); Christ died "in due time (kata kairon, Romans 5:6). Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 is actually a miniature essay on the word. Chronos embraces all possible kairoi, and since it is the more inclusive term, it is frequently used where kairos would have been equally suitable, though the reverse is not true. In chronos tou tekein (the time of bringing forth, Luke 1:57) and pleroma (Strong's #4138)

tou chronou ( Galatians 4:4), which refers to the fullness or to the ripeness of time for the manifestation of the Son of God, we would have expected tou kairou or ton kairon instead. The "times [chronoi] of restoration" ( Acts 3:21) are identical with the "times [kairoi] of refreshing," which are mentioned in Acts 3:19. Thus it is possible to speak of the kairos chronou, as Sophocles did: "May reason preclude from you the opportune moment [kairon] of time [chronou]," but not of the chronos kairou. Olympiodorus remarked: "Chronos is the interval at which something is done; kairos is the time [kronos] suitable for the action. Thus chronos can be kairos, but kairos is not chronos; it is the appropriateness [eukairia] of what is done occurring in time [chronos]." According to Ammonius: "Kairos indicates quality of time [chronou]; chronos indicates quantity." Eukairos chronos (a fitting time) occurs in a fragment of Sosipatros.

Consequently, when the apostles asked, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" he answered: "It is not for you to know times or seasons" ( Acts 1:6-7). "The times" (chronoi) are (in Augustine's words) "the very divisions of time," that is, the duration of the church's history; but "the seasons" (kairoi) are the joints or articulations in these times, the critical epoch-making periods foreordained by God or the "preappointed times" in Acts 17:26. Kairoi refers to the gradual and perhaps unobserved ripening and maturing process that results in grand decisive events that close one period of history as they inaugurate another. Examples of such decisive events in history include the noisy end of the old Jewish dispensation, the recognition of Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire, the conversion of the Germanic tribes settled within the limits of the empire and the conversion of those outside of it, the great revival that occurred with the first institution of the Mendicant orders, and more importantly the Reformation. The most decisive event of all will be the second coming of the Lord in glory ( Daniel 7:22).

There is not an adequate Latin word for kairoi. According to Augustine, who complained of this deficiency:

Greek speaks of Chronos or kairos. Our people call either word "time," whether chronos or kairos, although these two possess a differentiation which must not be neglected. The Greeks indeed use kairos as a particular time not however as one which passes in an alteration of divisions, but as one which is perceived on occasions fitting and suitable in some respect, as time for harvesting, gathering of grapes, warmth, cold, peace, war, and anything similar. They speak of chronoi as the very divisions of time.

Augustine did not recognize tempestivitas (timeliness), which is used by Cicero. This complaint is confirmed by the Vulgate, where various words are used to translate kairoi whenever it occurs with chronoi. In those cases, kairoi cannot be translated by tempora (times) because chronoi is. Thus it is translated in various ways such as "times and moments" (Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1), "times and ages" (Daniel 2:21), and "times and generations" (Wisdom of Solomon 8:8). A modern Latin commentator on the New Testament has "times and divisions" and Bengel has "intervals and times." It might be argued that *tempora et opportunitates* (times and opportune times) would fulfill all the necessary conditions. Augustine anticipated this suggestion and demonstrated its insufficiency by arguing that *opportunitas* (opportune time) refers to a convenient, favorable season, but kairos may refer to a most inconvenient and unfavorable time that is nevertheless essentially the critical nick of time. Kairos itself does not determine whether this critical time is positive or negative, helpful or harmful. "Whether the time is convenient or inconvenient, it is called kairos. "It is usually, however, the former: "Kairos is for men like a very great chief over every work."

#### THAT IT IS ALREADY THE HOUR FOR YOU TO AWAKEN FROM SLEEP: *hoti hora ede humas ex hupnou egerthenai* (APN):

- Jonah 1:6; Mt 25:5, 6, 7; 26:40,41; Mk 13:35, 36, 37; 1Co 15:34; Ep 5:14-note; 1Th 5:5-note, 1Th 5:6, 7-notes, 1Th 5:8-note
- [Romans 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Romans 13:11-14: Your Present Walk and the Coming Day](#) - Steven Cole
- [Romans 13:11-14 Putting On The Lord Jesus Christ, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11-14 Time to Wake Up](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11-12 Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:12-14 Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Romans 13:11-14 Do You Know What Time It Is](#) - Ray Pritchard
- [Romans 13:11-14 Responsibilities Under Grace 12](#) - Wayne Barber

The return of our Lord  
has always furnished the supreme motive  
for consistent Christian living.  
-Erdman

Already gives a touch of urgency to Paul's exhortation. He is not speaking of some remote period for which they could make leisurely preparation for, but of one that called for action now. He is sounding a "Paul Revere" call for alertness.

**G Campbell Morgan** - I never begin my work in the morning without thinking that perhaps He may interrupt my work and begin His



own. I am not looking for death. I am looking for Him.

**Alexander Maclaren** - The language is vividly picturesque. The darkness is thinning, and the blackness turning grey. Light begins to stir and whisper. A band of soldiers lies asleep, and, as the twilight begins to dawn, the bugle call summons them to awake, to throw off their night-gear,—namely, the works congenial to darkness,—and to brace on their armour of light.

**Awaken from sleep** - No Christian should be asleep, yet the ordinary life of most of us is but a drowsy state of spirituality compared with what it should be and what it would be if our Christian hope (certainty) were perpetually present in our minds to spur us onward. In Ephesians 5:14 Paul is speaking to the "spiritually asleep" believers.

For this reason it says, "**Awake** (present imperative), sleeper, and **arise** (aorist imperative - do this now, it's urgent!) from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." (Ep 5:14-note)

Comment: Not everyone agrees this verse is directed to believers, but I feel the context and tenor of the latter half of Ephesians 4-6 [which calls for a worthy walk in believers] favors this verse as also directed to believers.

Compare a similar admonition to believers in Corinth...

**Become sober-minded** (aorist imperative - do this now, it's urgent!) as you ought, and stop (not sinning) **sinning** (present imperative with a negative conveys sense of stop an action already occurring); for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. (1Cor 15:34)

**Awaken** (1453) (egeiro) means to rise (stand up) from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5), to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25), figuratively to "awaken" from death (rise up). Egeiro was used literally also to raise up or lift up a person either sitting or lying down. Figuratively egeiro was used to "raise up" a person from illness, thus restoring them to health. In Romans 4:24, egeiro describes the bringing back of Jesus from the dead and thus raising Him or causing Him to rise. The idea of wake up from death is conveyed by egeiro because sleep was used as metaphor of death for believers (there is however no "soul sleep").

Encyclopedia Britannica defines sleep as "a state of inactivity with a loss of consciousness & a decrease in responsiveness to events taking place."

Here Paul is referring to a believer being "spiritually" asleep.

## SATAN'S STRATEGY: SLEEPY SAINTS

**Martin Luther** wrote a parable about Satan conversing with his minions (demons) on the progress they had made in opposing the truth of God and destroying the souls of men.

One spirit said there was a company of Christians crossing the desert. "I loosed the lions upon them, and soon the sands of the desert were strewn with their mangled corpses."

"What of that?" answered Satan. "The lions destroyed their bodies, but their souls were saved. It is their souls that I am after."

Another reported, "There was a company of Christian pilgrims sailing through the sea on a vessel. I sent a great wind against the ship that drove the ship on the rocks, and every Christian aboard the ship was drowned."

"What of that?" said Satan. "Their bodies were drowned in the sea, but their souls were saved. It is their souls that I am after."

The third came forward to give his report, and he said, "For ten years I have been trying to cast a Christian into a deep sleep, and at last I have succeeded."

And with that the corridors of Hell rang with shouts of malignant triumph.

Awake! Awake! Hear the call of the Lord while we still have light to work!

**Sleep** (5258) (**hupnos**) in Scripture usually refers to literal sleep (Mt 1:24, Lk 9:32, Jn 11:13). In the present passage Paul is referring to figurative sleep, specifically spiritual lethargy.

**Friberg** says the entire phrase (ex hupnou egerthenai) is

literally be be roused out of sleep, i.e. wake up to reality, realize what is going on.

**Sleep** is a metaphor (see terms of comparison - simile, metaphor) which pictures spiritual apathy and lethargy or unresponsiveness to the things of eternal value that please God.

Vine notes that...

hupnos is never used of death. In five places in the NT it is used of physical "sleep;" in Ro13:11, metaphorically, of a slumbering state of soul, i.e., of spiritual conformity to the world, out of which believers are warned to awake... In 1 Thessalonians 5:6, where the verb katheudō is used, believers are warned against falling into soul slumber; here they are exhorted to awake out of it...

The apostles were ever consistent in their instruction concerning the Lord's return as an event to be regarded as imminent. Discussions as to whether any of them changed their view as to its imminence, or whether they were mistaken, are entirely beside the mark. The exhortations they gave were designed for the saints throughout the present era. To wait for the Son of God from heaven not only was the actual attitude of the church of the Thessalonians, their example was to be followed by all believers in each generation till the event takes place. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

Hupnos is the source of our English words "hypnotic, hypnosis, etc". In the present passage, Paul is telling his readers us to awaken from their "hypnotic state", which by default are produced by the enticements of the **world**, the **flesh** and the **devil** .

The hour of our Lord's return is drawing nigh and you are sound asleep spiritually!

Alford on hupnos - the state of worldly carelessness and indifference to sin, which allows and practises the works of darkness. The imagery seems to be taken originally from our Lord's discourse concerning His coming: see Matthew 24:42; Mark 13:33, and Luke 21:28-36, where several points of similarity to our Romans 13:11-14 occur. ([Romans 13 - Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

Hupnos is used 6 times in the NT - Mt 1:24; Lk. 9:32; Jn 11:13; Acts 20:9; Ro 13:11

Phil Newton says Paul is exhorting believers to "Throw off the hypnotic state", adding that "I use the word hypnotic intentionally. The Greek for "sleep" is the root for hypnotize, which is a state that resembles sleep. "It is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep [hupnos]." He's not talking about literal sleep but rather the sluggish, dulled, hypnotic, and almost trance-like state that the world lulls us into. Paul moves from speaking of kairos—the momentous event, the significant happening, to hora or time in a momentary sense. The schedule has arrived. The beep-beep-beep has signaled that your appointment is here. It's time to awaken or literally, arise from the sluggish, hypnotic state induced by the world. It's time to wake up! Have you ever fallen into such a deep sleep that you dream of waking up but you cannot? You feel frozen. You know that you need to get up but you just can't; it's as though you are strapped to the bed. You feel like you are in a trance as the world moves around you, but you cannot arise and get into action. That's the picture that Paul gives. He tells us that it is now time to get up—to throw off the hypnotic state that the world has put you into. Realize that the **world**—that system of thought and suggestion and action that does not include God—is not your friend; it is out to ruin you. So it is time to wake up to the world! See it for what it is in your life! ([The Armor of Light](#))

S Lewis Johnson says this is a description of "Christian somnambulists" - They walk in their sleep. Our churches, our Evangelical churches, are full of people like this. They're going through the motions. Have you ever seen anybody walk in their sleep? They're walking. They actually have motor power, but they don't know what's going on... They're sitting in our meetings. They bow their heads when prayer is made. They actually read, but they don't pay any attention to what they read. They're inwardly asleep. ([Christian Citizen and the Day](#))

Bruce Goettsche writes...

Tim McGraw has a CD out where the album and title cut is "Live Like You Were Dying". The song is about a man who was in his early forties who gets news that he has a terminal illness. The rest of the song recounts that the man lived with a new sense of urgency. He went skydiving, mountain climbing and bull riding. He gave attention to the people he loved and basically changed all the things he used to think were important. The phrase repeated again and again is this one:

"someday I hope you get the chance to be living like you were dying."

This is the what Paul is saying. We should be living with a new urgency. We must remember that we are terminal. We understand that we could die or Jesus could return at any time. Paul suggests that those who understand this fact will change the way they live. He uses the metaphor of changing clothes. He says we need to change from the deeds of darkness to the armor of light. ([Get it in Gear](#))

Christian citizens are to live in the light of the eminency of the Lord's return. Paul admonishes us to

**"Wake up-Dress up-Clean up-Look up!"**

## Are we "listening up"?

Let us not be lulled to sleep by indulgence in pleasure or be influenced by the specious words of mockers who suggest that the Lord has delayed His coming or that He will not return at all (2Pe 3:3,4 -note).

**Bethany Bible** sermon notes asks...

What do Christians look like who are "asleep" in this way? I believe such "spiritual slumber" shows itself in a slackening of the intensity of their faith. They may read their Bibles, but not with much excitement or application. They don't "tremble" at God's word (Isaiah 66:2). They may pray, but not with much earnestness, or effectiveness, or expectation (James 5:16). They may go to church, but only as "spectators" and "consumers", and not as a properly working part of the Body that contributes to its growth (Ephesians 4:16). They may be around non-believers, but they're not excited enough about their own faith to present it to others as "ambassadors of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20). They're saved; but are just sort of taking a "spiritual siesta" all the time.

"**Sleep**" is the perfect word to use to describe the state of a passive, uninvolved, indifferent Christian. Great potential is there in them; but there's nothing happening.

Many years ago, I worked in a moving and storage warehouse; and a young guy started working in the warehouse that, for some reason, we just couldn't find. He'd come to work - I mean, we'd see him enter the warehouse - but we just couldn't find him after that.

Well, we finally found him - or, I should say, we heard him snoring. He had pulled a bunch of warehouse crates around himself, made a little hiding place, and was sleeping on the job. The rest of us all gathered around this sleeping beauty, and on the count of three, shouted, "Wake up!!" And that's what Paul is doing here. This is a call to the sleepy Christian to wake up!

Let me make a suggestion. Pray about this before God. It'll take guts; because God will answer your prayer. Ask Him to show you whether or not you are a sleepy Christian. Ask Him to reveal to you where you might be dozing off. And then, ask Him to set you ablaze with the expectation of the Lord's return. He will. (See the full message on [Romans 13:11-14 Now's the Time!](#))

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What Time Is It?-There are many ways of keeping time. Let's look at three of them. The first is called "world time." For many years this was how the world set its clocks. World time was determined by the relationship of the earth to the sun, and it enabled man to measure time by the movements of the heavens.

A second way of keeping time was adopted in 1972 when the switch was made to "atomic time." This method measures hours, minutes, and seconds not merely by the big picture of the heavens but by the highly accurate vibrations of the atom.

Then there's a third method. It's based on our relationship to God, and His timekeeping is perfect. Let me explain. When we recognize our accountability to God, we see that now is the time to surround ourselves with the values, thoughts, and attitudes of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ro 13:14-note). We become aware that our eternal rescue is closer than ever before (Ro 13:11). Because of our relationship to the Lord, we should heed the warning that time is running out for this world (Ro 13:12). If we are going to live honestly and lovingly, we must do so now!

As you look at the clock today, remember that you should also figure time by your relationship to the Lord. --M R De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God set a goal, yet gave the choice  
To mortals how time may be spent;  
Admonishing that worth, not length,  
Will value time's accomplishment.

-Mortenson

Counting time is not as important  
as making time count

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Asleep On The Job - The following notice was posted on the bulletin board in a business office: "It has come to management's attention that workers dying on the job are failing to fall down. This practice must stop, as it becomes impossible to distinguish between death and the natural movement of the staff. Any employee found dead in an upright position will be dropped from the payroll."

This humorous description finds a serious parallel among Christians. We can go through the motions of obedience without any real heart involvement. Behind our business-as-usual appearance is a lack of enthusiasm for righteous living and serving God. We need

Paul's admonition: "It is high time to awake out of sleep" (Romans 13:11).

We must remain intense in our desire to please the Lord. Centuries ago the psalmist prayed that he wouldn't settle for a casual religious experience (Ps 119:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). He longed for a total commitment to love what God loves and hate what He hates. He sensed that he would have to give his whole heart, mind, and strength to the task.

We will accomplish much for the Lord if we set our will against the current of the world and the pull of our sinful flesh. Let's not fall asleep on the job. —M R De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Go, labor on; spend and be spent,  
Thy joy to do the Father's will;  
It is the way the Master went;  
Should not the servant tread it still?  
—Bonar

Living for Jesus is not a part-time job. (see also [How To Have A Revival](#))

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Ray Stedman sounds an alarm writing...

I am afraid that we often hear men preaching who are aware of the fact that the age is drawing to a close, but their word to us is not to wake up, but to hurry up. Yet, as I turn to the pages of the New Testament, I never find that word "hurry" occurring. It isn't "hurry up," it is "wake up" that the Lord is continually saying to us. It is not hurry that is needed. Back in Isaiah, Isaiah says, "He that believeth need not make haste" {cf, Is 28:16 KJV}. That is a wonderful word: "He that believeth need not make haste... It is not hurry that is needed, it is awareness. "Watch," Jesus said over and over to his disciples. "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch," {Mk 13:37 KJV}. Act intelligently. Don't act in panic, but in knowledge. Be aware of what you are doing. Act purposefully and intelligently, Wake up! ([The Demand of the Hour](#))

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This humorous description finds a serious parallel among Christians. We can go through the motions of obedience without any real heart involvement. Behind our business-as-usual appearance is a lack of enthusiasm for righteous living and serving God. We need Paul's admonition here in (Ro 13:11). We will accomplish much for the Lord if we set our will against the current of the world and the pull of our sinful flesh. Let's not fall asleep on the job. Living for Jesus is not a part-time job.

Go, labor on; spend and be spent,  
Thy joy to do the Father's will;  
It is the way the Master went;  
Should not the servant tread it still? —Bonar

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**FOR NOW SALVATION IS NEARER TO US THAN WHEN WE BELIEVED: nun gar egguteron hemon e soteria e hote episteusamen (1PAAI):**

- 1Jn 3:2 1Pe 1:5, 13
- Eccl 9:10; Lk 21:28; 1Co 7:29, 30, 31; 1Pe 4:7; 2Pe 3:13, 14, 15; Re 22:12,20
- [Romans 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Romans 13:11-14: Your Present Walk and the Coming Day](#) - Steven Cole
- [Romans 13:11-14 Putting On The Lord Jesus Christ, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
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- [Romans 13:11-14 Do You Know What Time It Is](#) - Ray Pritchard
- [Romans 13:11-14 Responsibilities Under Grace 12](#) - Wayne Barber

For (gar) is a **term of explanation** explaining why they should awaken from their sleepiness (spiritually speaking). Why? Because our salvation (deliverance) from this present world is nearer.

Now salvation is nearer - What salvation is he referring to? Paul is speaking of our future tense salvation (glorification), that wonderful day when we receive our glorified bodies (Ro 8:22, 23-note), along with freedom from the presence of sin and pleasure of sin and forever in perfect conformity to the perfect will of God. (see study of Three Tenses of Salvation). The "nearness" of this glorious day should motivate the readers to live life with an "eternal perspective" walking by faith (seeing with "eternal" vision so to speak) not by sight.

## THE NOW AND NOT YET

**Phil Newton** ([Armor of Light](#)) says that "We live in the realm of the now and the not yet. They overlap. We're seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph 2:6-note); yet we live in the world but are not to be of the world (Jn 17:15, 16). We're hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3-note), yet we must take action to consider the members of our earthly bodies dead to sin (Col 3:5-11-note). We read of "the last days" prophesied by Joel, typically thinking of it as the days immediately preceding the return of Christ. Yet Peter identified it as the era from the cross until the return of Christ (Acts 2:16-21, cp Heb 1:1, 2-note). So when Paul exhorts us to change our perspective, to get a new view about life, he calls on us to live toward the final Day when Christ brings to culmination the work of redemption—reordering the cosmos and claiming His Bride. Live toward that day of "salvation," or future deliverance. Live as one that will be claimed by Christ on that day.

Live as one who will gladly welcome Him.

Live as one whose life is not bound  
by the latest fads, music, movies, and entertainment.

Live as one whose life is not consumed  
with pursuing the world or living for retirement  
or living for a paycheck or living for the next party.

Live as one that will see Jesus Christ.

I like the way **Dave Guzik** phrases it...

Because we know the danger of the times and we anticipate the soon return of Jesus, we should be all the more energetic and committed to a right walk with God instead of a sleep-walk with God.

How important it is to awake out of sleep! We can do many Christian things and essentially be asleep towards God. What a difference it makes when we are awake!

- We can speak when we are asleep
- We can hear when we are asleep
- We can walk when we are asleep
- We can sing when we are asleep
- We can think when we are asleep

**William Newell** comments that "The hope of the imminency of our Lord's coming, with the consummation of salvation in bodily redemption (Eph 1:14-note, Ep 4:30-note) and glorification (1Co 15:52, 53, 54 - see Relationship of Justified, Sanctified, Glorified), is constantly used by the apostles in exhorting believers to a holy walk in love (cp 2Pe 3:11-note). This present verse sets before us the awful tendency to sink down (as did the ten virgins! Mt 25:1-8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) into slumber and sleep,—into a state of spiritual torpor in which no Christian duties are effectively done. Believers are to "know the season." Our Lord sternly arraigned the Jews of His day for their ignorance concerning "the time"; "When ye see a cloud rising in the West, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it cometh to pass. And when ye see a south wind blowing, ye say, There will be a scorching heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time? And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Lk 12:54, 55, 56, 57) There their Messiah was, in their midst, and they knew Him not! Why? Because they did not apply themselves to know the time they were in, although they could have known it, both from the prophetic Word which was being fulfilled before their eyes in Christ; and also "of their own selves," if they had set themselves to judge truly of the moral conditions about them and the necessities of action involved therein. If the Jews even then were called by our Lord "hypocrites," for applying their God-given discernment to the signs of the weather, and neglecting to apply it to spiritual things, and so going on blindly to judgment; how much more this should arouse us who have so much greater light and

knowledge, in view of Christ's death and resurrection, and the presence of the Holy Spirit; and the certainty of our Lord's Coming, and our uncertainty as to the day and hour! ([Romans 13 Verse by Verse Commentary](#))

**Salvation** (4991) (soteria [word study]) as discussed in earlier chapters can be understood in "three tenses" (See Relationship of Justified, Sanctified, Glorified) - (1) As a deliverance accomplished in the past (justification, when we by faith we were declared righteous - Ro 3:28-note; Ro 5:1-note), (2) As a deliverance in which God's Spirit daily is delivering us from the temptations and snares of the the world, the flesh and the devil,

is being accomplished in the present time (sanctification) and which is yet future when our our bodies will be redeemed and [glorified](#) (Ro 8:30-note, 1Pe 1:5-note; 1Pe 1:13-note, cf 1Jn 3:2-note).

In a similar way, Jesus was alluding to this "future tense" of salvation in Luke 21:28 when He said

But when these things begin to take place, straighten up (look up) and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

**Soteria** - 46x in 45v in NAS -

Mark 16:8; Luke 1:69, 71, 77; 19:9; Jn 4:22; Acts 4:12; 7:25; 13:26, 47; 16:17; 27:34; Ro 1:16; 10:1, 10; 11:11; 13:11; 2Cor 1:6; 6:2; 7:10; Eph 1:13; Phil 1:19, 28; 2:12; 1Th 5:8, 9; 2Th 2:13; 2Ti 2:10; 3:15; Heb 1:14; 2:3, 10; 5:9; 6:9; 9:28; 11:7; 1Pe 1:5, 9, 10; 2:2; 2Pe 3:15; Jude 1:3; Rev 7:10; 12:10; 19:1. NAS = deliverance(2), preservation(1), salvation(42).

The great hymnwriter Fanny Crosby describes in verse our imminent day of glorification "when our happy souls shall rest by the fount of life eternal with the ransomed ever blest!"

## **WE ARE NEARING**

[\(Play Hymn\)](#)

We are drifting towards the waters

Of a calm and tranquil sea,

And we soon shall anchor safely

In that port where we should be.

Refrain

We are nearing, we are nearing,

Nearing the golden strand;

We are nearing, we are nearing,

Nearing the soul's bright land.

We are drifting from the sorrows

That for us will soon be o'er;

We are drifting from the trials

That will vex the heart no more.

Refrain

We are drifting from the shadows

Into pure and perfect day;

'Tis the Savior guides our vessel,

And His presence cheers our way.

Refrain

Oh, the morning and the meeting,

When our happy souls shall rest,

By the fount of life eternal,

With the ransomed ever blest.

Refrain

**Nearer** ([1452](#)) (**egguteron** = comparative of eggus - [1451](#)) describes a point of time subsequent to another point of time, but relatively close. The verb form eggizo (move nearer to a reference point) is used in Ro 13:12 (note).

**Eggus** - 25x in 24v in the NAS -

Mt 24:32, 33; 26:18; Mark 13:28, 29; Lk 19:11; 21:30, 31; Jn 2:13; 3:23; 6:4, 19, 23; 7:2; 11:18, 54, 55; 19:20, 42; Acts 1:12; 9:38; 27:8; Ro 10:8; Ro 13:11; Eph 2:13, 17; Php 4:5; Heb 6:8; Heb 8:13; Rev 1:3; Rev 22:10.  
NAS = close(1), near(27), nearby(1), nearer(1), ready(1).

When we believed - By using the plural pronoun "we", Paul included himself in his reference to the moment of salvation (justification) when moved and convicted by the Spirit (Jn 3:3, 16:8), we placed our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, receiving His gift of eternal life. At that moment when we believed, we were justified or declared righteous because God imputed (credited, reckoned) Christ's perfect righteousness (2Co 5:21-note, Ro 4:5-note, Ro 4:25-note) to our otherwise spiritually bankrupt account.

**Believed** ([4100](#)) (**pisteuo [word study]** - see study of related word pistis) means to be persuaded of, place one's confidence in, to trust, express reliance upon. Belief that brings about the new birth is more than intellectual assent to a presentation of Biblical truth. The demons believe but they are clearly not saved (Jas 2:19). To be sure, genuine (saving) belief (faith) does have a component of intellectual assent, but it also includes an act of one's heart and will. Biblical saving faith is not passive assent but an active staking of one's life on the claims of God. The respected Greek lexicon author W E Vine summarizes saving faith as consisting of (1) a firm conviction which produces full acknowledgment of God's revelation of Truth, (2) a personal surrender to the Truth and (3) a conduct inspired by and consistent with that surrender. If a person says "I believe" and yet never, ever manifests any alteration in their life, then based on the NT definition of faith, one must be suspect of their salvation. Remember however that God is the ultimate judge of an individual's faith as to whether it is merely intellectual faith or genuine saving faith.

Paul had explained this belief in Romans 10 writing...

But what does it say? "THE **WORD** IS NEAR (eggus) YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" (Dt 30:14) -- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe (pisteuo) in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes (pisteuo), resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES (pisteuo) IN HIM WILL NOT BE **DISAPPOINTED**. (see notes Ro 10:8; 9; 10; 11)

We will be glorified when Jesus returns, which draws closer with each passing day. The Bible frequently uses the return of Jesus Christ to motivate believers to holy living (2Co 5:9,10; Titus 2:11-note; Titus 2:12-note; Titus 2:13-note; He 10:24,25-note; Jas 5:7,8; 1Pe 4:7, 8, 9-notes, 1Pe 4:10, 11-notes; 2Pe 3:11, 12-notes, 2Pe 3:14-note) and this fact may also explain why approximately 1 in 20 of every NT verses refers either directly or indirectly to the Second Coming of our Lord. Beloved, we are one day closer to His return than we were yesterday.

The era between the advents of Christ then is critical, because the promise of the return of Christ hovers over the believer. We must not be lulled to sleep by indulgence in pleasure or be influenced by the specious reasoning of those who would suggest that the day of the Lord's return can't be known so why worry... after all some reason, He may not return at all (2Pe 3:4, 5, 6-note, 2Pe 3:7, 8-note, 2Pe 3:9-note). Paul does not say how near the day of the Lord's appearing is, for he himself does not know the day (Mt 24:36, 42, 43, 48, 49, 50, 51 Mt 25:13 Mk 13:32). He is content to advance the reminder that "our salvation is nearer now than when we believed"

**C H Spurgeon** writes...

Oh, you unconverted men, must I read the text as it would have to run if it were written to you?

"It is high time that you should awake out of sleep, for now is your damnation nearer than when you first heard the gospel and rejected it."

God grant you grace to take heed and believe in Christ.

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The golden age of the Church lies, not in the past, but in the future. We may be humiliated by the passionate devotion to Christ which glowed in the hearts of the apostles and of many of their immediate converts; we may wonder at the courage and fortitude which during the early Christian generations confronted fearlessly all that was mightiest and most venerable in the ancient civilization, and endured imprisonment, torture, and death in the power of an exulting hope and a triumphant faith; but it is apparent, both from the apostolic epistles and from later Christian writings, that even in those heroic times there were vast numbers of Christian men and women who fell far short of the saintly life. The glory of God which dwells in the Church of every age was clouded then, as it is clouded now, by human infirmity and sin.

Nor do we look back with regret upon the brief years during which our Lord Himself was visibly present in the world: it was expedient for us that He should go away. The great hour is yet to come: we move forwards to it day by day, year by year. 'Now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed.' (R W Dale)

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**Charles Simeon's** sermon on Romans 13:11...

If you don't know who this great brother in Christ is, you need to take a moment and listen to the Mp3 Audio of John Piper's survey of Simeon's life entitled "[Brothers, We Must Not Mind a Little Suffering](#)" (to download to desktop or Ipod right click and select "Save Target As... ") - you will be as riveted to your seat as I was when I first heard the powerful and convicting testimony of this saint of old. You can also read a summary but the audio is better - [Transcript](#)...

## **THE NEARNESS OF SALVATION** **A MOTIVE TO DILIGENCE** by Charles Simeon

Ro 13:11. Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

SO contracted are the views which many have of the Gospel, that they account nothing worthy of that name, except what relates primarily and expressly to the great subject of redemption. But the Gospel comprehends duties as well as privileges: nor can any minister preach it aright, if he do not guard his audience against every species of sin, and inculcate the performance of every kind of duty. Nor are any persons to be excepted from such pastoral charges. The Apostles themselves needed to be warned against hypocrisy and a recurrence to corrupt habits: and they also in their turn have transmitted similar warnings to the Christian world in all ages. It was to "believers" that St. Paul addressed the words before us: and I conceive myself to be discharging a most solemn duty whilst I call your attention to,

I. His injunction—

Every believer is prone to relapse into a state of stupor—

The "wise virgins slumbered and slept," no less than the foolish. The Church of Ephesus, too, amidst their many exalted virtues, needed to be reproved for having "left their first love." And who does not feel that the caution given to "the children of light" in the Thessalonian Church, is applicable to himself?— In truth, there are seasons, even with the best of men, when the divine life comparatively languishes within them, and when "the things which remain in them are in appearance at least ready to die -

This may arise from different causes: sometimes from "the cares of this world" pressing upon the mind; sometimes from "the deceitfulness of riches," or the gratifications of sense beguiling the soul; and sometimes from "the abounding of iniquity in those around us." But from whatever it proceeds,

"It is high time that we awake out of sleep"

With all of us much time has been lost: and how little remains, who can tell? At all events we have a great work to do; and no man should relax his labours, till he can say, "Father, I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do."

I call you then, my brethren, to arise, and "do your first works," lest God abandon you to the power of your great adversary, and to the evils of your own hearts. If St. Paul felt the need of "keeping his body under and bringing it into subjection, lest by any means, after having preached to others he himself should become a cast-away," think not that such care and such fear are unsuitable to you. To the most stable amongst you I would say, "Beware, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness; and to the most confident amongst you all, "Be not high-minded, but fear." Let every one of you look to himself, that



he lose not the things which he has wrought, but that he receive a full reward."

To impress on your minds this admonition, let me call your attention to,

II. The consideration with which it is enforced—

"Salvation" is the prize held forth to all who believe in Christ: and who shall adequately express or conceive what is comprehended under this term? - Yet this, with all the blessedness attached to it, is daily hastening towards you.

You are daily "nearer" to,

1. The termination of all your conflicts—

Whilst you are in this life, you must of necessity have trials of some kind to sustain. A corruptible crown is not gained without much exertion, much less is a heavenly crown: "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence; and the violent take it by force." But "there is a rest remaining for you;" and that rest is now very near at hand. Look then at the racer in his course: does not the thought of his having nearly finished his labours animate him to increased exertions? So then should you "forget the things that are behind, and press on to the goal for the prize of your high calling;" and never think that you have attained any thing as long as any thing remains to be attained.

2. The completion of all your hopes—

Soon will God's work of grace be perfected within you, and "a crown of glory be awarded to you as having been faithful unto death." And will you by listlessness and indifference endanger the loss of all the glory and felicity of heaven? Awake, I say, and "run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of your faith." Make more use of the great principles of the Gospel than ever you have yet done. "Look more to Christ;" "live more entirely by faith upon him." Get his image more formed upon your hearts. Live only for him, and "to him;" and speedily shall you be "seated with him upon his throne," and be a joint-heir with him of his inheritance.

But let me not close without a few words to unbelievers—

If believers need such an admonition as this, what, think ye, do ye need? What words can ever be too strong for you, who have never fled to Christ for refuge, or believed in him for the saving of your souls? Truly your end also is near: but "who can tell what that end shall be?" Alas! an inspired Apostle declares to you, that "your judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and your damnation slumbereth not." Surely then "it is high time for you to awake out of sleep;" for, if death find you unprepared to meet your God, your condition will be such, that it would be "better for you that you had never been born."

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A sermon by Alexander Maclaren

### **Salvation Nearer** **by Alexander Maclaren**

'Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.'—Romans 13:11.

THERE is no doubt, I suppose, that the Apostle, in common with the whole of the early Church, entertained more or less consistently the expectation of living to witness the second coming of Jesus Christ. There are in Paul's letters passages which look both in the direction of that anticipation, and in the other one of expecting to taste death. 'We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,' he says twice in one chapter. 'I am ready to be offered, and the hour of my departure is at hand,' he says in his last letter.

Now this contrariety of anticipation is but the natural result of what our Lord Himself said, 'It is not for you to know the times and the seasons,' and no one, who is content to form his doctrine of the knowledge resulting from inspiration from the words of Jesus Christ Himself, need stumble in the least degree in recognising the plain fact that Paul and his brother Apostles did not know when the Master was to come. Christ Himself had told them that there was a chamber locked against their entrance, and therefore we do not need to think that it militates against the authoritative inspiration of these early teachers of the Church, if they, too, searched 'what manner of time the Spirit which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the glory that should follow.'

Now, my text is evidently the result of the former of these two anticipations, viz. that Paul and his generation were probably to see the coming of the Lord from heaven. And to him the thought that 'the night was far spent,' as the context says, 'and the day was at hand,' underlay his most buoyant hope, and was the inspiration and motive-spring of his most strenuous effort.

Now, our relation to the closing moments of our own earthly lives, to the fact of death, is precisely the same as that of the Apostle

and his brethren to the coining of the Lord. We, too, stand in that position of partial ignorance, and for us practically the words of my text, and all their parallel words, point to how we should think of, and how we should be affected by, the end to which we are coming. And this is the grand characteristic of the Christian view of that last solemn moment. 'Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' So I would note, first of all, what these words teach us should be the Christian view of our own end; and, second, to what conduct that view should lead us.

#### I. The Christian View Of Death.

'Now is our salvation nearer.' We have to think away by faith and hope all the grim externals of death, and to get to the heart of the thing. And then everything that is repulsive, everything that makes flesh and blood shrink, disappears and is evaporated, and beneath the folds of his black garment, there is revealed God's last, sweetest, most triumphant angel-messenger to Christian souls, the great, strong, silent Angel of Death, and he carries in his hand the gift of a full salvation. That is what our Apostle rose to the rapture of beholding, when he knew that the thought of his surviving till Christ came again must be put away, and when close to the last moment of his life, he said, 'The Lord shall deliver me, and save me into His everlasting kingdom.' What was the deliverance and being saved that he expected and expresses in these words? Immunity from punishment? Escape from the headsman's axe? Being 'delivered from the mouth of the lion,' the persecuting fangs of the bloody Nero? By no means. He knew that death was at hand, and he said, 'He will save me'—not from it, but through it—'into His everlasting kingdom.' And so in the words of my text we may say—though Paul did not mean them so—as we see the distance between us, and that certain close, dwindling, dwindling, dwindling: 'Now,' as moment after moment ticks itself into the past, 'now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' Children, when they are getting near their holidays, take strips of paper, and tear off a piece as each day passes. And as we tear off the days let us feel that we are drawing closer to our home, and that the blessedness laid up for us in it is drawing nearer to us. 'Our salvation,' not our destruction, our fuller life, not in any true sense of the word our 'death,' is 'nearer than when we believed.'

But some one may say, 'Is a man not saved till after he is dead?' Is salvation future, not coming till after the grave? No, certainly not. There are three aspects of that word in Scripture. Sometimes the New Testament writers treat salvation as past, and represent a Christian as being invested with the possession of it all at the very moment of his first faith. That is true, that whatever is yet to be evolved from what is given to the poorest and foulest sinner, in the moment of his initial faith in Christ, there is nothing to be added to it. The salvation which the penitent thief received on the cross is all the salvation that he was ever to get. But out of it there came welling and welling and welling, when he had passed into the region 'where beyond these voices there is peace'—there came welling out from that inexhaustible fountain which was opened in him all the fullnesses of an eternal progress in the heavens. And so it is with us. Salvation is a past gift which we received when we believed.

But in another aspect, which is also emphatically stated in Scripture, it is a progressive process, and not merely a gift bestowed once for all in the past. I do not dwell upon that thought, but just remind you of a turn of expression which occurs in various connections more than once. 'The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved,' says Luke. Still more emphatically in the Epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle puts into antithesis the two progressive processes, and speaks of the Gospel as being preached, and being a savour of life unto life 'to them that are being saved,' and a savour of destruction 'to them that are being lost.' No moral or spiritual condition is stereotyped or stagnant. It is all progressive. And so the salvation that is given once for all is ever being unfolded, and the Christian life on earth is the unfolding of it.

But in another aspect still, such as is presented in my text, and in other parallel passages, that salvation is regarded as lying on the other side of the flood, because the manifestations of it there, the evolving there of what is in it, and the great gifts that come then, are so transcendently above all even of our selectest experiences here, that they are, as it were, new, though still their roots are in the old. The salvation which culminates in the absolute removal from our whole being of all manner of evil, whether it be sorrow or sin, and in the conclusive bestowal upon us of all manner of good, whether it be righteousness or joy, and which has for its seal 'the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body,' so that body, soul, and spirit 'make one music as before, but vaster,' is so far beyond the germs of itself which here we experience that my text and its like are amply vindicated. And the man who is most fully persuaded and conscious that he possesses the salvation of God, and most fully and blessedly aware that that salvation is gradually gaining power in his life, is the very man who will most feel that between its highest manifestation on earth, and its lowest in the heavens there is such a gulf as that the wine that he will drink there at the Father's table is indeed new wine. And so 'is our salvation nearer,' though we already possess it, 'than when we believed.'

Dear brethren, if these things be true, and if to die is to be saved into the kingdom, do not two thoughts result? The one is that that blessed consummation should occupy more of our thoughts than I am afraid it does. As life goes on, and the space dwindles between us and it, we older people naturally fall into the way, unless we are fools, of more seriously and frequently turning our thoughts to the end. I suppose the last week of a voyage to Australia has far more thoughts in it about the landing next week than the two or three first days of beating down the English Channel had. I do not want to put old heads on young shoulders in this or in any other respect. But sure I am that it does belong very intimately to the strength of our Christian characters that we should, as

the Psalmist says, be 'wise' to 'consider our latter end.'

The other thought that follows is as plain, viz. that that anticipation should always be buoyant, hopeful, joyous. We have nothing to do with the sad aspects of parting from earth. They are all but non-existent, for the Christian consciousness, when it is as vigorous and God-directed as it ought to be. They drop into the background, and sometimes are lost to sight altogether. Remember how this Apostle, when he does think about death, looks at it with—I was going to quote words which may strike you as being inappropriate—'a frolic welcome'; how, at all events, he is neither a bit afraid of it, nor does he see in it anything from which to shrink. He speaks of being with Christ, which is far better; 'absent from the body, present with the Lord'; 'the dissolution of the earthly house of this tabernacle'—the tumbling down of the old clay cottage in order that a stately palace of marble and precious stones may be reared upon its site; 'the hour of my departure is at hand; I have finished the fight.' Peter, too, chimes in with his words: 'My exodus; my departure,' and both of the two are looking, if not longingly, at all events without a tremor of the eyelid, into the very eyeballs of the messenger whom most men feel so hideous. Is it not a wonderful gift to Christian souls that by faith in Jesus Christ, the realm in which their hope can expatiate is more than doubled, and annexes the dim lands beyond the frontier of death? Dear friends, if we are living in Christ, the thought of the end and that here we are absent from home, ought to be infinitely sweet, of whatever superficial terrors this poor, shrinking flesh may still be conscious. And I am sure that the nearer we got to our Saviour, and the more we realise the joyous possession of salvation as already ours, and the more we are conscious of the expanding of that gift in our hearts, the more we shall be delivered from that fear of death which makes men all their 'lifetime subject to bondage.' So I beseech you to aim at this, that, when you look forward, the furthest thing you see on the horizon of earth may be that great Angel of Death coming to save you into the everlasting kingdom.

Now, just a word about

## II. The Conduct To Which Such A Hope Should Incite.

The Apostle puts it very plainly in the context, and we need but expand in a word or two what he teaches us there. '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.' To what does he refer by 'that'? The whole of the practical exhortations to a Christian life which have been given before. Everything that is duty becomes tenfold more stringent and imperative when we apprehend the true meaning of that last moment. They tell us that it is unwholesome to be thinking about death and the beyond, because to do so takes away interest from much of our present occupations and weakens energy. If there is anything from which a man is wrenched away because he steadily contemplates the fact of being wrenched away altogether from everything before long, it is something that he had better be wrenched from. And if there be any occupations which dwindle into nothingness, and into which a man cannot for the life of him fling himself with any thoroughgoing enthusiasm or interest, if once the thought of death stirs in him, depend upon it they are occupations which are in themselves contemptible and unworthy. All good aims will gain greater power over us; we shall have a saner estimate of what is worth living for; we shall have a new standard of what is the relative importance of things; and if some that looked very great turn out to be very small when we let that searching light in upon them, and others which seemed very insignificant spring suddenly up into dominating magnitude—that new and truer perspective will be all clear gain. The more we feel that our salvation is sweeping towards us, as it were, from the throne of God through the blue abysses, the more diligently we shall 'work while it is called day,' and the more earnestly we shall seek, when the Saviour and His salvation come, to be found with loins girt for all strenuous work, and lamps burning in all the brightness of the light of a Christian character.

Further, says Paul, this hopeful, cheerful contemplation of approaching salvation should lead us to cast off the evil, and to put on the good. You will remember the heart-stirring imagery which the Apostle employs in the context, where he says, 'The day is at hand; let us therefore fling off the works of darkness'—as men in the morning, when the daylight comes through the window, and makes them lift their eyelids, fling off their night-gear—and let us put on the armour of light.' We are soldiers, and must be clad in what will be bullet-proof, and will turn a sword's edge. And where shall steel of celestial temper be found that can resist the fiery darts shot at the Christian soldier? His armour must be 'of light.' Clad in the radiance of Christian character he will be invulnerable. And how can we, who have robed ourselves in the works of darkness, either cast them off or array ourselves in sparkling armour of light? Paul tells us, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh.' The picture is of a camp of sleeping soldiers; the night wears thin, the streaks of saffron are coming in the dawning east. One after another the sleepers awake; they cast aside their night-gear, and they brace on the armour that sparkles in the beams of the morning sun. So they are ready when the trumpet sounds the reveille, and with the morning comes the Captain of the Lord's host, and with the Captain comes the perfecting of the salvation which is drawing nearer and nearer to us, as our moments glide through our fingers like the beads of a rosary. Many men think of death and fear; the Christian should think of death—and hope.

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Steven Cole - Think back over this past week. How much of what you did was motivated by your conscious awareness of the coming of the Lord? If you're like me, you'll have to admit, "Not much." I often get so caught up with daily pressures and deadlines that I forget the big picture. I forget that Jesus is coming and that I should be living each day in light of that great future event.

Romans 12:1-2 exhorted us to live in the present in light of God's past mercies to us. Romans 13:11-14 exhorts us to live in the present in light of the future return of Jesus Christ. This is a frequent theme in the New Testament. Jesus warned (Matt. 24:42-44), "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will."

In a paragraph that contains language and imagery quite similar to our text, Paul writes (1 Thess. 5:1-10):

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.

Many other verses also use the promise of the Lord's coming to motivate us to holy living (e.g., Phil. 4:4-7; Titus 2:11-13; Heb. 10:24-25; James 5:7-8; 1 Pet. 4:7-11; 2 Pet. 3:11-14; 1 John 3:2-3).

In our text, Paul begins with a short phrase that most scholars interpret as an imperative: "Do this." Then (Ro 13:11-12a) he gives some indicatives: "knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near." Then he gives more imperatives, calling us to action in light of the time (Ro 13:12b-14): "Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts." To sum up, he is saying,

The approaching day of the Lord should cause us, in contrast to this evil world, to walk in holiness. [Your Present Walk and the Coming Day Romans 13:11-14](#))