



Rise and Shine and Give God the Glory!

(Romans 13:11–14)

We are going to be looking at a remarkable passage today, for in it are two verses that were used of God to bring Augustine, that renown Christian of the early church, to a saving knowledge of Christ. However, the aim of the passage was to get Christians to rise from their slumber, get dressed, and

make themselves presentable because the King is coming, the night is passing, and a new day is dawning. That Augustine was converted by today’s text does not surprise me. I have talked to enough people at the doorway after the service to know that what I say from the pulpit when I preach and what people hear can be poles apart.

Augustine’s conversion came about in this way. His soul was restless. What Augustine wrote in the beginning of his *Confessions*, was true of himself, when he penned, “thou hast created us for thyself, and our hearts cannot be quieted till it may find rest in thee.” (Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 1, Chapter 1). He had prided himself as being a learned man in search of true wisdom, yet simple ordinary men who knew Christ had a peace that eluded him. What did they have, that he lacked? Wanting to get away and think, he left his friend, Alypius, went out into the garden, and flung himself down under a fig tree. While there, he heard children playing and singing a tune saying, “tolle lege, tolle lege,” which meant, “Take up and read. Take up and read.” Augustine got up, hurried back into the house, and picked up a Bible next to Alypius. Opening to Romans 13:13,14, he read, “Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ; and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” Instantly, Augustine tells us; he found Christ to be his Savior (Book 8, Chapter 12).

You will discover that our text divides quite nicely into three parts in this wake-up call to sleepy Christians. It is 1) Wake up (Rom 13:11), 2) Get dressed (Rom 13:12), and 3) Make yourself presentable (Rom 13:13–14). The application is found in how we are to be dressed. We are not dressed in our own righteousness. We are to be clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ, which is a recurrent theme throughout the book of Romans.

Table1. Romans 13:11–14

<p>¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.</p> <p>¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.</p> <p>So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.</p> <p>¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.</p> <p>¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.</p>	<p>Understand the times</p> <p>1. Wake up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation is near • The day is near <p>2. Get dressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put aside darkness • Put on light <p>3. Make yourself presentable</p> <p>Be clothed with Christ</p>
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When it finally dawned upon me that this passage uses a common ordinary experience—the act of rising out of bed in the morning and getting dressed, to drive home a point. I envisioned what it would look like if a wife just got up and did not bother to get dressed or comb her hair. This reminded me of a photo I saw in a magazine article back in the 1970s.

It was in an article upon a best-selling book of 1974, *Total Woman*, by Marabel Morgan in (I think) *Time* magazine. Does anyone remember that book? It was written by an Evangelical Christian, who was unhappy with herself and her husband. She made the decision to overlook her husband's faults and seek to please him. When he came home, the house would be picked up. She would take pains with her appearance, take a shower, put on nice clothes, and make sure that she looked good. She would have a good meal ready, and cheerfully seek to please him, sort of like the *I Dream of Jeannie* TV program of my youth. It celebrated the joy married sex as well. This was something not talked about in Christian circles at the time, which probably stoked the sale of the book. Marabel lived in south Florida. She looked like a model. Her mother-in-law went to the church Martha and I attended in college and she would often sing solos. The Mrs. Morgan we knew was was in her 60s. The family appeared to be affluent. If you feel sorry for Marabel as a stay at home Mom, she built an empire. In 1974 the book sold a half-million copies, over 10 million over the course of the book's life, and Marabel had seminars with a staff of speakers.

There was a lot of good in the book, however, looking back it seems a little over the top. True beauty, real and lasting beauty, is not skin deep. The Bible says it is not braided hair, wearing fine clothes, and jewels, but a meek and quiet spirit. That treasure can be wrapped in homespun and wrinkles. But now that you know what the book and the *Time* article was about, I think you will find the photo in the article memorable. It portrayed a frumpy middle-aged woman in a frayed housecoat, with her hair up in curlers, seated reading the book, *Total Woman!* Now that struck me funny at the time.

I said all of this to press home the image of a man or woman getting out of bed and getting dressed for a special occasion. Perhaps a wedding, a job interview, or a date.

What is in view here in our text is an image not of pulling the covers over your head and rolling over and going back to sleep, or crawling out of bed walking around in your nightclothes looking like a zombie, but getting up, getting dressed, and getting ready. Why are we to wake up and get going? It is because the night is ending and a new day is dawning. What a beautiful imagery is found in our text.

1) Wake up (Rom 13:11)

¹¹ *And do this, understanding the present time.*

*The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber,
because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

¹² *The night is nearly over;
the day is almost here.*

The first thing to notice is the time! It is nighttime. All is dark. But the time is advancing toward dawn. One thing about night. It does not last. Are you in a dark time? Morning could be just around the corner. We need to not only know the time but the fluidity of life and how things can change overnight. Bad times do not last forever. Every storm runs out of rain!

I have a favorite saying. "Cheer up. Things could be worse. So, I did, and it did. [It got worse!]. However, if things turn for the worse. It does not mean it will stay that way. This passage speaks of hope in the night!

"It is time to wake up!" I remember hearing those words as a kid. We traveled to Florida every fall and returned to New York every spring. My sister and I looked forward to the trip. We would always start early, before

daybreak. To hear the words, “It is time to wake up,” meant that there was something special to wake up for. There is an adventure ahead.

Woe is the day when there is nothing to wake up for! Such is a recipe for depression. As Christian, every day is a gift from God, and there is always a task to do. For Marabel, it was to live to be a real helpmate to her husband, other directed, rather than inner directed. [Illustration of the recent widow riding the train].

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The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber,
because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

¹² *The night is nearly over;
the day is almost here.*

Two things are nearer (seen a lot easier in underlying Greek text as the same word is in view). The two things 1) salvation, 2) day – night is ending, and both day and salvation are coming! You heard about the good to come, that is why you believed. The good is knocking at your door! So get up, get out of bed, you sleepy head!

2) Get dressed (Rom 13:12)

*So let us put aside the deeds of darkness
and put on the armor of light.*

Get out of your night clothes and put on your day clothes! Here, the admonition is to put on your armor. (Eph 6) Get ready for battle! We do have real foes—the world, the flesh (we are our own worst enemies) , and the devil.

3) Make yourself presentable (Rom 13:13–14).

¹³ *Let us behave decently, as in the daytime,
not in orgies and drunkenness,
not in sexual immorality and debauchery,
not in dissension and jealousy.*

¹⁴ *Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ,
and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature*

“Let us behave decently” – I can hear my mother saying this, I am sure you heard the same thing from your mother too, but in a different way. My Mom would say, “We are now going to []. I want you to be on your best behavior.” In other words, you better not embarrass me!

We do not want to be an embarrassment to God!

What not to do (according to Paul, for his original audience)

- No drunken parties
- No out of control immorality
- No fighting, arguing, and plain old nastiness

Instead, “clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.”

With the warning – “and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature”

Or as my Mom would say “Don’t even think about it!” This is the severest of severe warnings!

What does it mean to clothe yourself with Christ? He is the armor of light we are to be dressed in.

- It means, that all the admonitions of Romans 12–13, all the things we are to do, we are do them in the strength the Lord gives to us.
- You cannot do the “thou shalt nots” of the Ten Commandments, because love does no harm, unless the Lord helps you.
- Life is full of failures, but for the Christian it is to repent, confess, and do the right thing with God’s help.

Jesus spoke of this theme of being alert and ready at the Lord’s coming – the parable of five wise and five foolish virgins. (Matthew 25: 1–13, page 961 in the pew Bible)

- We need oil in our lamp (the Holy Spirit – salvation)
- We need trimmed wicks (so we shine with a clear light)

The title of today’s message comes from a children’s song about Noah building an “arky, arky.” The song gets to the line, “Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory children of the Lord.”

This is the picture portrayed in our text. Get out of bed, get dressed, be on your best behavior for the Lord is coming!