

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Spiritual Sleep Walking

(Jerry Fite)

Most of us have heard of, or some may even know a person who “sleep walks”. With eyes wide open, a person may engage in various activities, but be asleep. I know a person who went to their closet to buy two tickets for the next show. Some sitting up in bed may rise to rearrange furniture. A misconception is that if you wake up such a person from their “sleep walking”, it will be harmful. In fact, the person is oblivious to objects such as electrical cords in their way, and if not awakened, can trip over dangerous obstacles resulting in personal harm.

We can be actively engaged in life’s activities, but oblivious to the malady of spiritual sleep walking. We are busy, but asleep. Paul does not mind providing a verbal shaking to awaken us to spiritual reality. He writes, “. . . Awake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee” (*Ephesians 5:14*).

Paul is writing to people who were active. In pursuit of the satisfaction of the flesh, they are spiritually dead. Foolish and filthy speech clearly identifies the speaker as those producing unfruitful works of darkness. Such

people needed to be awakened to reality. They were dead in sin, destined to eternal damnation.

It is interesting to note that those needing to awake were really spiritually dead. Such people are lost in sin. However, they did not need a direct operation of the Spirit to awake, but become aware of their true spiritual condition of being “dead” so they could awake themselves. The command to the dead is “awake”! The inspired testimony of Paul as to their true condition and destiny was the means to awaken one from spiritual sleep walking.

The Christian was not to be caught up in this spiritually malady. As Christ was to shine upon those being awakened to soberness, the Christian should be shining as children of light showing the way. The Christian was not to be deceived that spiritual sleep walking has no dangerous consequences. Such were empty words, because the sons of disobedience sleep walking through life are destined to experience the wrath of God (*Ephesians 5:6*). Not only were Christians not to participate with the unfruitful works of darkness, they were to reprove the fleshly pursuant (*Ephesians 5:11*). Refusing to

spiritually sleep walk, but soberly walk in wisdom should characterize the alert Christian (*Ephesians 5:15-17*).

Paul offers another verbal alarm to awake us in our walk of life. He writes, “*And this knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light*” (*Romans 13: 12-13*). The Christian should be as alert spiritually as we are physically at midday after our favorite energy jolt. Walking in the spiritual stupor of darkness has no appeal to those who love the soberness of the day. We are closer today to eternal salvation than we were yesterday. Why give up eternal bliss for momentary sinful pleasure (*cf. Hebrews 11:25*)? Casting aside the works of darkness allows us to put on the protective “armor of light” sheltering us from spiritual sleep walking.

The alert Christian knowing the day of salvation is nearer, also knows the day of eternal damnation is nearer for the lost. Let us be busy awaking them!