

Eternity Daily Bible Study

Romans 9-16 The Implications of Salvation

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE AIBI

Number: 611

Verses: Romans 13:11-14

Topic: Christians Are Not Party Animals

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Romans 13:11-14 MKJV *This also, knowing the time, that it is already time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. (12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand; therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. (13) Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in carousings and drinking; not in co-habitation and lustful acts; not in strife and envy. (14) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not take thought beforehand for the lusts of the flesh.*

St. Augustine was converted to Christ through the above passage of Scripture the following account is from the website http://www.midwestaugustinians.org/saints/s_augconversion.html :

Augustine's life as a young man was characterized by loose living and a search for answers to life's basic questions.

He would follow various philosophers, only to become disillusioned with their teachings. For nine years he was associated with the Manichean sect. But he gradually became aware that Manicheism was unable to provide satisfactory answers to his probing questions.

At this time, Augustine was teaching rhetoric in Milan. He went to hear the preaching of Saint Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan. At first he went only to hear Ambrose's eloquent style of speaking. But the Bishop's preaching led Augustine to a new understanding of the Bible and the Christian Faith.

Some time in the year 386, Augustine, his mother Monica, his son Adeodatus, and several friends, were spending time in Cassiciacum, a small village near Milan. While outdoors, Augustine heard the voice of a child singing a song, the words of which were, "Pick it up and read it. Pick it up and read it." He thought at first that the song was related to some kind of children's game, but could not remember ever having heard such a song before.

Then, realizing that this song might be a command from God to open and read the Scriptures, he located a Bible, picked it up, opened it and read the first passage he saw. It was from the Letter of Paul to the Romans. Augustine read:

Not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual excess and lust, not in quarreling and jealousy. Rather, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh. --Romans 13: 13-14

Reading this scripture, Augustine felt as if his heart were flooded with light. He turned totally from his life of sin. He was Baptized by Ambrose during the Easter Vigil April 24, 387. His friend Alypius and his son Adeodatus were Baptized at the same time.

Later, reflecting on this experience, Augustine wrote his famous prayer: *You have made us for yourself, Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.* He went on to become a powerful influence on the spirituality and theology of the Christian Church.

Christians are not to be "party animals" - the recent drunken carousing and self-exposure of certain Hollywood celebrities and the popularity of "Girls Gone Wild" is symptomatic of

the rapid moral decline of some (rather large) sub-sections of Western culture. But Christians are not to be like that! Rather we are to "put on the armor of light" and to live decent, holy and becoming lives - lives suited to the folk in whom Christ dwells.

The gaudy, lustful, indecent, squabbling, envious and foolish life of the flesh is on display all around us here in California. Slanging matches, hateful feuds, and atrocious and immoral behavior are the stuff of gossip, legend and press attention. People are being given the lowest possible moral examples by the media!

The Holy Spirit does not call us to live in the gutter – but in the Kingdom of God! We are to live with decency and dignity, we are to be a noble, wise and spiritual people, and we are to be awake and alert to the voice of God.

We are not to even think of such a lifestyle or to plan for it. "Make no provision for the lusts of the flesh". Not planning on sinning means some quite obvious things - Don't go to that wild convention in Los Vegas, don't carry a condom "just in case" you meet someone attractive, don't think of how to meet that person that God does not want you involved with, don't think of joining the drunken crowd, don't hang out near the home of the immoral woman etc. We are not to supply sin with a method of gratification!

Paul uses many metaphors that describe a rapid growth in spiritual awareness: knowing the time, awake, cast off (darkness), put on (the armor of light, Jesus Christ). These are sudden things, that are done in a moment. For instance Augustine "woke up" and put off the darkness, and was flooded with light in the short time it takes to read a verse of Scripture. We are to stop mollicoddling our lusts and instead we should make a sudden and definite break with them.

Paul gives a most unusual command – *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ!* What on earth does that mean? How do you put on a person? You act like that person, you walk and talk and think like that person, you become "in character" with that person even adopting their every thought, gesture and mood. We are to be "imitators of Christ" and to take His commandments (for example in the Sermon On The Mount) with absolute seriousness.

As we put on Christ we will find that we live an enlightened life and a spiritually safe life for we will also have "put on the armor of light". We are to step out of the darkness and move into a new zone of living that is righteous, pure and good. The light is positive, pure, holy and clean. And as we dwell in it we are cleansed, healed and purified. The light will at first make us very aware of our sins – but only so they can be forgiven and removed:

1 John 1:5-10 HCSB *Now this is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in Him. (6) If we say, "We have fellowship with Him," and walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. (7) But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (8) If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say, "We have not sinned," we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

In Ephesians 5 Paul has an extensive passage on what it means to live in the light:

Ephesians 5:8-20 HCSB *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light-- (9) for the fruit of the light results in all goodness, righteousness, and truth-- (10) discerning what is pleasing to the Lord. (11) Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead, expose them. (12) For it is shameful even to mention what is done by them in secret. (13) Everything exposed by the light is made clear, (14) for what makes everything clear is light. Therefore it is said: Get up, sleeper, and rise up from the dead, and the Messiah will shine on you. (15) Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk--not as unwise people but as wise-- (16) making the most of the time, because the days are evil. (17) So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. (18) And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless actions, but be filled with the Spirit: (19) speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music to the Lord in your heart, (20) giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Living in the light is a joyous, Spirit-filled life of goodness, righteousness and truth. We live awake, sober and alert lives, discerning the will of the Lord and refusing the works of darkness, making the most of every day for God. The wild party lifestyle belongs to pre-conversion days, for Christians are not party animals, rather they are the children of God.

Blessings,

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