

Romans – Gospel of God Exalted

Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver

Zoom Meeting ID:

 **828 7580 6094** ►

Thursday September 25, 2025

Women of Excellence

Bible Study 7pm

Memory Verse

Romans 13:12 (NLT) The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So, remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ

Romans 13:11–12 (NLT)

¹¹ This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So, remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Romans 13:11–12 (NASB95)

- 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.
- 12** The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore, let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

POINT 1 - WAKE UP!

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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. (13:11)

The phrases **it is already the hour ... now salvation is nearer ... the night is almost gone ... and the day is at hand** all express *urgency*. Time is limited, opportunity is brief. The time to heed and to obey is *now*. There is no time for apathy, complacency, or indifference.

If that admonition was urgent during Paul's day, how much more urgent is it today! It has always been urgent and will always continue to be urgent until the Lord returns, when our opportunities for earthly faithfulness, obedience, and evangelism will end and judgment will fall.

Every generation has had its share of skeptics who ask, **"Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation" (2 Pet. 3:4)**. No believer who honestly holds God's Word to be free from error could think that Paul and Peter were simply overanxious about the Christ's second coming. But the majority of Christians throughout most, if not all, of church history have lived believing that was true.

And this do carry the idea of achieving something in addition to what Paul has just been stressing, especially in verses 8–10 regarding love. "Why all this stress on behavior? Because, as I think you have realized, the present time is of the highest importance." We are never to stop offering our **"bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is [our] spiritual service of worship" (Rom.12:1)**. We are always to be properly related to unbelievers as well as believers, to civil leaders as well as church leaders, to enemies as well as friends and neighbors—fulfilling God's law through love (12:2–13:10).

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Paul is not referring to chronological **time** but to **time** as an era, a season, or age. This term and its Hebrew equivalent are frequently used in Scripture. During the reign of King David, “the sons of Issachar” were described as “men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do” (**1 Chron. 12:32**).

When a group of Pharisees and Sadducees tried to test Jesus’ authority, they demanded that He perform “a sign from heaven. But He answered and said to them, ‘When it is evening, you say, “It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.” And in the morning, “There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.” Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?’ ” (**Matt. 16:1–3**). Jesus was speaking about their understanding of what God was then doing before their very eyes. The Messiah, the divinely promised Redeemer, the incarnate Son of God, was standing before them, yet they did not recognize Him or accept anything He taught or did. They were in the very midst of the season of redemption, but their spiritual blindness prevented their seeing it.

Because they are untaught or wrongly taught in God’s Word or have little interest in spiritual things, many believers voluntarily share some of the spiritual blindness of unbelievers. Especially their ignorance of and lack of interest in the return of their Lord. That spiritually plagued believers in the early church, obviously including some in Rome. It was for that reason that the apostle seems almost to shout: **It is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep.**

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines sleep as “a state of inactivity, with a loss of consciousness and a decrease in responsiveness to events taking place.” Paul calls them **to awaken from spiritual sleep**—from unconsciousness, unresponsiveness, and inactivity concerning the things of God.

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The apostle also cried out to certain believers in Ephesus, saying, “Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you” (**Eph. 5:14**). He was not speaking to the unsaved, to those who were *spiritually* “dead,” but to genuine believers whose spiritual laziness made them appear and act as if they had no spiritual *life*. This is intolerable in light of the urgency of spiritual matters.

Paul both warned and appealed to believers at Corinth: “**Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame**” (**1 Cor. 15:34**). As with the Ephesian believers just spoken of above, the apostle was not accusing those Corinthians of not knowing God as Savior but of being *ignorant of God’s Word*. They were unaware of and unconcerned about what the Lord was then doing in the world and even less concerned about what He promised He would yet do—in particular the promise that Christ would come again to earth, not as a humble servant but as Conqueror, King, and Judge.

In declaring that **now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed**, Paul obviously is speaking about the *completion* of **salvation**. He is addressing Christians, those who already had **believed** and been converted. The **salvation** that is becoming **nearer** refers to the future and final dimension of redemption, namely, glorification. Justification refers to declared and positional righteousness that happens once and saves the believer from the penalty of sin. Sanctification refers to the lifelong process of the believer’s growing spiritually in practical righteousness. Glorification refers to the believer’s ultimate perfection as a child of God when their time on earth is ended, either by death or by rapture.

Earlier in this letter, the apostle has spoken of “**waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body**” (**Rom. 8:23**), referring to this third and final

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aspect of salvation, when the Lord takes us to be with Him for all eternity. That is the future aspect of **salvation** which he here says **is nearer to us than when we believed.**

It is to that hope of Christ's return, to which the apostle appeals. Throughout the New Testament, Christians are called to holy living in anticipation of the return of Jesus Christ. That should be the utmost incentive for living according to His will and for His glory.

Paul reminds Titus that “the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus” (**Titus 2:11–13**). The writer of Hebrews admonishes believers to “consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our 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. 10:24–25**). James counsels: “Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord; ... strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand” (**James 5:7–8**). Peter warns: “The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins” (**1 Pet. 4:7–8**). Paul reminds us that, even as believers, “we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body. **2 Cor. 5:10 (NLT)**

We already are eternally freed from condemnation and punishment for our sins. Christ's taking upon Himself the sins of the world (John 1:29) became permanently effective for us the moment we received Him as Lord and Savior. But when He returns, there will be a *judgment* of our efforts on behalf of the kingdom, when He

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“will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God” (1 Cor. 4:5).

Near the end of his remarkably fruitful ministry, Paul rejoiced: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:7–8). The Lord Himself promises His people: “Let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy. Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me” (Rev. 22:11b–12a; cf. Rom. 14:10).

We do not know and cannot know the hour of Christ’s coming. But we know that it is some 2,000 years closer than when Paul wrote his letter to Rome. We do not know how much sand remains in the top of the Lord’s “hour glass” of human history as we know it, but there is abundant evidence that not much time is left. We know that we are nearer to the coming of our Lord “with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30) than any other generation in history. Every day we live, we come one day closer to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the final events in God’s redemptive plan.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Explain the difference between justification and sanctification?**
- 2. What is the meaning of glorification?**
- 3. What does Paul mean by “awakening out of sleep?”**

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4. What stood out to you in this section of the lesson?

POINT 2 - WAKE UP! (continued)

Romans 13:12a (NASB95) The night is almost gone, and the day is near.

Paul's declaration that **the night is almost gone, and the day is at hand** means that man's time of spiritual unbelief, rebellion, and sin is about to end and God's time of judgment, glory, and righteousness is about to begin.

In the New Testament, the term **day** is often used to signify the dawning, as it were, of Christ's return, and is used here in contrast to the **night** of man's spiritual darkness, which is almost over.

Speaking of His return, Jesus warned, "Many will say to Me *on that day*, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness' " (**Matt. 7:22–23**)

From the human perspective, it sometimes seems that the **night** of man's wickedness has no limits and that Satan's dominion over man is becoming stronger and not capable of being changed. The world as a whole is certainly *not* becoming more godly and peaceful but more ungodly and violent (**cf. 2 Tim. 3:13**). Every day, the news of man's inhumanity to man becomes more dreadful and his refusal of God more apparent. But this was not unforeseen by God, nor should His people be surprised by it. Through Peter, the Lord long ago declared:

Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?"

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For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.” For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (2 Pet. 3:3–7)

In a word of great encouragement to believers, the apostle goes on to say, “But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (vv. 8–9).

The writer of Hebrews consoled the believers to whom he wrote, saying, “Do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay” (Heb. 10:35–37).

Throughout the New Testament, the Lord encourages the saved and warns the unsaved that the return of Christ is near. Paul gives that combination of assurance and warning in his second letter to persecuted believers in Thessalonica. Their suffering for Christ’s sake was a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,

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dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **(2 Thess. 1:5–8)**

In his first letter, Peter admonished believers that “the end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer” **(1 Pet. 4:7)**. James wrote, “Be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand” **(James 5:8)**.

The nighttime of world history will soon give way to the daylight of Christ’s glorious kingdom. And in that day, “loud voices in heaven” will proclaim, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever” **(Rev. 11:15)**. As for our expectation of and preparation for that great day, Paul tells us: **1 Thessalonians 5:1–8 (NLT)**

Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters, we don’t really need to write you. ² For you know quite well that the day of the Lord’s return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. ³ When people are saying, “Everything is peaceful and secure,” then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman’s labor pains begin. And there will be no escape.

⁴ But you aren’t in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won’t be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief. ⁵ For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don’t belong to darkness and night. ⁶ So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Stay alert and be clearheaded.

⁷ Night is the time when people sleep and drinkers get drunk. ⁸ But let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation.

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Discussion Questions

1. What did Paul mean by the night is almost gone, and the day is near ?
2. What was most meaningful in this lesson that you can apply to your life?

Closing Prayer