



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#181)


Responding to the COMMANDS related to the resurrection concept.

1

The RESURRECTION demands a RESPONSE!

>> This is true of all aspects of the resurrection concept. <<

When Scripture tells us something, it demands: our **ACCEPTANCE**, and (when applicable) our **OBEDIENCE**.



- ⇒ **SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION:** Some passages focus on our coming to spiritual life – being raised from *spiritual* death. (There may also be a reference to *Jesus'* death and resurrection.)
- ⇒ **PHYSICAL RESURRECTION:** Some passages focus on our future resurrection – being raised from *physical* death. (There may also be a reference to *Jesus'* death and resurrection.)

2

> The **NEED** for **FACTS**. <

LAST TIME → We discovered that there were a large number of **FACTS** related to resurrection concepts.

↳ **WE NEED THOSE FACTS!**

- Otherwise, we end up with *half truth* (at best) – which is *half lie* (or worse).
- Ultimately, we are in danger of being *unsaved* ... all the while being fully convinced that we *are* saved. (We won't know the truth until it's *too late* to undo our judgment.)

↳ This is one reason we need to pursue a **RENEWED MIND** – and this is a **command!**

Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:2 (BSB)

3

> **CONDUCT** or **ACTION** is also needed. <

WITHOUT it: Our "faith" would be useless and dead; we would be hypocrites destined for a horrible judgment.

... faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is **dead**.
... do you want evidence that faith without deeds is **useless**?

★ [This is followed by 2 examples, then the following conclusion.] ★

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is **dead**.

James 2:17b, 20b, 26 (NIV)

Jesus' warning: "So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when **you don't do what I say**?"

Luke 6:46 (NLT)

How Jesus described the religious leaders in his day: "... **they do not practice what they preach**."
"Woe to you, ... you hypocrites! ... How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

Matthew 23:3b, 13a, 33b (NIV)

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↳ It can't be just "actions" ... it has to be **actions based on truth!**

- It must be based on the **FACTS** of *God's* Word.

Here is the **wrong way** to do it!

"**You have let go of the commands of God** and are **holding on to human traditions**."

Mark 7:8 (NIV)

EVIL people can do religious activities.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the person who does what my Father in heaven wants.

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name? Didn't we force out demons and do many miracles by the power and authority of your name?'


Then I will tell them publicly, 'I've never known you. Get away from me, **you evil people**.'"

Matthew 7:21-23 (GW)

5

When we look at the **commands** associated with resurrection concepts, we make a surprising discovery:

Whereas there were about **A DOZEN FACTS** related to that concept ...



... there are only **TWO COMMANDS** related to it (repeated a few times).

- ⇒ This **doesn't** mean the **COMMANDS** are less important.
 - Obeying them may mean the difference between heaven and hell.
- ⇒ We **can't** obey the **COMMANDS** properly, **unless** they are based on the **FACT** foundation.
 - The **FACT** foundation determines the *significance* of the commands, and it helps us to *understand* them properly.
 - Also, most of the commands are directly linked to facts, and are said to be *the proper response to those facts*.

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⇒ Here are the two commands:

- **"WAKE UP" from sleep (or become "awake").** This command involves a *transition* from a sleeping condition to an awake condition. (This is found in a few "command" passages.)
 - **"BE ALERT" (being or staying "awake, watchful, vigilant").** This command involves the ongoing act of *staying* awake, and not falling asleep. (This is found in the majority of the "command" passages.)
- Sometimes, additional words (synonyms) may be found associated with these concepts. – Example: "Be alert" and "Be on your guard" both express the same basic concept, but perhaps with slightly different emphases.

**These two commands work together:
'Wake up' and 'stay that way!'**

7

WAKE UP!!!



⇒ THE "SALVATION CALL."

"Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."
Ephesians 5:14 (NIV)

"Wake up and be saved!"

- This passage is about the *spiritual* resurrection that occurs when we become saved.
- (The rest of the resurrection-related passages focus on the return of Jesus and the events that will happen at that time.)

8

⇒ "Wake up, because salvation is almost here!"

- Salvation is ours when we trust Jesus and openly declare that he is our Lord (master) – Romans 10:9-10. *But salvation will not be complete until Jesus returns.*

And do this [= love for others], understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to **wake up from your slumber**, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.

Romans 13:11-12a (NIV)

- The people in this young church were still learning what it means to "follow Jesus." They needed to "wake up" to the *urgency* of forsaking sin (vs. 12b-14) and living a life of love (vs. 8-10; love is also defined in Romans 12).
- We don't need to debate whether these people were saved or unsaved. *Their response to this command would prove which it was... just as it will for us.*

9

⇒ "If you don't wake up, you won't be ready for Jesus' return!"

- This is a scathing rebuke to a spiritually *dead* church. Many – perhaps most – were unsaved. Only those who repent and have victory over this sin will be saved (vs. 4-6).

I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. **Wake up!** Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.

Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But **if you do not wake up**, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

Revelation 3:1b-3 (NIV)

- As we saw, when looking at resurrection-related *facts*, there are blessings for those who wake up and stay that way!

"Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who **stays awake** and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed."

Revelation 16:15 (NIV)

10

BE ALERT!!!



⇒ YOU DO NOT KNOW

"Therefore **keep watch**, because you do not know the day or the hour."
Matthew 25:13 (NIV)

WHEN JESUS IS COMING!

- Some people claim that they do know when Jesus will return. This is in direct opposition to what *Jesus* says.
- In reality, some events may point to the fact that Jesus' return is quickly approaching (example: Mark 13:28-31); but *none tells us exactly when.*

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⇒ JESUS SAYS, "BE ALERT!"

- In these passages, when Jesus described *end-time events*, part of what he said *also* refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (That event would be a "picture" of the even greater catastrophe that will occur at Jesus' return.)

CONTEXT of these passages:

- Jesus warns the people that he would not return until they were willing to welcome him "in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:34-39; Jesus quotes Psalm 118:26).
- Jesus tells the apostles that the temple would be destroyed (Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-3; Luke 21:5-6).
- The apostles ask when these things would take place, *and* when he would return. (Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7).
- Occasionally, Luke will have a greater focus on the AD 70 event; the others tend to have a greater focus on the end times.
- When Jesus answers, he is speaking to the *apostles*; but he claims that **what he is saying applies to everyone** (Mark 13:37).

12

In MATTHEW: "Have the right priority!"

"Therefore **stay alert**, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have been **alert** and would not have let his house be broken into.

Therefore you also must **be ready**, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

Matthew 24:42-44 (NET); also in Matthew 25:13.

- There may be "reminders" that Jesus is coming **soon** (Matthew 24:32-34 may be one such example); but the specific time is something that *nobody* on earth knows. [Even *Jesus, as a human*, did not know when (Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32).]
- This leaves us with only two choices: 1) Be ready (watchful, prepared, alert, etc.), or 2) Be caught by surprise (NOT ready).

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"Therefore..." – What is it there for? **WHY** should we be alert?

"Therefore **stay alert**, ..."
Matthew 24:42a (NET)

- There are several reasons given in Matthew 24 and 25. The reason closest in the context is this:

For just like the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be.

For in those days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. And they knew nothing until the flood came and took them all away. It will be the same at the coming of the Son of Man.

Matthew 24:37-39 (NET)

- It wasn't that they weren't warned. Noah was a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5); and they *ignored* what he said.

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- At a different time, Jesus described this "end time situation" in a similar way, but also included Sodom and its destruction.

Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage—right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot, people were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; but on the day Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

It will be the same on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Luke 17:26-30 (NET)

- ★ Jesus does not focus on the wicked violence that these people did, but on its "starting point": their preoccupation with "*day-to-day*" activities. Their "God-focus" was crowded out by the "**normal**" activities of life! *This is what a "not-ready" person is like!*

15

In MARK: "Be ready!"

- Mark's emphasis is similar to Matthew's, but he gives different examples to illustrate the need to keep watch.

"**Be on guard! Be alert!** You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to **keep watch**."

"Therefore **keep watch** because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to everyone: '**Watch!**' "

Mark 13:33-37 (NIV)

- Jesus used a variety of illustrations. Matthew, Mark and Luke *each* included words and illustrations that were most fitting for the audiences they wrote to. Here, Mark uses 3 different words to emphasize the need to be ready!

16

In LUKE: "Don't get distracted!"

"**Watch out!** Don't let your hearts be dulled by carousing and drunkenness, and by the worries of this life. Don't let that day catch you unaware, like a trap. For that day will come upon everyone living on the earth.

Keep alert at all times. And pray that you might be strong enough to escape these coming horrors and stand before the Son of Man."

Luke 21:34-36 (NET)

- The "**worries of this life**" are not necessarily *sinful* things. They are the things that preoccupy one's attention and crowd out "seeking first the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:25-34).
- These "worries" are also mentioned in "The Parable of the Sower" (i.e., the farmer who was planting seeds). The third type of "soil" seemed good at first, but *it never produced anything fruitful*. (Unsaved "church-goers" fall into this category.)
- This is the type of person who treasures other things more than the Kingdom of God. *Their heart is somewhere else* (Luke 12:34).

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⇒ PAUL SAYS, "BE ALERT!"

- In this passage, Paul is describing how the *end-times events* should bring us *encouragement*.

❖ **CONTEXT:** Paul tells the Thessalonians that *both* dead and living Christians will have a part in Jesus' return (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). He also says (as did Jesus) that we do not know the exact timing of his return. But when it does happen, there will be two responses:

- ✓ **For the world:** Jesus' return will be sudden and unexpected (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).

You know very well that the day when the Lord comes again will be a **surprise**, like a thief who comes at night.

People will say, "We have peace and we are safe." At that time **destruction will come** to them quickly, like the pains of a woman giving birth. And those people **will not escape**.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 (ERV)

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✓ **For Jesus' followers:** In contrast to the world, they do not need to be surprised. It's NOT that we will know the timing of his return; but rather, we are willing to *be ready*.

But you, brothers, are not in the darkness so that this day should overtake you like a thief. For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day; we do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

So then, let us not sleep as the others do, but let us **remain awake** and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night; and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of our hope of salvation.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8 (BSB)

19

AN UNNECESSARY DEBATE: BECAUSE THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS!

It should be obvious that the unawake/unalert concepts are *totally incompatible* with the wake/alert concepts. But people sometimes raise this question:

"CAN A SAVED PERSON LIVE UNAWAKE/UNALERT?"

↪ Some people hold to "end times" views that (in their opinion) "prove" that the "awake" commands don't apply to them. [Example: "These verses apply only to certain people at a certain end-time event."]

✓ We are going to show that there are "awake" commands that apply to *everyone*. We are not to use our views of *some* verses, to "cancel" what the others say!

↪ Others point out that these commands were written to *saved* people; and they argue that the presence of such commands to *Christians* "proves" that Christians can live that way and *still* be saved.

✓ Actually... ↪

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↪ **THESE VERSES WERE WRITTEN TO CHURCHES**
– which means *groups of people*.

- This included:
 - Spiritually mature** Christians.
 - "New-born" Christians**, who were still learning what it meant to "follow Jesus."
 - Fakes** – including the "wolves" that Paul warns against (Acts 20:27-31)
- An "unawake" life is *totally incompatible* with following Jesus.
- Yet saved people (in this present life) have not reached 100% perfection (as Paul says in Philippians 3:12-13). So we shouldn't be surprised if we (or people we know) sometimes fail to be "awake."
- Yet the Holy Spirit is in saved people, and the Spirit does change them. So being "unawake" cannot be a chosen way of life!**
- Ultimately the response people have to these instructions and warnings will show which category they belong in. Do they pursue being "awake" (even if inconsistently), or do they choose to remain "unawake"? It's the difference between "saved" and "unsaved."

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BE ALERT!!!

↪ **THE NEED TO BE ALERT IS**

"Therefore **keep watch**, because you do not know the day or the hour."
Matthew 25:13 (NIV)

NOT JUST THIS!

VIGILANT
AWAKE
WATCHFUL

↪ **ALSO PRESENT WHEN NOT FOCUSED ON END-TIME EVENTS!**

- The "be alert" commands are often connected to *other* obligations that people have.
- Many of these verses connect the "awake" concept with *prayer*. (You *can't* be alert/watchful ... and ignore the God who makes it possible!)

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"End-time readiness" connected to "daily life."

- In Luke 12, Luke connects "seeking first God's kingdom" (a "Sermon on the Mount" teaching, Luke 12:22-34) to being ready for Jesus' return (Luke 12:35+) – which includes this passage:

"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord will find **watching** when he comes. Truly I tell you, that he will dress himself, and make them recline, and will come and serve them. And if he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are they.

But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched and not have allowed his house to be broken into.

Therefore **be ready** also, for the Son of Man is coming in an hour that you do not expect him."

Luke 12:37-40 (NHEB)

23

WATCHING out for EVIL ...

↪ **WATCH OUT for false teachers:** Even people you *don't* expect to go astray may eventually prove to be false teachers.

- Leaders are to follow Paul's example and watch over both themselves and others. *But false teachers are coming, who will do the opposite.*

For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

So **be on your guard!** Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

Acts 20:27-31 (NIV)

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