

# THE BELIEVER AND THE THREAT OF TIME

## ROMANS 13:11–14

### *Introduction*

Time is very important to most people. Without time, man is not living; he is no more. The one thing he does not want is to run out of time. Therefore, it is critical for every man to know the threat of time.

- I. It is time to understand this critical period of history (v. 11).
- II. It is time to wake up (vv. 11-12).
- III. It is time to put aside the deeds of darkness and to put on the armour of light (v. 12).
- IV. It is time to behave properly (v. 13).
- V. It is time to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and to make no provision for the sinful nature or flesh (v. 14).

### *Another Outline*

Four pictures are also given in this passage.

- I. Picture 1: Sleeping vs. awakening (v. 11).
- II. Picture 2: Darkness vs. light (v. 12).
- III. Picture 3: Walking straight vs. walking crooked (v. 13).
- IV. Picture 4: Clothing — putting on Christ vs. putting on the sinful nature or flesh (v. 14).

### **I. *Romans 13:11 The Critical Period of History***

It is time to understand this critical period of history. The believer is to know the time. The word “knowing” or “understanding” (eridotes) means to make sure that you know or understand; do not dare miss knowing or understanding. The phrase “present time” (ton kairon) means the critical period; the strategic or special period of time.

What strategic or critical period of time is meant? What is the period of human history that we must not overlook?

=> The day of “our salvation,” the day that is nearer than when we first believed.

=> The day that is almost here, the day when we will meet the Lord Jesus Christ face-to-face.

### **II. *Romans 13:11–12 Time to Wake Up, Spiritual Sleep***

Its exhortation is strong, and there are two reasons for its forcefulness.

1. Our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The word “salvation” is being used in a future sense, referring to the glorious day when we shall be fully saved. It is the day when our salvation will be consummated, and we will be delivered from this
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present evil world and perfected forever to live in the presence of God. The point is dramatic: the day is nearer than when we first believed. Awaken out of sleep — arouse yourself — get up — pay attention:

- Look at the world situation
- Look at yourself
- Look at life, its uncertainty
- Look at the signs
- Look at your body, its condition
- Look at the time

The day of salvation, the day of our redemption, is nearer now than when we first believed.

**Luke 21:28** *“When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”*

**Heb 1:2** *But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.*

**1 Pet 1:5-6** *Who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.*

**1 John 2:18** *Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. (see 2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:3; Jude 18)*

2. Judgment is almost here. The night is nearly over: the day is almost here. What day? The day when we will meet God face-to-face, either through death or through the return of the Lord Jesus. Time is fleeting, passing ever so rapidly — so prepare.

**Amos 4:12** *“Prepare to meet your God, O Israel.”*

**Mat 3:3** *“Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.”*

**Mark 13:34-37** *“It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his 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!’”*

**1 Cor 15:34** *Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.*

**Eph 5:14** *For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

**1 Th 5:6** *So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*

**ROMANS 13:11 SPIRITUAL DARKNESS, CARNAL, UNSPIRITUAL**

There is the sleep of false security; the sleep of slothfulness complacency and neglect; and the sleep of indifference. □

**III. Romans 13:12 Deeds of Darkness and Armour of Light**

It is time to put aside the deeds of darkness and to put on the armour of light.

1 The deeds of darkness are the deeds which men do under the cover of darkness, the things they want to keep secret. They are sins...

- which men want to keep secret
- which men know are unacceptable
- which men are ashamed of
- which men know would cause hurt
- which men fear the results of
- which men know would do great damage

**John 3:19-20** *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

**Rom 13:12** *The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.*

**Eph 5:11-12** *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.*

**1 Th 5:7** *For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.*

**Gen 3:8** *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

**Job 24:16** *In the dark, men break into houses, but by day they shut themselves in; they want nothing to do with the light.*

**Prov 28:13** *He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

**Isa 29:15** *Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the Lord, who do their work in darkness and think, "Who sees us? Who will know?"*

**Isa 30:1** *"Woe to the obstinate children," declares the Lord, "to those who carry out plans that are not mine, forming an alliance, but not by my Spirit, heaping sin upon sin.*

**Ezek 8:12** *He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the darkness, each at the shrine of his own idol? They say, 'The Lord does not see us; the Lord has forsaken the land.'"*

2. The armour of light differs entirely from the clothing of darkness. Note: the picture is that of clothing oneself. The believer is to strip off whatever dark sins and works he has wrapped around himself, and he is to cast them away. Once he has stripped himself, the question arises: What is the believer to put on? What he puts on is striking: he is not exhorted to just put on the clothes of light; he is told to put on the armour of light. The believer is to be clothed with the heavy shield and protective armour of light — a shield and protection so full of splendour and glory and brilliance that it cannot be penetrated by the works of darkness. What is this armour of light?

a. It is the weapons of righteousness (2 Cor. 6:7).

*2 Cor 6:4, 7* Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in truthful speech and in the power of God, with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left.

b. It is the armour of God (see Eph. 6:10-20).

=> the belt of truth

=> the breastplate of righteousness

=> the sandals of the gospel

=> the shield of faith

=> the helmet of salvation

=> the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God

=> the supernatural resource of the soldier: prayer

*Eph 6:10-11* Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

*1 Th 5:8* But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

#### IV. Romans 13:13 Sin

It is time to behave properly. The word decently (euschemonos) means proper, honourable, decent, noble. The believer is to walk in honesty before God, living a life of honour, decency and nobility. He is to walk in the day, not hiding or trying to hide anything. Scripture gives six sins in particular which the believer is to cast off and turn from — forever.

1. *Orgies (komois)*: revelling, carousing, partying, feasting, intemperance, debauchery, unrestrained revelry and indulgence, giving license to basic urges.

*Gal 5:19, 21* The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; and envy; drunkenness, orgies and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

*1 Pet 4:3-5* For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do — living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

2. *Drunkenness* (methais): to take intoxicating drink or drugs to affect the senses and faculties; to become intoxicated for the purpose of lust or pleasure; to seek to be tipsy or intoxicated; to seek to loosen moral restraint for the sake of bodily pleasure.

**Luke 21:34** “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap.”

**1 Cor 6:10-11** Nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**Hab 2:15** “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbours, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies.”

3. *Sexual immorality* (koitais): adultery fornication (premarital sex).

**Rom 1:27** In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

4. *Debauchery* (aselgeiais): sensuality, running wild, licentiousness, homosexuality, lasciviousness, living a wild, partying and immoral life. It is excess lust, unbridled lust that consumes one’s thoughts and behaviour through...

- looks and dress
- dances and parties
- books and pamphlets
- talk and jokes
- films and pictures
- suggestions and gestures
- songs and music
- touch and behaviour

**James 5:5** You [the rich] have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.

**2 Pet 2:18** For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

5. *Dissension* (eridi): contention, quarrelling, arguing, striving. It is the craving deep within a person that wants recognition, honour, position and authority. It is a spirit that is in constant competition with others, that will push one forward...

- by putting others down
- by ignoring others
- by blaming others
- by bypassing others
- by holding others back
- by neglecting others

**Phil 2:3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

**2 Tim 2:14** *Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarrelling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen.*

**2 Tim 2:24** *And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.*

**Prov 26:17** *Like one who seizes a dog by the ears is a passer-by who meddles in a quarrel not his own.*

6. *Jealousy (zelei)*: envy that begrudges others. It looks upon the position, recognition and success of others with a jealous eye. It regrets the success of others.

**1 Cor 13:4** *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.*

**Gal 5:26** *Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.*

**James 3:14** *But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.*

**Prov 14:30** *A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.*

**Prov 23:17** *Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord.*

**Prov 24:1** *Do not envy wicked men, do not desire their company.*

## **V. Romans 13:14 Put on the Lord Jesus Christ**

It is time to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and to make no provision for the sinful nature or flesh. Note two points.

1. We are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Again, the picture is that of clothing ourselves. We are to clothe ourselves with Jesus Christ and His righteousness. We are to be as closely bound to Him and His righteousness as we are to our clothes. This means two things.
  - a. Jesus Christ becomes our clothing. As our clothing He...
    - touches us
    - covers us
    - protects us
    - hides us
    - warms us
  - b. We are wrapped up in Jesus Christ. Being in Him means that we live, move and have our being in Him: in His life and thoughts and behaviour. Therefore, we must...
    - look only at that upon which He would look.
    - listen only to that to which He would listen.
    - talk only as He would talk.
    - touch only what He would touch.
    - eat and drink only what He would eat and drink.
    - think only that upon which He would think.



**Eph 4:24** *And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

**Phil 2:5** *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

**Col 3:1-3** *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*

**Col 3:10, 12** *And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

**Luke 9:23** *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*

2. We must not make provision for the flesh or the sinful nature. The idea is that we do not give in to the sinful nature or flesh and its lusts; we do not indulge or give license to the flesh. We do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

**Mat 5:29** *"If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."*

**Rom 6:6** *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.*

**Rom 13:14** *Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

**Gal 5:16** *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

**Col 3:5** *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*

**1 Pet 2:11** *Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.*

**1 Pet 4:2** *As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ■*

## ROMANS 13:14 BELIEVER, PUT ON SPIRITUAL CLOTHING

*Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature. **Romans 13:14***

Scripture lists seven things that the believer is to put on or with which he is to clothe himself.

1. The believer is to put on and be clothed (endusesthe), with the Holy Spirit (Lk. 24:49).
2. The believer is to put on and be clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27).
3. The believer is to put on and be clothed with immortality (1 Cor. 15:53-54; 2 Cor. 5:3).
4. The believer is to put on and be clothed with the new self or new man (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
5. The believer is to put on and be clothed with the nature of God (Col. 3:12).
6. The believer is to put on and be clothed with the armour of light and of God (Rom. 13:14; Eph. 6:11f).
7. The believer is to put on and be clothed with love (Col. 3:14). □