



Wake Up!

The Bible tells us to “awake to righteousness.” Do you feel that you are asleep spiritually; that the deeper things of life are out of your reach? If you do, then it’s time to awake to righteousness!

Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame. 1 Cor. 15:34

What is the one thing that puts you to sleep spiritually?

Sin. That’s what it says in verse 34. “Awake to righteousness and sin not.” Righteousness and sin oppose each other. When you sin, you oppose righteousness. Wow! Now, that’s pretty clear cut, isn’t it? But, what



is sin? That’s the million dollar question.

Years ago, I presented a seminar on “sin.” My goal, at least initially, was to identify all the sins a Christian could commit. I was determined to provide an easy process for sin’s identification and resolution. Why not? After all, if God told us to not sin, then He should also have defined and listed them too? Well, that’s not exactly what happened. I found out that sin wasn’t so easily defined. In fact, the closest definition that I could uncover was

the following. Sin happens when you walk away from God’s Word. I was unable to establish a list of sins at all. Perhaps that’s the way God wanted it?

When the Word of God tells you to not sin, it’s telling you to “Live the Word.” That’s easy, much easier than trying to follow a list of avoiding a thousand sins. Humm, sounds like Old Testament, doesn’t it. Well, that was my mindset years ago until I realized that the Old Testament wasn’t written to me; it’s there only for my learning.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might

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have hope. Romans 15:4

I realized that Christianity is a truly different sort of spirituality. God designed Christianity far differently than he designed Judaism.

Christian's sins have already been forgiven. We've been told to not sin anymore. Old Testament believers (Jews) had to perform sacrifices in order to receive forgiveness. They were told to follow the Mosaic Laws. Jesus Christ made freedom from sins available.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Eph 1:7

It was through his blood that we received forgiveness of sins. We have already received it. Then why does it tell us to stop sinning? The answer is quite simple. Man has free will and can do whatever

he wants to do. Christians are included. *If a Christian wants to walk away from God's Word and lifestyle, he can.* He tests grace when he does so, but he can do so. If you want to sin, can you sin? Of course you can. Who's going to stop you? God won't.

Today, you can:

- Be horribly mean to your spouse and get away with it.
- Hurt your best friend and get away with it.
- Steal from a colleague and get away with it.
- Lie to your boss and get away with it.
- Abuse your child and get away with it.
- Misdirect your family and get away with it.
- Ignore God and get away with it.

Who's going to stop you? After

all, aren't you the boss? You have free will. But should you sin? No, a thousand times no.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Rom 6:1,2

God says that you are dead to sin. That means a couple of things. It means that the sins of Adam no longer rule in your life. It also means that you have the ability to live according to a far more wonderful lifestyle than the one sin caused. The question is, do you want to live a Christian lifestyle?

Back in 1 Corinthians 15, we were told to "awake to righteousness and sin not." *Half the battle is won if you live your life according to God's Word.* The other half may not be as easy, but it can be done. Wake up to the greatness

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of righteousness. What does this mean? Righteousness refers to “righteous living.”

If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. 1 Cor. 15: 32, 33

Paul was in a pretty heated discussion with the Corinthian believers on the subject of baptizing for the dead, among other things. Smack in the middle of this discussion are the above two verses. Paul was telling them that if the Word of God wasn't true, then all his actions were going to be in vain. He stated that there was no advantage to his past stand for God. If there was no advantage to standing for God, then he should have had the mindset of “let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.” If

there was no possibility of eternal life, then let's turn to the world and start living it up big time.

This sounds like people today.

Thirty years ago, I was able to find more serious, Bible-believing people than today. It's a rarity anymore to

have a Bible-based discussion with people here and there. The closest I get, usually, is hearing about their religion, or the latest religious book they have read. We almost never get to the Bible. Sounds to me like they are asleep to righteousness, doesn't it? It also sounds like Paul had to deal with this 2000 years ago too, doesn't it? How did he handle this problem? He told them to live a righteous lifestyle. He recognized the problem, and then told them to “be not deceived.” He called the worldly lifestyle - “evil communications.” “Communications” refers to “lifestyle.” The phrase means,

“evil way of life.”

An evil way of life will corrupt good manners, the good way of life, a righteous lifestyle. That makes sense, but what else did he tell them so that they would change if they were going to use their free will to change? He said “awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame” in verse 34. So far, we have learned that, to avoid the pitfalls of evil living and living in sin, we need to:

1. Be not deceived.
2. Understand that an evil lifestyle corrupts a righteous lifestyle.
3. Awake to righteousness and sin not.

If you are willing to exercise your free will, you too can awake to righteousness. You too can live according to God's Word and not live according to “sin's” word.

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Did you catch the last part of verse 34? “For some have not the knowledge of God”? Now do you see that the easiest way to avoid sin is not with a long list of sins to avoid? It is by having the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God is what frees you.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32

There’s more than one way to skin a cat, as the saying goes. Learn to look at a verse from different angles. What do you see in the words in a verse, and what does God see in those same words. Instead of trying to define sin and come up with a list just so that you can awake to righteousness, how about living God’s Word and thereby avoiding sin altogether? Sounds a lot easier, doesn’t it? Start now by taking the time to learn from God’s knowledge, His

Word.

When Paul said, “I speak this to your shame,” he was talking about people who had already been taught God’s Word. These people choose to walk away from the Bible that they had been taught. They choose to follow other doctrines and ways completely unassociated with the truth. Don’t you do that. No matter how many people it seems do not believe today, don’t you walk away.

I often see wonderful Christians turned sour. These are people who love

God, but they changed their ways. The Bible says that we should be radiant as we look to God.

They looked unto him, and were lightened [radiant]: and their faces were not ashamed. Psalm 34:5

But once shining Christians now

can’t seem to eek out a pleasant smile. Why is this? They stopped feeding on God’s knowledge. They stopped living according to His Word. Don’t be one of these, and if you are, turn back. The “let us eat and drink” lifestyle will make you fat, dumb and happy, but especially, it will put you to sleep spiritually. Adam went to sleep spiritually and look where it got him (and us as a result). Don’t fall for “sin’s word.” You may not get back up. Go HARD to God’s Word and stop playing around with the silly, stupid, and sinful things of the world.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2:6

Awake to righteousness and sin not. Remove any shame by living according to God’s Word!

Much love in Christ,

Jerry D. Brown