

God Said Live

by Bill McLeod

God is calling us to wake up, come out, and live a deeper life for His glory, and to share the gospel with others around the world.

Duration: 31:58

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 John 2:1

Topics: "Renewal"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of Christians waking up from spiritual slumber. He references Ephesians 4:5, Romans 13, and 1 Corinthians 15 as passages that urge believers to awaken. The preacher acknowledges that while not every believer may need a revival every three weeks, it is still easy for Christians to become spiritually complacent. He emphasizes the need for believers to separate themselves from those who are not living for God and to put on the armor of light, walking in righteousness and avoiding sin.

Transcript

For we preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves, your servants, for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, is he who has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Not of us. We preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. Philippians 121, where the apostle Paul says, to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Balaam said, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. But he didn't, and it wasn't. He died on the end of a sword in the hand of a Jew.

And to die the death of the righteous, you have to live the life of the righteous. To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Many Christians exist, but they do not live.

They are truly God's children, they have life, but they seemingly do not have what Jesus called life more abundant. And that's what we're concerned about in these meetings, and over the weekend, to the glory of God. Now I want to take a number of phrases in the Bible, and one word, as God has laid it on my heart.

God says, wake up. Romans 13, it's high time, Paul said, to awake out of sleep. He said that to Christians.

It's high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. And if that was true 1900 years ago, how much truer is it tonight? The night is far spent, the day is at hand.

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness. And then the more subtle things, not in strife and envying, but put you on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And do not make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof. So the word of God is saying, it's high time to wake up. High time to wake up.

Paul says the same thing in 1 Corinthians 15. Awake to righteousness, and sin not. For some have not the knowledge of God.

I speak this to your shame. Awake to righteousness, and sin not. 1 John 2 says, my little children, these things I write unto you, that you sin not.

And Peter in 1 Peter chapter 2 said that we are to follow his steps, who did no sin. Neither was guile found in his mouth. Who when he was reviled, reviled not again.

When he suffered, he threatened not. But committed his cause to him that judges righteously. Follow his steps, who did no sin.

No fancy theological argument. No intricate, deeper life teaching. God says sin not.

He's appealing to our will. Sin not. Stark and naked.

That's what he says. Billy Sunday used to say, quit your meanness. Stop your sinning.

Well, you might say, I would like to, but I can't. Well, God has an answer for that too. God says, wake up.

Ephesians 4, 5 rather, Paul said, Awake now that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time. That means buying up the opportunities for the days of evil.

So we have three texts and they tell us to wake up. All of them are written to Christian believers. Now, Finney made the exaggerated statement.

I say it, I think it was probably a little exaggerated. He said he thought the average believer needed a revival every three weeks. I think that might be just a little exaggerated, and yet, from past experience, from personal experience, we know that it's very easy to go to sleep.

I think it was Finney that said in the time of revival, some Christians, they awaken up, vociferate, rub their eyes, yawn a time or two, and go back to sleep again. Sometimes we do that. Some here perhaps have done this.

God touched your life in a genuine way, but you've gone back. And you're sleeping again. God is saying, wake up.

Wake up, now is our salvation nearer than when we believe the night is far spent. The day is at hand. And then, we have another phrase in 2 Corinthians 6. Come out.

Come out from among them, and be you separate. What fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion has light with darkness? What concord has Christ with Belial? What part has he that believes with an infidel? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.

They shall be my people, and I'll be their God. Wherefore? Now what he's saying now, he's basing on what he's already said. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be you separate.

Sayeth the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. And I will receive you. And I will be a father unto you.

And you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Sins of the flesh.

Well, in Galatians 5, Paul says, the sins of the flesh, the works of the flesh, are manifest, easily to be recognized and seen, which are these. Then he goes through. Eighteen separate works of the flesh.

What about the spirit? We are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and filthiness of the spirit. Well, filthiness of the spirit in the context here is for a Christian believer to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever. Whether it's in marriage, in business, or maybe just simply in the kind of friends I choose, that I spend much time, that I find more friendship perhaps with unconverted people than with Christians.

Now remember, don't misunderstand me, we're to love the lost, spend time with them, yes. But some Christians spend most of their time in social activities with the unconverted. That's wrong.

God says, come out and be separate and do not touch the unclean thing. And then he says, I'll be a father to you. Isn't he already the Christian's father? Yes.

But this is in a special, intimate way. I'll receive you. You'll be my sons and daughters.

So, having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled. I say again, blessed are the pure in heart. Do you have that pure heart, by the grace of God tonight? You need it, or there's a blessing connected with it.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And that verse I quoted a moment or two ago from Hebrews is just an echo of that verse in Matthew 5.8. Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. All right? Wake up, God says.

Then God says, come out. And Paul says this in 2 Timothy 2. He says, in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself, purge himself from these, from the vessels that are used for dishonorable purposes, he shall then be a vessel unto honor.

Scientific, that means set apart and fit, notice, fit for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. He didn't say it took three years in Bible school or four years in seminary to be fit, prepared to every good work. He says you have to be separate.

You have to purge yourself, and then you're fit. That's in 2 Timothy 2. And then he says, The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves, if God for adventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will. But before I can work in this way, I have to know this other experience.

I have to separate myself from, there's many Christians, you know, many Christians who are not really living for God, who have no intention of living, no intent even to live for God. They want to stay the way they are. And they'll drag you down, they'll slow you up, they'll talk you out of it.

They'll come between you and the will of God. And in the spirit of humility and love, we have to separate ourselves, purge ourselves, come out and be separate, and do not touch that which is unclean. There's a verse in the Psalms that says, Though you have been laying among the pots, and listen, if you're lying among the pots, you're going to get pot black on you.

And many Christians have pot black on them. Though you have been lying among the pots, yet shall you be as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold. Look what Jesus can do.

Take all that black away, and make us look like a dove, silver and gold. Jesus can do that for you, but the devil is telling you he can't. Who will you listen to? God's voice? I hope so.

And the next phrase is found in Hebrews 13. He says, The blood of those beasts, no, the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the gate. Wherefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate.

And here's the phrase. Let us go forth therefore unto him outside the camp bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city.

That is no eternal city. Jerusalem which now is in bondage with her children, Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Here we have no continuing city.

The prophet says the cities of the nations will fall, Winnipeg included. Alright. So he says, let's go forth therefore unto him, Christ, Jesus, outside the camp bearing his reproach.

What was the significance of being outside the camp? Oh, that's where the murderers were taken to be stoned to death. That's where the adulterers were taken to be stoned to death. That's where the blasphemers were taken to be stoned to death.

That's where the gluttons and the drunkards were taken to be stoned to death. That's where the lawbreakers were stoned to death. That's where the lepers had to live.

That's where the human dung was buried. That's where the bodies of the beasts were burned. It was an unclean place.

And that's where Jesus died, but you know wonderfully, in the Old Testament there was one place outside the camp that was clean. And the ashes of these animals was to be taken out to this clean place outside the camp, and that's where Jesus died. And we're to stand with Jesus.

I preached on that particular text down in South America at a place called Maximal Pass, a three-day Deeper Life conference, not more than 50 people, 40, 50 people there. And a missionary, a missionary 25

years in Chile and 5 years in Argentina, he said, now I see it. Now I see what it means to be crucified with Christ.

It means to be identified with him. I said, yes, completely, outside the camp, no matter what people say or what people think or do, God says, let's go forth unto him, outside the camp, bearing his reproach. And it says about Moses in Hebrews chapter 11 that when he was 20 years, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming notice, esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

So even Moses knew something about the reproach of Christ, and he wanted to be identified with the people of God, and he was willing to bear the reproach of Jesus Christ. And he turned down all the riches in Egypt, all the honor that might have been his, so that rather he might bear the reproach of Jesus. And no wonder the Lord let him stand on that mountain and talk with him.

Jesus did. There appeared to Jesus, Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. And what did they talk about? They spoke of his death, which he would accomplish at Jerusalem, for the death of Jesus was a mighty accomplishment.

And may I say this? Your death and mine, in a spiritual sense, with Jesus on the cross, is the greatest accomplishment that we can ever know. Samson slew thousands of the Lord's enemies while he lived, but the scripture expressly states that he slew more when he died. And so were you and I. So were you and I. When we die.

So, God says, then let's go forth, therefore, unto him outside the camp, bearing his reproach. Then here's another thought. Send forth.

Send forth. Students of revival have said that revivals have more or less four stages, and they may not always occur in the same order. The first step is the reviving of the people of God.

The second step is evangelism. The third step is missions. And the fourth step is a social concern.

And all the great revivals of history, to those who have studied it, they tell me this, that this is the pattern they normally follow. But as I said before, not necessarily in that express order. Now, in the book of Isaiah, it says, Blessed, there's that word again, blessed are you that sow beside all waters, because the field is the world, not Canada and the States.

And I think many of us, dear people, listen, I have a burden in my soul. I think far too many of us have been concerned solely with revival in Canada and the States, and we do not have a world vision for revival. And God must give us that.

Blessed are you that sow beside all waters, but send forth thither the feet of the ox and of the ass, that send people out. You remember it says, How shall he believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall he hear without a preacher? And how shall he preach, except they be sent? Somebody has to send them. We have to send them.

As many of you will know, my wife and I have been in South America twice. We plan to go back in 79 for three months probably, to India this year, to Africa in 1980. God willing, of course.

But I wish God would call others to this ministry, because the fields are wide open. I was trying to figure out, in the three countries I've been in South America to preach, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina, and I would say this, there is probably only one-tenth of gospel work going on in those countries that there is here. That is in North America.

For example, missionaries told me in Argentina they knew of many, not a few, but many villages, with ten and fifteen and twenty thousand people, where there wasn't one evangelical worker. Is that right? Let me talk about the Baptists for a minute. You know, in the Maritimes in Canada, where there is just one and a half million people, listen carefully, one and a half million people, there are six hundred Baptist churches.

In the whole of Argentina, with twenty-five million people, you only have three hundred Baptist churches. Does that give you an idea? There are far more Bible schools in Western Canada, what is there, five million people in Western Canada, than there is in the whole of Argentina? I understand there are thirty-five Bible schools in Western Canada. I think there are, is it six or so? Something like that.

The need is great. And people listen, God is working down there, blessed are you that sow beside all waters, that send forth to the feet of the ox and of the ass. The needs are the same there, and the blessing is the same.

And we're from one to seventy-five people responding in meetings, and all of this through an interpreter. It was beautiful to watch God work. I'm just a very dry stick, but God is a living flame.

And He does unusual things, even when you have poor interpreters. We had an interpreter one night that had a moral problem, and the people that asked him to interpret for me, they knew that, and should never have used him. And I didn't know this, but God knew it.

And afterwards, someone who knew English and Spanish told me, there was one word you used four or five times tonight that the interpreter did not translate at all. I said, what was the word? And they said it was the word pride. Oh, I said, and he left the next day.

But the whole thing surfaced as God worked in some other hearts. And a beautiful thing, one night, a man came, stood here at the front, and began to share. Tears just raining down his face, and he said, people, and the interpreter told me what he was saying.

It was all in Spanish, of course, and the interpreter told me what he was saying. He said, you know, I've been married eight or nine years. I've never ever told my wife that I love her.

I've made life miserable for her. I've used her and abused her. And he said, people, I'm going home now.

Please pray for me. I'm going home now to make it right, and I'm going to tell my wife I really love her. So you know what happened? The next night she was there, and he was looking after the kids.

And she stood up here at the front. She couldn't talk. The tears just raining down on her sweater.

She just stood there and cried. And you know what had happened? Her husband had come home and told her that he loved her. And a lady got up in a meeting, and she told us how she grieved her mother's heart so terribly for many, many years.

And she asked the congregation to forgive her. And she turned to her mother who was in the meeting and said something like this. My Spanish is probably not right.

Perdónenme, madre. And they flew into each other's arms, and they were reconciled. And a man got to his feet and said, I've been backslidden for 25 years.

And he said, I've just come back to God. He was living in Carmelon the next night. The girl he was living with gave her heart to Jesus Christ.

It was beautiful to watch God work. But listen, people, I'm one person, and the world is big. And the revival message, I'm sure, God wants to push it out to the ends of the earth.

Some countries have it, and many do not. And so they wanted me to stay for two years. Two years they wanted me to stay, and I couldn't.

What about the revival? Do you know what I think? I think that if we don't get a world mission, a world vision, it's going to dry up. I feel that. Blessed are you that sow beside all waters that send forth to the feet of the ox and of the ass.

Well, I shared some phrases. Let me give you one word. It's the word live.

And you read about it in Ezekiel chapter 16, where God, in a sort of an allegory, he talked about Israel and the way he first found her. He said, I saw you. You were like a baby that had been just born and thrown out in the field.

Your navel wasn't cut. You had not been washed. You had not been swooped.

Nobody bothered with you. You weren't swallowed. You were just cast out as a loathsome object in the field, and then I passed by.

And behold, it was a time of love. And God said, I cast my garment on you, and I covered your nakedness. And I said unto you, when you were lying in your blood, I said, live.

And that's what God said to a lot of us. He said, live. And we found life in Jesus.

But God is talking to us now about living in a deeper way for the glory of God. I am come to remember that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. And a missionary came 800 miles to counsel with us.

And when his eyes, he told us the burden of his heart. We prayed, we counseled for a long while, and finally he said, Bill, God has given me peace. And he went home.

And you'll never believe, if I tell you the name of the place, we were driving down to where he lived later on for a crusade, and we're going down the highway, and I looked, I couldn't believe it, it said, I'll give it to you the way we say it in English, Villa Regina. Regina, it said. They pronounced it, Villa Regina.

But anyway, we got to Regina, and I preached there Sunday morning, and this missionary had his congregation unite with a Baptist congregation, and the Lord came down. There was no place at the front of the church, we had to get them all on the platform, and some people had been prayed for for years, backsliders and unconverted people found Jesus. It was a beautiful meeting.

And we've heard since from that missionary. And he says everywhere he goes, there's a revival. And that's what I was praying for, that somehow God would just raise up people that could carry on the

message.

And he told in specific detail how he'd gone from place to place, and God was saving souls and reviving. He said missionaries and pastors and church leaders are getting right with God. His name is Ron Holmes.

Pray for him. He has a terrible financial need. His allowance doesn't reach anymore because last year the, well, inflation, 350% in one year.

They're trying to get it down to 12% a month, which is 144% a year. He and others like him have problems. Well, pray for them.

God said live. And listen, I know that God is saying that to some people here tonight. He started talking Tuesday night.

Or he might have started talking a month ago through your pastor. But maybe Tuesday night or maybe last night, or possibly tonight. And God is saying live.

Do you know what revival is? It's you and I agreeing with God. It's you and I saying an eternal yes to God. God is saying live, and some of us would rather die.

We'd rather stay the way we are. We don't want to run any risks. We don't want to rock the boat.

I heard Dr. Tozer say one time that the prevailing philosophy among Christian believers was this, don't rock the boat, don't stick out your neck, and don't get involved. That's where many Christians wickedly live. Listen, we were like that lonesome object lying in the field, covered in blood, a newborn child that nobody wanted, and God passed by.

Have you forgotten? Have you forgotten that God passed by and said to your heart, live, and you owe everything you are and everything you have to him. And any time he wants, he can take your life, and someday he will. My times are in thy hand.

Dear people, like Daniel said to King Belshazzar, the God in whose hand is your breath and whose are all your ways, you have not glorified. Are you glorifying God? He wants you to. That's why he saved you.

And God is saying, live. In just a moment, Ralph's going to lead us in an invitation. Will you say yes to God? There's a statement in the Bible given four times.

If it's given four times, it must be very important. It's a little statement today. If you'll hear his voice, don't harden your heart.

All people listen. There are many here who are capable of helping you under God, counseling with the word of God, praying with you. You have a need.

Don't go home the way you came. Let God change you. Wake up.

Wake up. Be identified with Jesus. Listen.

You know what they said of George Whitefield? They said he was all light and fire and force and wing. That's how Spurgeon described Whitefield. Moody said, after God filled him with the Holy Spirit, I wouldn't be placed back before this, before this experience, for all the gold in the world.

I just finished reading a book that moved me, as very, very few books have. It's the life story of Catherine Booth, and I picked it up in the Christian bookstore in Winclair, Manitoba, a little while ago. Catherine Booth died early in her 50s.

They said she died because she loved too much. It's an incredible story. And maybe it's not for you.

I don't know. But I would advise you to get the book and read it. If it doesn't do something to your heart, then you've passed hope.

It's a marvelous story, the love these people had for each other, and how they tried to perfect each other in the image of Jesus so they could together serve God and win people to Jesus and live holy for God. It's the most powerful book, I think, that I ever read. At least God blessed it that way, to my heart.

And then Adonai Judson. I read his story and asked my son Tim to read it. And he said, Dad, that book is a heartbreaker.

Yes, he suffered terribly. His wife and he were separated one time in the mission field for two years. She didn't know where he was.

He'd gone to his ancestors and hadn't come back. And she kept trusting and praying. What was the result? A harvest in Burma of 300,000 souls, eventually.

And C.T. Studd never saw his wife for 14 years because she was looking after the home office in England and he was looking after souls in Africa. They got together for two weeks and 14 years. They loved each other dearly, dearly.

But they had a greater love. To me, to live is Christ. And to die.

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