

# Awake to Your Purpose

by Brian Long

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of awakening to one's God-given purpose and living for the glory of God and the souls of men.*

**Duration:** 43:59

**Scripture:** Esther 4:14, Esther 4:16, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 5:14-17, Philippians 1:1

**Topics:** "Purpose"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of committing oneself fully to God's purpose. He uses the example of Esther, who was willing to risk her life for the sake of her people. The preacher urges the congregation to wake up spiritually and walk wisely, redeeming the time because the days are evil. He emphasizes the need to understand God's will through prayer and the study of the Word. The sermon concludes with a call to embrace God's purpose, glorify Jesus, and join Him in rescuing the perishing.

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## Transcript

I want to thank you, brothers and sisters, so much for the privilege of being able to be with you this week. It has been a tremendous privilege of mine to be with you. You're a precious, precious people.

And I know you're going to have a special place in my heart. Not that that's important. You have a special place in God's heart.

That's what's important. But it has been such a privilege to be able to be here. I could go down the line and the aisles and see gifts that many of you have, and godly character that I long to be more like.

And gifts that you have that I respect so much, and families that reflect the glory of God. You're a tremendous example, and I want to thank you so much for your light, and just for the privilege of being with you these days. Tonight, something happened to me just before we were to leave.

I was feeling unsettled about the message that I had for tonight. And the Spirit of God, I really believe, spoke to me and said, that's not what I want to say. And He changed the message just before I came.

Now this is a message I've preached before, in terms of the text and everything. But I'm so persuaded that this is for us tonight. This is a message, I believe, straight from the heart of God.

And I just entitled it, Awake to Your Purpose. Awake to Your Purpose. And we're going to turn to Esther chapter 4, and we'll begin reading in verse 13.

And Mordecai told them to answer Esther, Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place. But you and your father's house will perish.

Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this. Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, Go gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan and fast for me. Neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day.

My maids and I will fast likewise, and so I will go to the king, which is against the law. And if I perish, I perish. Let's pray one more time, please.

Now, Father, I believe with all of my heart, this is a message from Your heart. And we pray now, God, for a liberty to deliver Your Word. We ask You to remove every wall of resistance and speak to the depths of every one of our hearts.

Thank You, Father, for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Thank You for the gift and the power of Your Spirit. Thank You for Your Word.

Thank You that You're speaking to us today. Lord, kindle an urgency in our hearts. Give us ears to hear what Your Spirit is saying to us, I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Now, Esther was a young Jewish woman whose mother and father had died. Probably at the hands of the Babylonians.

And she was taken in and raised by her cousin Mordecai. Mordecai took Esther and raised her as his very own daughter. Now, how did this young lady ever end up at the king's palace? To eventually even become queen? When Esther had taken another queen's place, what had happened was, the king had held a royal feast that lasted for 180 days.

And after that 180-day feast, he threw a seven-day party. And after that seven days, when he was full of wine, he sent his servants to go get the queen. And he said, tell the queen to put on her royal crown, basically to dress herself up, because I want to display her beauty to all the people.

Well, Queen Vashti received that message and she said, I'm not coming. He's not going to just put me on display so as to show off my beauty. And so when the messengers came back and said, King, the queen said she's not coming.

He burned with anger. And so he says to his servants, what should I do with this woman? And they said, oh king, if all the wives here that your wife didn't submit to you, then our wives aren't going to submit to us. You've got to do something about this woman.

Remove her from her throne and let another woman take her place that is better than her. So, the king did just that. And he sent out messengers to go throughout all the villages to look for young, beautiful, virgin women.

And those young, beautiful, virgin women that were chosen were to be brought into the king's palace. One of those young women was Esther. All the young women that would be brought into the king's palace

would be, they'd be brought in, they'd be given the best food, they would take 12 months of beauty treatments, and then at the end of the 12 months, the young lady that the king was most pleased with would become the queen.

Esther was one of those women that was brought into the king's palace. During this same time, there was a man by the name of Haman. And the king had given Haman an exalted position.

He promoted him and set him high above all the princes. And because of that, because of Haman's position, all the king's servants and all the king's men, all those who sat in the king's gate, would bow down before Haman anytime they were in his presence. That is everybody except for Mordecai.

Mordecai would not bow down before a man. And Haman burned with anger because Mordecai would not bow down before him. And so Haman asked his servants, Why won't this Mordecai bow down before me? And they said, King, it's because he's a Jew.

And every God-fearing Jew knows the second commandment. You shall not make for yourself any graven image. You shall not bow down to idols.

Mordecai would not bow down to Haman. So because of this, Haman was so full of anger and hatred and rage for Mordecai, he wanted to kill him. But this thought of killing Mordecai didn't satisfy him enough.

He wanted to kill every Jew in every province. And there were 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia. And Haman had in mind to kill every Jew, man, woman, and child.

So he comes up with a plan. He comes before the king and he says, King, you have a bunch of Jews that live in these provinces and they go by another set of laws. They go by another set of laws than what we have.

And I want you to issue a decree, King, that on a certain day of a certain specific month, you have put to death, annihilate every Jew, man, woman, and child. Well, the king listened to Haman and he wrote a written decree. On a specific day of a specific month, every Jew from India to Ethiopia would be put to death, man, woman, and child.

When Mordecai heard this news and he received a copy of the written decree as it was being spread throughout all these 127 provinces, he mourned and wept and he tore his clothes and he clothed himself with sackcloth and ashes and he fasted and all the other Jews around him did the same thing. When Esther heard about Mordecai and his state of grief and sorrow, she sent her messenger to ask why he was acting this way. And Mordecai sent the servant, the messenger, back to Esther with a written copy of the decree that the king had issued and also a verbal message.

And that verbal message was a plea. Esther, you must wake up to your purpose. You have been placed in this palace for such a time as this.

You must go to the king and plead before him for the sake of your people. For if you do not, every one of our people from India to Ethiopia will surely perish. Brothers and sisters, the whole nation, the whole race of the Jewish people and their destruction hinged on one woman, one young woman awakening to her God-given purpose.

Have you awakened to your God-given purpose? A whole race of Jewish people that were on the brink of utter destruction, total ruin. And can I say to you, outside these walls, there are souls, sinners for whom Christ died. They are people that God created in His image.

They do not know Christ. There is a whole nation, a whole people who are sitting on the brink of eternal ruin and destruction. Could it be that you and I have been brought into the kingdom for such a time as this? Could it be that it's time for us to wake up to our purpose? Esther must wake up to her purpose.

Mordecai saw young Esther as perhaps the only hope for his people and that is why he sends her this message. Let's read it again in verse 13. Mordecai told them to answer Esther, Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.

For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place. But you and your father's house will perish. Now listen to this.

Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this. God had sovereignly placed Esther in the king's palace on purpose. God had set before Esther an open door.

God had chosen to raise up one woman to intercede for an entire race of Jewish people but Esther had to awaken to her purpose. Suppose Esther, after hearing this news, would have just stayed asleep to her purpose. Suppose she'd been so taken up with just enjoying the safety and the security and the comfort of the king's palace.

Spending every day in front of a mirror, gloating over herself, basking in the lavish lifestyle of the king's palace while a whole nation outside the palace was on the brink of destruction and about to perish. She's looking in the mirror, beautifying herself. Yet how many of us are taken up too much with ourselves? How many of us are enjoying the king's palace? We're thankful that we're Christians.

We're resting in the promise of eternal life. We're basking in the blessings of God. We have wonderful homes and families and comfortable homes and a wonderful church.

Praise be to God. But how many are lulled to a slumbering sleep of selfishness? We're just waiting around for heaven while a perishing people outside our walls are on the brink of devastating and eternal destruction. There is a real hell.

There is an eternal hell. And people are really going there for all eternity. It took an alarming message to awaken Esther.

And it's time we wake up, brothers and sisters. It's time we awaken to the fact that you and I have been brought into the kingdom for such a time as this. You have a God-given purpose.

You have been placed here in Wisconsin by God on purpose for such a time as this. It took an alarming message to awaken Esther. The message was both proclaimed, preached, if you will, to her.

And it was written. The messenger came to her speaking the alarming message. But he also handed her a written decree.

She listened. She read it. And she awakened to her purpose.

And, brothers and sisters, you and I must do the same. Now, what's the first step? We must awaken to the Word of God. We must awaken to the Word of God.

It's being both preached and it has been written to us. From Genesis to Revelation, we have the written decree. We have the message.

We also have it delivered to us through the preaching of God's Word. It is the Holy Word of God. What if Esther would have listened to the alarming message like many listen to the preaching of God's Word today? What if she, with a yawn and a sigh, would have said, Go tell Mordecai that was a good sermon.

Mordecai would have said, What? Good sermon? Good sermon? Did she not get the message? The message is, every one of our people, every Jew from India to Ethiopia, is going to perish on a certain day. And she's telling me I delivered a good sermon? She didn't get the message. She didn't hear the sound of the alarm.

She awakened to that message. W.P. Nicholson said, Nothing is so alarming as the utter absence of alarm in our churches. Folks, it's dangerous to listen to the Word of God preached night after night, week after week, and not heed to what you have heard.

It is dangerous to hear the preaching of God's Word and do nothing about it. It is dangerous to hear the preaching of God's Word week after week and not wake up to what God is saying through the messenger. That is dangerous.

Not to awaken to our purpose for which we heard it. And how about the written message? We have the written message. She had the written decree.

We have the written message. And I want to ask you very plainly, very straightforwardly, all of us have a Bible. Amen? Anybody in here do not have a Bible? Raise your hand.

We all have the Bible. We all have the Word of God. I want to ask you very plainly, are you reading the Bible? Are you reading the Bible? I'm not asking you if you're reading devotional books.

I'm not asking you if you're reading other literature that has Bible verses in it. I'm asking you, are you reading the Word of God? And suppose Esther would have done this. Suppose Esther would have opened that written decree and she would have read a sentence here and maybe a sentence down here, maybe a word over here.

You know, pick out a verse here, pick out a verse there. I know that God can speak to you by just opening up the Bible and reading a verse. I know He can speak to you by just skipping around and reading a verse here and there.

But I'll tell you this, if that's the only Bible reading you're doing, you're missing something. I want to encourage you, brothers and sisters, and I want to challenge you. Take this book, the Word of God, the Holy Word of God, and you pick out a book in the Word of God.

Acts, John, Romans, wherever it is, Deuteronomy. Pick out a book in the Word of God. You start in chapter 1, verse 1, and you read from chapter 1, verse 1, throughout the entire book.

You know what will happen when you read one book of the Bible all the way through? You will awaken. You will awaken to your purpose. You will awaken to its message.

Discipline yourself to sit down and read the Word of God. And better yet, find you a book. Start with a short book.

Philippians, Galatians, Acts. Start in chapter 1, verse 1, and read it all the way through in one setting. What's going to happen? The Word of God's going to get in your heart.

It's going to begin to burn in your heart. You're going to begin to be enlightened to God's ways and His thoughts and who He is, His character. You're going to begin to awaken to your purpose and why you are here for such a time as this.

We must awaken to the written Word of God. Now, not only must we awaken to the Word, but we must awaken to prayer. Notice here what she did.

Esther had the privilege of going to the king, but only if he invited her or called her to come into his presence, and yet she still went. I want to tell you this. Prayer is the greatest privilege that you and I have as a believer.

You tell me what privilege is greater than being able to commune with the Most High God. To have conversation with the Most High God of heaven and earth. To be able to enter into His presence and call upon Him, and He is listening to you, and He is speaking to you.

What privilege is greater than prayer? This is our greatest privilege. This is our greatest responsibility. Prayer.

And Esther awoken to the fact that she could go into the presence of the king and intercede on behalf of her people. The problem was, she could only come into the presence of the king if the king invited her. And if he did not invite her, it was a death sentence.

But you and I have not only been given direct access to the king of kings, we have even been commanded to come boldly into His presence by the blood of Jesus. Hebrews 4, verse 16 says, Let us therefore come boldly into the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. If you are in Christ, your sins are washed away, you're clothed in the righteousness of Christ, you are an adopted son or daughter of the Most High God, and God your Father invites you and not only invites you, but commands you to come into His presence.

Boldly! Are you taking advantage of that heavenly privilege? Are you taking advantage of that incredible privilege called prayer? Coming into the presence of God and communing with Him. And not only communing with Him, but interceding on behalf of those who don't yet know Him and are headed for an eternal hell. Who are on the brink of utter destruction and eternal ruin.

Jesus said in Luke chapter 11, I say to you, ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened.

For everyone who asks, receives, and to him who seeks, finds, and to him who knocks, it will be opened. Let us awaken to our privilege and the call and the responsibility to prayer. The single most important meeting of the church is the prayer meeting.

The single most important meeting of the church is the prayer meeting. And Esther awakened to her vital purpose of going to the King in order to intercede for her people. When we awaken to the Word and we

awaken to the message, then we will awaken to our God-given purpose and we will see clearly, brothers and sisters, that that God-given purpose is not just about us.

It's not just about you. It's not just about me. Can I tell you this? There is nothing in the Christian life that is selfish.

There is nothing. There is no room for selfishness or self-centeredness in the Christian life. When you awaken to your God-given purpose, you're going to awaken to this truth.

Your God-given purpose is all about the glory of God and the souls of men. The glory of God and the souls of men. Why did He leave you and I here after we were saved? If we have no purpose, best thing could have happened, we'd get saved, we'd die, go up and to be with Him in heaven.

He left you here because you have a purpose. You've been brought into the kingdom for such a time as this and your purpose is the glory of God and the souls of men. It's not about you.

There is no greater tragedy than for someone to profess to be a Christian and yet not live for the glory of God. There's no greater tragedy than for someone to profess to be a follower of Christ and yet be a self-centered man or woman living for themselves. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5 that He died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again.

How tragic for Esther to have heard the message, read the decree, and then said, Well, at least I'm safe in the king's palace. At least I'm safe in the king's palace. Now let's see.

Where is my mirror? Mary, will you hand me my lipstick? Mind you, every Jew from India to Ethiopia, the day is approaching they're going to die. Every child is going to be slaughtered. Mary, where's my lipstick? Sue, give me some more mascara.

That's how many Christians are living, brothers and sisters. We've not awakened to our purpose. There are souls with an eternal destiny and we're looking in the mirror? We're staying comfortable in our own little comfort zones as if life is all about me, myself, and I? It is not.

It is about the glory of God and the souls of men. And it is a tragedy when a man or a woman who knows Christ doesn't awaken to that. I love this quote I read by John Piper.

Piper says this, I will tell you what a tragedy is. I will show you how to waste your life. Consider a story from the February 1998 edition of Reader's Digest, which tells about a couple who took early retirement for their jobs in the Northeast five years ago when he was 59 and she was 51.

Now they live in Punta Gorda, Florida where they cruise on their 30-foot trawler, they play softball, and they collect seashells. At first when I read it, I thought it might be a joke, a spoof of the American dream. But it wasn't.

Tragically, this was the dream. Come to the end of your life, your one and only precious God-given life, and let the last work of your great life before you give an account to your Creator be this, playing softball and collecting shells. Picture them before Christ at the great day of judgment.

Look Lord, see my shells? That is a tragedy. And people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream. Over against that I put my protest.

Don't buy it. Don't waste your life. And we say, Amen, John Piper.

I say, God has a purpose, a big purpose for you, brothers and sisters. Don't miss it for shells. Don't miss it for early retirement.

Where is that word in the Bible? Don't miss it for self-centered living. Don't miss it for golf and hunting and fishing. There's nothing wrong with hunting, fishing, playing golf, but there is something wrong with it, if that is your purpose.

If you live as if that's your purpose, and that's taking your focus off of Christ. What a tragedy. To come before Jesus, and the Bible says we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

What a tragedy. To stand before Jesus at the judgment seat of Christ and Him have to show to you what could have been, had you only trusted Him and awakened to your purpose. What a tragedy to stand before Christ and see you missed your God-given purpose.

You didn't awaken to it, because you didn't awaken to the Word, the message. You didn't awaken to the privilege of prayer. You can come into His presence freely through the blood of Christ.

What a tragedy. Erwin Lutzer in his book, *When a Nation Forgets God*, writes about an eyewitness account of how some church members reacted to Nazism during the Jewish Holocaust under Hitler. Listen to what one eyewitness says.

He says, I lived in Germany during the Nazi Holocaust. I considered myself a Christian. We heard stories of what was happening to Jews, but we tried to distance ourselves from it because what could we do to stop it? A railroad track ran behind our small church, and each Sunday morning we could hear the whistle in the distance, and then the wheels coming over the tracks.

We became disturbed when we heard the cries coming from the train as it passed by. We realized that it was carrying Jews like cattle in cars. Week after week the whistle would blow.

We dreaded to hear the sound of those wheels because we knew that we would hear the cries of the Jews en route to a death camp. Their screams tormented us. We knew the time the train was coming, and when we heard the whistle blow, we began singing hymns.

By the time the train came past our church, we were singing at the top of our voices. If we heard the screams, we sang more loudly, and soon we heard them no more. Although the years have passed, I still hear the train whistle in my sleep.

God, forgive me. Forgive all of us who called ourselves Christians and yet did nothing to intervene. Thank God that Esther didn't just sing a little louder.

Thank God that Esther didn't just sing a little louder when she heard this cry, there are Jews from India to Ethiopia that are approaching a day of destruction. She awoke to her purpose and having awakened to her purpose, she committed herself fully to the end. Look at this, brothers and sisters.

Once God awakens you to your God-given purpose, you must commit yourself fully to the end. You must commit yourself. You must abandon yourself to Christ.

Look at what she did. Chapter 4, verse 10. First of all, let me give some background.

In verse 10, it says, Esther spoke to Hathak and gave him a command to Mordecai. She said, All the king's servants and all the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king who has not been called, he has but one law, put all to death. You have to see the seriousness of this.

Esther, to go into the presence of the king without being invited, would have the death sentence put upon her. Her head could come off. Except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter that he may live.

Yet I myself have not been called to go to the king these 30 days. Do you see the dilemma she's in? For 30 days, the king has not even invited me to come into his presence. And if I come into his presence uninvited, it could mean off with my head.

Unless he extends that golden scepter and lets me touch the end of it. Her life was on the line. Well, it says in verse 14, If you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise from the Jews from another place.

But you and your father's house will perish. And I want to say to you, brothers and sisters, if you remain silent at this time, and I remain silent at this time, God doesn't need us. He wants to use us.

But God will look. He's looking. His eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth.

He's liable to raise up another church right here in Wisconsin to do what He wanted you to do. To do what He's calling you to do. If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise from the Jews from another place.

But you're going to miss your purpose. Yet, who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this. Now watch this.

Verse 15. Esther told him to reply to Mordecai, Go gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan and fast for me. Neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day.

My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.

That's commitment. That's abandonment. That's surrender.

That's devotion to the Lord. If I perish, I perish. I'm going to do what God tells me, even if it kills me.

I'm going to reach out, even if I'm rejected. If I'm rejected, I'm rejected. I'm going to love, even if I'm hated.

If I'm hated, I'm hated. I'm going to forgive, even if I get hurt. I'm going to read the Bible, even when I don't want to.

I'm going to pray, even when I'm tired. I'm going to preach, in season and out of season. When it's popular, when it's not popular.

I'm going to love God, and I'm going to serve Him, even if it kills me. And brothers and sisters, can I say, that is a very, very likely possibility. Persecution is coming.

I remember, I don't remember everything I preached to you last time I was here, but I remember vividly the last message I preached to you here, before I went home. The church that stands in the coming storm. And the Lord gave me a message to warn you, that there is a storm coming.

There is a storm coming, to this nation. And it's not just going to be one, it's going to be many. Persecution is coming.

Who will awaken to their God given purpose, and take on this devotion of Esther, and say, if I perish, I perish. I'm sold out. I'm enlisted in God's army.

I'm sold out for Christ. I have nothing else to live for. All my chips are in.

If I perish, I perish. Why? Because when I survey the wondrous cross, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, and my all. Isn't Jesus worthy of all? Isn't He worthy of all? All of your heart, all of your devotion, all of your commitment.

I'm going to love, even if I'm hated. I'm going to reach out, even if I'm rejected. I'm committed to the glory of God, the purpose of God, and the souls of men.

Esther woke up to her purpose, and because of it, a whole nation was saved. From India to Ethiopia, she made her way into the presence of the King. Can you imagine? Is He going to extend that golden scepter? Am I going to lose my head? And she's not thinking of herself.

She's thinking of all those children. You know what breaks my heart, brothers and sisters, and I know it's not just where I am, it's everywhere, but the town where we live, methamphetamine addiction is an epidemic. And I see little children running up and down the streets that are coming out of meth houses.

These are children. These are like these little children that are going back to houses of sin and darkness where the devil dwells. And they're up and down every street.

How can we as Christians look in the mirror and think, well, this is nice, this is a comfortable Christianity, and we think it's all about us? There's children. There are souls that are perishing. Could it be that you and I have been brought into the kingdom for such a time as this so that they may be saved? Now, we can't save them.

Only Christ can save them. But He has no plan B. He has only one plan, and that plan is for you and I to go. Go, He says, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. He that does not believe shall be damned. Go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them all that I have commanded you, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you.

That's His plan. That's His commission. Go.

Tell someone. Like we said the other night, don't be silent when you ought to be speaking. Awake to your purpose.

You've been brought into the kingdom for such a time as this. Esther awoke to her purpose. Because of it, every Jew was saved.

God turned the tables on the enemy, and Haman is hanged in the very place where He planned to hang Mordecai. Mordecai is placed second to the king in command, and Esther becomes queen. Glory be to God.

Awaken to your purpose, church. Awake. Ephesians 3, verse 20.

Some of my favorite verses. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Did you see that? He is the one who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think.

You know what will happen when you awaken to your God-given purpose? God will take you beyond yourself. God will take you where you could never go in and of yourself. God will make you what you could never become on your own.

God will bust out the boundaries that you have erected and man has erected around you and said, well, he can't do that. She can't do that. Oh, you watch somebody who surrendered fully to God.

He'll break down every wall. He'll do exceedingly abundantly above all you can ask or imagine. He's looking for that willing vessel that will wake up to their purpose, that it's not about them.

It's about His glory and it's about souls. Now it usually starts small. Obey God in what you've already been told.

Obey God in what you know. Obey God in the little things. Be faithful with little.

Be wholehearted with little. But do not, I say again, do not allow yourself to be idle. Did you know the devil will always find something for idle hands to do? Somebody said the idle mind is a devil's workshop.

That's so true. There is no time for idleness. Idleness assumes lack of purpose.

If I have no purpose, I will be idle. Idle minds are fertile ground for him to grow his poisonous weeds. Awake to your purpose and get started.

Commit yourself fully to the end. That's what Esther did. If I perish, I perish, but I'm all in.

One final scripture, Ephesians chapter 5, verse 14. Come on, Bible man. See, that's why you need to bring your Bibles to church.

Ephesians chapter 5, verse 14. Therefore He says, Awake, you who sleep. Arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.

He's saying, wake up. See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Listen, we don't have time to waste.

Jesus is coming again. He's coming soon. This whole nation sits on the brink of utter, total destruction and ruin.

We don't have time to waste. And can I say this to you, brothers and sisters? This is our only chance. We only get one chance at this.

This is our only opportunity. Very, very soon, you and I will be standing face to face with God. If you're a Christian, we will enter into the presence of God.

We will be in heaven. There's not a single soul to lead to Christ in heaven. There's not a single sinner to pray for in heaven.

There's no one to lead to Christ there. There's no children to reach out to in heaven. There's no poor to take care of.

There's no hungry to feed. Now is your time. Now is your chance.

Now is your opportunity to awaken to your purpose and to get started serving God. Just start serving Him in practical ways. Lord, make me a slave for a day.

I'm Your bond slave. Show me someone today who is in need. Someone today who is in need of You.

And God will use you, brothers and sisters. You make yourself available. You call out to Him.

Don't allow yourself to become self-centered, inwardly focused. Redeem the time because the days are evil. Therefore, He says, do not be unwise, verse 17, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

How do you know what the will of the Lord is? I've got to wake up to the Word. I've got to wake up to prayer. And I'll guarantee you, you will know what the will of God is for you and you will get busy.

Get busy doing, serving Him. Let's awaken to our God-given purpose, church, and we will arrive at our God-given destiny. Our purpose is to glorify Jesus and to join Him in rescuing the perishing.

I love what the man who sat down next to D.L. Moody when D.L. Moody was just a young man, he was a shoe salesman, poor vocabulary, barely literate. He's sitting on a park bench and a godly man comes up next to him and says, Dwight, the world has yet to see what God can do through one man who has fully surrendered to Him. And D.L. Moody looked up and said, By the grace of God, I will be that man.

All my chips are in. I'm fully committed to the end. If I perish, I perish.

But at least I'll die bringing glory to my Savior. Amen? Let's stand, please. We're going to enter into a time of worship for a few songs.

Johnny, and I just want to ask you, brothers and sisters, on our last night together, if there's someone here who has heard the Spirit of God speaking to your heart, and you want to make a commitment tonight, you want to awaken to your purpose and make a commitment tonight to the Lord and say, Lord, I'm fully in. I'm fully committed to the end. And you haven't committed yourself to the Lord yet, and tonight you want to do that, I want to invite you to come to the front and call upon the Lord.

He will hear you, and He will answer you. As we said this morning, God has no shortage of fire, but He's got a tremendous shortage of living sacrifices upon which His fire can fall. Can He find someone tonight that will awaken and say, God, I am getting back to Your Word.

This book, not any other book. Set the other books aside for a while. Go back to this book first and soak yourself in this book, the Word of God.

Awaken to what God says to you. Lord, I'm going to commit myself to prayer. No more meeting more important than the prayer meeting.

I'm devoted, I'm committed. I'm going to give myself to prayer in my personal prayer closet with You. And Lord, I'm awakening to the fact that love does not seek its own.

It doesn't seek its own. Who are you reaching out to? Who are you being broken bread and poured out wine for? Who are you being broken and spilled out? I'm not just wanting to put a guilt trip on you, brothers and sisters. I'm just asking you an honest question.

There ought to be at least one person that you're praying for. There ought to be one person that you're praying for and seeking to reach out to with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Souls are eternal.

Will you awaken to your purpose? And will you commit fully to the end? Father, I pray in the name of Jesus that You would seal these words deep into our hearts and that these precious people and that this church would awaken to Your purpose for them, Lord God. Awaken, awake, awake, awake to Your purpose, O God, and that they would commit fully to the end for Your glory and for the souls of perishing people right now, perishing sinners. May we be used by You to rescue the perishing.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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