

# Awake - Be Alert

by Erlo Stegen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being awake and alert to the things of God, and to put off the old, sinful ways and put on the new, righteous ways.*

**Duration:** 56:16

**Scripture:** Romans 13:11

**Topics:** "Sober Minded"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a vision of people falling into a bottomless pit, representing the eternal damnation of hell. Two guards try to save some, but countless others are lost. Meanwhile, there are people nearby who are completely indifferent to the suffering and continue to enjoy their own lives. The speaker emphasizes the need to wake up from spiritual sleep, recognize the evil in the world, and turn to God. The sermon concludes with a reading from Romans 13, urging listeners to cast off darkness, put on the armor of light, and live in a way that glorifies God.

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## Transcript

Lord, we thank you for all we have heard and seen. Please, Lord, be with us now and take the service into your hands, work through your Holy Spirit. And may your holy name be glorified.

Amen. We'll read from Romans chapter 13. From verse eleven to fourteen.

And do this knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, therefore let us cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light.

Let us walk properly as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. And put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. The first point in this text that we have read.

And do this knowing the time. Knowing the time. Now it says here that we, as we know the time, do we really recognize the time? What does this mean? What does this time mean that it's referring to? Just the time as it is today, tomorrow and day after tomorrow, does it refer to just this type of time? No.

In Greek it's the word *kairos* and that's the word used for time. It means this is the hour, now is the time, not after one but right now. God is here referring to you that you must put on the armor of light.

You must do something right now. No compromise, not negotiable. It's something you have to do immediately right now.

Some people when they are challenged by the Lord to give their lives to the Lord, to commit their lives to the Lord, that they be saved, they say well I'll give it some thought, I'll think about it. There's a demon which tells you it's not the time yet. But the word here says now is the hour, this is kairos, this is the time.

And kairos is not just about the time, the moment which is right now, but it also refers to the fact that it's God giving you this command to act immediately. It comes from Him. In fact you have no choice.

God is commanding you to do it now. And if you don't do it, you're guilty before God, you're sinning. And it's this hour, that and your response that you give now which will decide whether you end up in heaven or in hell.

If you obey, you will be saved. If you disobey, you will be condemned. What then is God commanding us to do in this moment, this hour? He says awake out of your sleep.

We've been challenged already. Even the child that spoke here said that Christians are fast asleep. Well the truth is that things are like they are in the world today because we are asleep.

That your children all run away from home, they forsake you, they forsake the gospel, they go into the world, go their own ways, it's because you parents are fast asleep. Evil abounds. You see what it's like.

Why? Because the children of God are asleep. You know what it means to be asleep. Many thieves they break into houses while people are asleep.

They are there, but they are asleep. So they steal cell phones, they steal things. When you wake up things are not there anymore.

Why? Because you were fast asleep. When you wake up things are not there anymore. Why? Because you were fast asleep.

And often we're fast asleep because there are warning signs. You can see warning signs in your child or in your parents or whoever else, your wife or your husband. You notice there's something not going as it should, but because you're asleep you're swept away by the tide.

You'll be swept away by the river, you'll wake up in the sea when the sharks eat you. And you think, oh it's not so bad because my child has left me, is no longer with me, left our church, but at least they're still going to some other church. They're not there serving the Lord, they're actually living in sin.

They are living in sin. It's sin that separates us from one another. Don't be fast asleep.

Don't let your child bluff you and then you comfort yourself and say, oh well at least they still go to church. You go to the bottom of it, you'll find them sleeping around. And those parents will even stick up for their children in spite of the fact that they're actually living in sin and secret.

But they will fight for them, justify them, that because they fast asleep, they'll be on their side. Now when you're asleep, you neither recognize the evil that's going on, nor do you recognize the good that is happening. You don't even recognize the significance that Jesus left heaven, came down to this earth, became flesh.

Jesus came into this world to save sinners because he loves you so much. He gave himself, his whole life for you, the last drop of blood he gave for you, but you feel nothing. All you're saying is, oh I'll think about it, I'll see you one day.

Jesus put on the flesh, God became man, Jesus became our brother. You hear those words, Jesus became our brother, but it doesn't touch you, you feel nothing. And by that God, the creator of heaven and earth, he became our father.

Just imagine God becoming your father. But it doesn't touch you that he became your brother, he became your savior. God came so close to us.

He made us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, that heaven becomes ours, but it leaves you cold, you don't feel anything. Jesus came, the gospel came, but all you say is, that's all you feel for him, you treat him like a dog. Now you've been asleep long enough, maybe you're 23, 18 or 16 or 60, whatever you are, you've been asleep for long enough.

Now God says, now is the time to wake up out of your sleep. You need to wake up to the things that are evil, but you also need to wake up to the things that are good and heavenly, things of God. And wake up, stop going, continuing in your blindness and drop the sin of indifference, where you just don't care, you are negligent, it's because of the sin of indifference that many will end up in hell.

Now is the time to awaken, it's high time to wake up out of our sleep, for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Whether you've believed for a year or 15 or 50 years, you've never been so close to your salvation as now. So that time will come soon where you will awake to that full salvation, but if you don't believe, to eternal damnation.

You need to wake up out of your sleep, get out of this darkness, where you grope around in the darkness, you don't know where you're going, you don't know where you're treading, you stand on a snake, you don't even notice it. If you walk around at night, you stumble, you fall over a stone, you find yourself lying on the ground. Why? Because it's dark, you don't see, you're fast asleep, that's why you don't see it, you're in darkness.

Darkness is where the devil reigns, if you haven't come out of darkness into the light which Jesus brings, you are in the realm of the devil where he is king and where he reigns with his demons. You should read the Bible, if you read the Bible, God comes close to you and he speaks to you. And if you cannot read yourself, listen when God's word is read and preached, because faith comes by hearing.

I said I want to be brief and I'm just being very concise in what I'm saying. But if we'd have time we could speak about the things which the devil does for you and the things God does for you. If you're in darkness, the devil reigns your life, you're in sin, you are in death, you're in the world.

But if you come into the light, then the darkness is dispelled, you then see things. In India there was a lady missionary, her name was Amy Carmichael. She was known as a hero of the faith there in India.

One night she couldn't sleep, she had a huge burden for the people in that area, the Indian people, praying and asking God to send his light into the darkness. She was agonizing, pleading for these souls that were lost. And then she saw a vision.

She found herself standing at the edge of a huge precipice. The ground just fell away into nothingness, almost like a bottomless pit, you didn't see the end of it. And then she saw people coming from all different directions heading towards this pit.

And then she saw a young mother walking with her two children. With a child in her arms and another one holding on to her skirt, walking towards this precipice. But she didn't realize where she was heading for because she was blind.

Can you imagine such a sight? This young mother, these two young children, depending on her, and here they were heading for this precipice. And there were countless others also heading towards this precipice. And then it was noticed that in fact everyone heading towards this precipice was blind.

They were all blind, they didn't see where they were going. And she says she saw these people heading towards this precipice, falling over the edge, and she says those screams you cannot describe the agony as they headed into that bottomless pit. As they fell into this darkness with no hope and they just disappeared forever.

Then she noticed that on the one side of the precipice there was a god, and on the other side there was another god. But in between these two men there was just nobody. There was a huge gap.

These two watchmen, they managed to save a few out of this huge crowd, but countless numbers fell over the edge. They couldn't get to them. And Amy says as she watched this sight it was like it was a huge river cascading over into that bottomless pit.

While this was happening she noticed some people sitting under a tree not too far away, totally oblivious of what's going on, just enjoying themselves, they're having their little picnic. Busy with their own things. They were totally indifferent.

They didn't care about all these people falling into this hopeless situation, into that pit. Here were these people. She was shaken by it.

Does it do anything to you? Here she saw this second most populous nation in the world after the Chinese just falling into a lost eternity. As I've said, sin separates children from their parents. I remember when our brother got married, my brother got up and he said there's one thing that's going to separate us.

And that is sin. And that we become indifferent, that we don't care, that things just don't matter to us anymore. It's because we've become blunt because of sin, not anything else.

And so this text says, let us cast off all the works of darkness. You need to cast off the works of darkness, not just put them here one side that you can go and get them again at a later stage. No, cast them off, get rid of them.

I remember the first Tsangoma that got converted when I started preaching the gospel. Her name was Posegile Mamshatuzana. She was a widow and she had no children, so she was all alone in the world.

But she was very bright. Now there was someone who had laid a complaint against her, accusing her of having stolen her goat when she said she hadn't done it. So it was unjustly, an unjust accusation.

But this person insisted she must, in Zulu one says, wash him. In other words, that this false accusation can be washed off. He should pay for defamation.

In other words, pay for defamation. Now, Nkosi was there with the whole, all the people were gathered there. And then eventually Nkosi said, well, what is going to be said? And then she got up.

And then she got up and she said, well, this man insists that I must wash him, so to say. In Zulu they literally say, you've got to wash me. And she says, well, now Nkosi, what must I do? He wants me to wash him.

Hasn't he got his own wife that should do that? And then she had a container with water in it, so she worked her way towards this man with this container. And then she took the water and she splashed it all over him. They said, but what are you doing? She says, well, he wanted me to wash him.

Then she got converted. And it was remarkable how the Lord spoke to her. She saw a way full of blood.

And she said, but what does this blood mean? I said, that's the blood of Jesus that was shed for you. And she asked me to visit her at her place. So I had to go down into the valley, right down to the bottom.

And when I got there, she lived in a real hovel. But she had prepared a wonderful feast for me. She slaughtered a chicken for me.

But she cooked it, but it was only half cooked. So it was half raw. She got the chicken out of the pot and put it onto this wooden thing.

So she put it onto her wooden thing for me to eat of this meat. But on the side of this plate that she offered were some chicken droppings. Now normally when you have a braai, you can cut up your meat nicely on this piece of wood.

And then you put your salt or your chili on the one corner where you can dip your meat into. And it tastes very nice. But this was a different combination.

I really prayed and asked God to give me the grace that I could actually eat and swallow this food. And He did help me, because I didn't want to disappoint her. Because she had really done the very best for me.

And then I went back home to where my parents lived. And I said, can't you help me? Because I've come across this Sangoma who's gotten converted. She lives in a miserable situation there.

I asked my father whether we couldn't just build a little place for her that she could come and live on the farm with us. My father agreed. We then fetched her.

And she lived on the farm. And then I tried to teach her. I said, look, it's good that we are hygienic and wash ourselves.

And then she said, well, the problem is I don't like water. And then she said, I don't like water. And she had an old dress which she wore.

It was really very tattered already. She wasn't poor either. She once showed me the money she had.

It was a pile of notes like this. And it wasn't just rands. They were pounds in those days.

And she said, you could see they were old notes. And she had kept them for a long time already. And she said, look, I'm treating you like my son because I don't have my own.

This is what I've got. And if I die, then you can get this. But I didn't actually ever get that inheritance.

I think maybe she was just too old already. She actually probably forgot and she gave it to someone else. It's a problem when someone makes a promise and forgets his promise.

In fact, before God, that is a sin to make a promise and not to keep it. And then we went to the service with her. And the white couple came along.

And they noticed the dress, how tattered it was that she was wearing when she came to the service. And they felt sorry for her and gave me some money, quite a bit. And said, look, use this money.

Go and buy her a good, nice dress. We'll come back again later and then we'd like to see her wearing this new dress. So we bought her a dress.

We bought the dress. So we bought the dress and I went to her. I said, look, I've heard that this couple is going to be at the service on Sunday again.

Now you have a good bath and put on this new dress that they can see this nice new dress that they bought for you. And so we sat there in the service. I was sitting with these visitors.

And in came this old lady. And what had happened, she came there hobbling along with her walking stick. And what had she done? She had taken this new dress that we had bought and put it on over her old tattered dress.

And I said, look, I've heard that this couple is going to be at the service on Sunday again. Now you have a good bath and put on this new dress that they can see this nice new dress that they bought for you. And what had happened, she came there hobbling along with her walking stick.

And what had happened? She had taken this new dress that we had bought and put it on over her old tattered dress. And what had happened? She had taken this new dress that we had bought and put it on over her old tattered dress. And what had happened? She had taken this new dress that we had bought and put it on over her old tattered dress.

Her old dress was sticking out under the new one. I was so embarrassed. Afterwards, I said to the visitors, Please excuse her, she is old already.

Just forgive her. But how many Christians don't do exactly that. They don't put off the old they just put the new over the old aren't you a Christian? Maybe you're still smoking.

You're still drinking you get irritable you get angry yet You call yourself a Christian. You see you've never put off the old Good morning. You must see you obey some woman like a Why is it hard to call time to call? Why is on three? What is on full? He's always a journey, but I have no savings you look Go and jingle boy.

You're calling a piece of one. I Heard of a sangoma that got converted but when she went to People to get advice. She said what must I do about all these old skins that I'm wearing because I'm a sangoma They said no that doesn't matter.

You just keep that just take get yourself a dress and wear it over your old skins Literally, she hadn't got converted she just wanted to be a so-called Christian being a church person and The the minister and the

deacon said just put the new garment of a Christian over those skins of a witch I Look soon. Okay. I got food.

Look good. Look good. Look cool.

Moola. Yeah Okay. Allah God doesn't allow that that you put on the old the new over the old you must put aside cost of the old and then Put on the new I Don't know why you don't want to put off that old Maybe you just enjoy that sin and you don't want to drop it.

You don't want to drop that boyfriend or girlfriend You just you want to sing in the choir. You want to be in the church? You do all the things but you haven't put off the old Way now Ufunumutu bugege gasekuba Kubera to equal release a willing willing Can't in a pantsie Kukoni zone or if we see you put on a good show You want to look like a good Christian that people think a lot of you but underneath you've still got the old men Alive, no, my boss. All right.

They don't move on the same I'm born caught in Kulu Kulu. You're born. I look who's it She's been young and even if the minister even if no one else notices it God sees what's in your heart No balloons in bar or now Ulika's a Wink-lousy pamphlet on cool because this body that you've got is made out of glass in God's sight I'm gonna call you Mike Bonner We are born a right through as a bone who said she's waiting when God looks at you He looks right through you.

He sees what's in your heart You are made of glass in God's eyes when he looks at you the first thing he sees your heart and your thoughts and All your little soak so-called little sins in your heart Kulu Kulu my bag Bonita's your yaku noxious when I am a bang now This was into a city. This is the zone isn't an adjacent is when y'all can go to Bonnagon I've seen the booty. We've been a man go far.

He's a coach. He's a little coach. He's about to go to Kulu Kulia Bonner.

I'll go cook fitly. We will work you again glass Google it doesn't help being a hypocrite putting on a show and you think well, no one knows it God sees it He sees right through you This is Julia Coachella Guyana, no move. I'll am young Indonga's are so pumped vacuum.

Kulu Kulu's a kiwi gang class Even your house you may lock the doors you may close it off Close it up. But even those walls of your house are made of glass before God Avang a punch of a bone got to Kulu Kulia born the people outside don't see what's inside, but God sees it In class Everything is open and evident clear before God you can lock something up in a box Lock it that no one can get at it, but God sees what's inside This cuts a reformation in Holland Abaniki but Sosa McKittin is but Sosa Namakati as in jenny's are Bapsusa, but it's a food. No good.

I've been a pundit by born in Peel. Is he peeling a party? As food we face None. I'm trying to do a whole lot of it is in his into a pocket in this During the time of the Reformation in Holland many of the Dutch people Remove the curtains from their houses from their windows.

They said we've got nothing to hide Anyone can look inside Even to this day if you go to all of you see it I had to open a stalatini. No, my sailor Tafu Lenny. No, my a salary knee Aguk is a fisheye but as born In 78 yeah, I see on a yo-yo Got a your car.

So even now you drive through the streets You can look into the houses while they're busy eating they sitting at table while they took it. They said we've got nothing to hide Come on. I've done goulash Who's

Toma easy Christ now cast off the old and put the on the armor of Christ.

Oh my god Sega Chris to easily come cool and cool Oh, yes, you can change what is on Billy the armor of Christ, which is God's Word Which is a like a two-edged sword Yeah, sure some some get pity now, I'm just rushing to get to the end 70 C's with a go see touching amber all when a boobie All right, no satani all right. No, so no all in a nyama. All right There's way use God's Word Use that as a sword to fight with the world with sin with evil We buy penalty Oh gosh, oh god.

Oh god. Oh the Bible says fight the good fight of faith I go to challenge you Is Yes Good one Don't and you don't just that doesn't mean just sitting back folding your hands very piously No, you must put on the armor. No more food.

I was afraid to six Who's also a gay car? He took a lot everything. They shoo me So money's coming. Everything is coming You call what is So cold.

I get cool. Don't I MP me and a pity song in Ephesians 6 from verse 10 You read about the armor of God and one of the pieces of armor is the shield of faith You cannot go into a battle without without a shield Um, oh, so me Satan get a toilet a doula. Oh, so God by the gala food If you put on the armor of God, the devil won't get at you easily.

In fact, he will even flee from you Oh good. Call. Oh, good.

I'm a lot of muggins. We let go Oh Uli, Lani, Luquen They look uncool uncool. I'm sure and faith comes by hearing the Word of God and putting it into action They say good to our knee harm bingo funnel a yo, and then it says Let us walk properly As a child as a child of the light I mean Not in revelry and drunkenness Not in greed and their own lewdness and lust I Don't know how Let's all see that sitting gagging.

We'll talk all right. Oh, my way. Look to a call of what a cornerless is it a parade? Columbum blue our Bonnie who boosts all sata not in strife and envy.

These are all things you'd Dare not find in a life of a Christian if you as a Christian have anything of this in your life You just am a half-hearted Christian you carnal Yen, but tiny a pointy look cleaner Inclosing or Jesu Christ the final point put on the Lord Jesus Christ Yeah, cool. Holy God. Yeah, I'm a son.

Did you remember last Sunday service? So cool. Um, I'm always father. No, baby.

He's old a We spoke of the woman who was closed with a son crystal on but I oh We find that I just a bomb but he laga Ogut itina Simba to chase Which is unknown. Okay. Okay.

Yeah. Okay. Okay.

No, please. Okay. No way.

Laga Umberto energies Kumula I'm seven thing Yo, boom, yama, I got satan Umba to jesu Say that's a picture of a Christian and of the church. We should put on Christ We should clothe ourselves with him and that Sun should shine brightly We should put off the old and put on Christ Um, but a good Jason. Okay.

No way sweet put on Christ who is the light of the world? Can you say room server? Bring light to the world Through your life Let's bow our heads I cry out to you Lord and pray that your word will not be in vain to us Local shumai a lot of call is it isn't a bond to but who may love a Kool-Aid way Guess-we-luck may

this preaching of your word bring faith to people that they can go away here being Changed through your word. Oh my man Sega Umamaya, Ottawa me do not want to move to like on swing I'm a cool look dollar a Fabulous. Ah, I'm back to Jesus Christ Lord My wish would be that there would not be one who wouldn't do it But that each one will put off the old and put on Christ Mbulele Ilona logo to Cairo CET knee.

We are see. Yeah Look, what's the question? Look? Oh my singer Quincy much Seneca lagoon Revealed to us what Kairos means and that as you command us that we should do it now If we don't we are guilty before you Linger a shortly longer sequence a phone Who was last way as for Queen that will do it before the Sun sets lest. We be cast into hell Sevens are gay.

He's we're not clean. I'll be the lazy God Kool-Aid telly telly need God work that your word may not be in vain But that it will grow and bear forth much fruit Yeah, Kayla would to move so I can cause a chance to be naughty song We pray Lord Jesus that your grace will be with us all Amen. Amen

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