

## Understanding the times

### Key Scriptures

Romans 13:11-14<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

<sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Ephesians 5:15-16 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

Matthew 18:7-9 "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! <sup>8</sup> And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

**Key Point:** Wake up! The time is short. Make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.

## TALK IT OVER

**Start talking:** Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- On what occasions do you like to dress up? When is it a pain to dress up? When do you like to dress down?

**Start thinking:** Questions to get your group thinking.

- In what ways do Christians have a unique perspective on the times we live in compared to non-believers? How does this understanding affect our priorities and actions? How is this related to what Paul wrote in 13:8-10,?
- What does it mean to put off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light? How do you do this practically? (see 1 Thess 5:8)
- What are some examples of behaviors of walking in the day (in the light) versus behaviors associated with revelry, drunkenness, lewdness, lust strife, and envy?
- What does it mean to "make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts?" Can you share examples of how this principle applies to different areas of life? How is Paul's statement in Romans 13:14 similar to Jesus' statement in Matthew 18:7-9?

**Start sharing:** Questions to create openness.

- Have there been moments in your life when you felt the need for a spiritual wake-up call? What were the circumstances, and how did it lead to a change in your mindset or behavior?
- How can remembering "who we are wearing" (putting on the Lord Jesus Christ) impact the way we live out our faith and interact with others, and love our neighbors?
- If you truly believed that Jesus was right before you in every moment, how would it impact your behavior, choices, and priorities? What practical steps can we take to adopt this mindset?

**Start doing.** Commit to a step and live it out this week!

- This week make it a goal to do these four things: Repent of every known sin & make every wrong right; Put away every doubtful habit; Respond to the Holy Spirit promptly; Confess your faith in Christ publicly

**Prayer Requests.** It may be helpful to pray the scriptures back to God.

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