

“Now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed”

In Romans 13:11 Paul says:

“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.”

Salvation is nearer than when we first believed. How near is it then? It is as near the end of our lives. For after we die there is nothing more that we can do. With every year passing then, as long as we stay faithful, salvation comes closer and closer. And because this day is fast approaching, it is urgent, says Paul, to awake out of sleep! What does the apostle mean with this? Let’s read on:

Romans 13:12-14

“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. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. ”

Because the day is at hand, because our salvation is nearer, we should throw away all works of darkness and instead put on the armor of light. “Not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy” says the apostle. To cast off the works of darkness, means to put them away, to abandon them, to REPENT for them. But is this something optional for our salvation? Is it something nice to have? I mean, even if we continue embracing the works of darkness, walking in them, instead of casting them off, wouldn’t still salvation be there for us? In this age of cheap “Christianity”, the usual answer you will get will be: “of course it will be there for you. It

does not matter whether you walk in darkness or not. Grace covers everything”. But my dear brother and sister it does matter. In Galatians 5, there is a similar passage like the passage of Romans 13. In fact exactly as in Romans 13, so also in Galatians 5, Paul mentions first love and how the whole law is fulfilled in that commandment of loving one another:

Galatians 5: 13-14

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

This compares to the 3 verses presenting Romans 13:11

Romans 13:8-10

“Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Love is the epitome of everything. If we truly love we will not murder or commit adultery or do anything else harmful. That’s why all the commandments, the whole law, are all summed up in the “you shall love your neighbor as yourself”. You do not therefore love or walk in love if you walk in the works of darkness. For love has no connection, it is completely incompatible, with works of darkness.

Then similarly to Romans 13, comes from Paul the calling to walk by the new nature, the nature of serving in love one another, and not do the works of the flesh:

Galatians 5:16-21

But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ”

Stop practicing the works of the darkness, is not something optional. It is not something nice to have. As Galatians warns nobody who does such things will inherit the Kingdom of God. To say it differently: those who practice those things will be out of the Kingdom of God, out of the New Jerusalem. As John saw in Revelation:

Revelation 22:14-15

“Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”

And as the Lord Himself said, while on earth:

Matthew 7:21-23

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

Those who practice lawlessness, those who do the works of the flesh, those who do not cast them off, repenting for them, will not find themselves in the Kingdom of God. In the new Jerusalem will enter only those who do His commandments, only those who do the will of His Father in heaven. My dear brothers and sisters do not be deceived by the message of cheap, false, “Christianity”. Its teachers are like the false prophets of the Old Testament. These prophets were prophesying day and night to those that had abandoned the Lord that nothing bad would happen to them and they would have peace:

Jeremiah 14:13-14

“Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’ And the LORD said to me, “The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart.”

Jeremiah 6:13-14

“Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely. They

have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace."

Ezekiel 13:10

"Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace"

While the people of Israel had abandoned the Lord, the false prophets were promising them "peace and prosperity". I do not really recall a place in the Old Testament where a false prophet prophesied anything else than a "peace and prosperity" message! Only the true prophets of God were reproofing the people, giving them the true consequences of their actions and asking them to repent. For the false prophets there was no need for repentance. It is the same today. The false teachers of the false "Christianity" promise salvation without repentance. To whoever walks after the desires of their own hearts they say "walk in peace brother", instead of saying, like Paul did: "cast the works of darkness off, repent, for the time is approaching".

The time is approaching my dear brothers and sisters. Salvation is nearer than when we first believed. If we do works of darkness, it is URGENT to stop doing them and repent of them. Do not get deceived by the false teachers of false "Christianity" that try to persuade you that it is OK to stay with them!! It is not. Leave any work of darkness behind and look forward. Salvation is not further than the end of your life, which you don't know when it is. Even if you are young, believe me: the years will go by very fast! Be ready then, following the Lord. Replace greed with abundant giving from your surplus to the poor. Replace envy and strife with love and mercy. Replace sexual immorality with pureness. So that the time – which is now close and gets closer by the day – will

find you ready. So that you hear “Well done, good and faithful servant; Enter into the joy of your lord.” (Matthew 25:23).

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