

Have you ever been woken up after only two hours of sleep?

**ILL:** My 9-11 story. We were at war, people were dying, and suddenly sleep wasn't so important. I was awake and ready to fight, ready to take action. We all collectively knew we MUST do something!

### Wake Up, It's Time to Take Action

**Matthew 9:35-38** Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Do you know anyone who is harassed, helpless, like sheep without a shepherd?

**37** Then he said to his disciples, "**The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.**

**38** Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

I think now, more than ever, we know Jesus' words are true!

### Wake Up to Our Greatest Opportunity to Harvest

*"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity"— Albert Einstein*

As we are coming out of the pandemic, a very difficult time, we must understand that this is one of our greatest opportunities to reach people for Jesus in our lifetime.

Prior to the Pandemic, I heard Rick Warren say that "70% of the people we are trying to reach for Jesus will not respond to the gospel because they are not in pain therefore they don't want to hear about Jesus. But the 30 percent in pain want to hear about Jesus."

The pandemic has put everybody in some sort or some degree of pain. We have experienced a collective trauma and we are all experiencing the effects of that trauma.

Every 60 years or so there is a Cultural Disruption (Cultural Convulsion). It takes about 4-5 years to settle out. This is our greatest opportunity for revival since 1968.

What we are experiencing today is very much what our country experienced in 1968.

There was a pandemic called The Hong Kong Flu, a severe racial divide, political unrest, street riots, and protest. We had the assassination of Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King, and the Vietnam War going on.

There was an underlying attack on the nuclear family and a subculture emerged during that time, known as the Flower Children or Hippies all seeking relief from their collective trauma with drug experimentation, Free Love, and a "Do your own thing" philosophy.

Of course, none of this brought the peace and soul restoration that people were looking for, so out of that pain the Jesus Revolution began. The Jesus Movement was one of the greatest revivals so far in our lifetime with 30 million people born again.

This is our perfect opportunity! Now is the time, right now, to "BE THE LIGHT." As the Father has sent me, Jesus said, so send I you! "**The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Matthew 9:37**

### So, What's the Problem?

The problem is that we are sleeping through the harvest! **Proverbs 10:5 He who gathers crops in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son**

It would be disgraceful if a farmer had a huge crop, but he was unable to harvest without help and he had a son or two who slept through the harvest rather than helping their father!

The church is often times sleeping right through the harvest and it is disgraceful!

*"Rock a bye believer in the treetop,  
Ignore the alarm and stay in bed,*

*Snoozing will cause your growth to stop.  
You'll never fulfill your purpose you sleepy head."*

## Sound The 5:14 Alarm!

**Ephesians 5:14** “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

Next Step: I will take the 5:14 Challenge. I will set my clock for 5:14 a.m. and/or 5:14 p.m. , wake up and pray, “Lord Jesus I love you. Wake me up to live with my spiritual eyes wide open, and Christ Jesus shine on me.”

### We Choose To Be Inward And Outward Focused

We don't just WANT to reach people for Jesus... we MUST reach people for Jesus.

Just like that day on September 11<sup>th</sup> when I was awakened from my sleep, I couldn't go back to sleep because people were dying. I had to do something about it! This was not time to sleep.

I think if we get a reality of hell and realize that people are going there that don't need to be, people that Jesus died for; I think it will be hard for us to sleep, too!

Realizing people are dying should cause us to hear the 5:14 alarm and wake up!

### Five Reality Wake Up Calls for Believers

#### 1. Wake Up Because Everyone Is Not Going to Heaven

**Matthew 7:13-14** “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

You are thinking, “Ax murderers, yes they're not going, but surely most people are going to heaven.”

**III:** Sea Island Guard Gate – As you drove by if the guard looked at you at all he would just wave you on through. We want a gate guard God like that, don't we? Our culture does.

- We hear, “If you're sincere, whatever you're driving, it doesn't matter who you're following; just drive up to God and He'll just nod and wink and wave you on through.”
- We think, “If I'm a good guy or a good girl; if I keep my nose clean and throw some money, maybe, in the offering plate or to a charity now and then, God's just going to wave me into heaven. Because I'm better than most people. I'm just a good guy, or good girl.”

Both heaven and hell are gated communities. ...But everyone is not going to heaven.

#### 2. Wake Up Because More People Will Go to Hell Than Heaven

**Matthew 7:13** ...For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

**ILL:** Back in the '80s AC/DC wrote the song “Highway to Hell”. They were exactly right, because there is a highway to hell, and it leads to destruction. It's easy to get on this highway because the road is broad and very easy to follow. Feeling good about life, self-reliance leads to self-deception, and self-deception will lead to self-destruction.

**It's Just a Big Party. Right?** “You know, I don't care if I'm going to hell because I'll party with my friends in hell, and we'll have a great time in hell.” That's not what Jesus said it would be like at all!

**Matthew 25:30** And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Some argue, “How can a loving God send people to hell?” God doesn't. We volunteer. Jesus has tried to get you into a relationship with him and if we've kept him at a distance, in the end you'll have a greater measure of this distance in eternity.

**Small Gate, Narrow Road. Matthew 7:14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.** Jesus said:

**John 10:9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. / John 14:6 "...I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.**

There is no option B or C? Jesus said He was the only way! That should wake you up! The 5:14 alarm! Wake us up to share our faith; to leverage everything we can to tell others the Good News of Jesus!

We don't serve a guard gate God who just goes, "Come on in, man. No problem, just come on in!"

**Romans 3:23 ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

Sin is serious! It's so serious that it cost God His very own son, Jesus Christ.

### **3. Many Sleepers Who Think They Are Christians... Aren't.**

**Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?'"** ("Lord, I was Baptist. I was Catholic. I was confirmed. I was an altar boy. I lived a good life. I tried to help the needy...")

**23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'**

**The Fruit:** "Most people," Jesus is saying, "who think they're a believer aren't really a believer. They're not really followers of Christ, because followers produce fruit. Jesus goes on to say that a bad tree doesn't produce good fruit. A good tree produces good fruit. **Matthew 7:16 By their fruit you will recognize them...**

*"Scott. Are you trying to get me to doubt my salvation?"* No, I am challenging you to take inventory, to take stock in your life. Because we're saved by faith alone, but faith that saves is never alone. It comes with "Fruit." Fruit is a byproduct of our salvation.

- If you don't like spending time with Jesus now, why would you enjoy it in heaven?
- If you don't read and love the Word now, why would you want to spend eternity with the Word?
- If you don't talk to Jesus now, why would you want to talk with him for eternity?
- If you don't like to gather with God's people now, why do you think you would like it in heaven?
- If going to church is hell for you and you call yourself a Christian, then heaven will be hell for you.
- If you call yourself a believer and you don't have a heart for the only institution that Jesus ever built, the local church...not serving in the church, not treating you spouse and family right, not bringing the minimum 10% of Gods money to him, not living by his principles and truths, what makes you think you are saved?

**But I Believe: James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that —and shudder.** Demons believe! But there's one problem. They will not submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

**Test Yourself: 2 Corinthians 13:5-6 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you —unless, of course, you fail the test? 6 And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.**

**Next Step: I will inspect my fruit and examine myself to see if I pass the test.**

#### **4. Wake Up Now Because You Will Not Get Another Opportunity After You Die**

**Hebrews 9:27** “**And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.**” (KJV)

Everyone is going to die. And it’s an appointment we’re not going to be late for.

When we die, we will spend eternity in one of two places: either with Christ or in a Christ-less eternity.

God is going to look at your life and mine and see if we believed in Jesus as our savior and asked Jesus to forgive us. He is going to see if we received the Holy Spirit, and the gift of righteousness by faith.

He is going to see if we are covered by grace and wearing the robe of righteousness.

Then he will say welcome home, enter my kingdom.

But if He doesn’t, we can’t work some kind of deal like, *“Okay, I knew you were the way and I know you tried to get near me during that Bible study; I knew you tried to get near to me at that Believers Church service, but I kept you at a distance. I just stiff-armed you. But surely, there’s another chance.”*

What we do on this side of the grave affects where we will spend eternity.

#### **5. Wake Up to Knowing Jesus Today Because This Could Be Your Last Chance**

Today could be your last opportunity to wake up and make this decision. It could be.

**Luke 13:24-25** “**Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. 25 Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’**

**“But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.’**

How close are you from death? If I take my pulse right now, my heart’s beating like this [Scott snaps his fingers at the pace of a heartbeat]. We’re just one heartbeat away from eternity.

And you’re not ready to live until you’re ready to die.

Make the decision to be changed by Christ Jesus! Do it! Don’t delay! Now is the time.

Maybe you are thinking: “I thought I was a believer... now I’m not so sure.”

Now’s the time to make sure. Do it right now.

#### **SALVATION PRAYER**

#### **BAPTISM INVITATION**

**Matthew 10:32:** “**Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.**