

HOW TO KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE

Note to the speaker:

Alert the brothers to the constant danger of being overcome by the spiritual drowsiness that permeates mankind. Give clear direction as to what to do and what to avoid in order to keep spiritually awake. Urge them to be ever more vigilant as the end draws near

CHRISTIANS ARE EXHORTED TO KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE (5 min.)

As the most momentous event of all time, Har-Magedon, approaches, mankind in general is spiritually asleep (*w91 5/1 21; w79 3/15 28-9*)

Fast-moving space age is slumbering, not awake to meaning of world events (Mt 16:2, 3)

In contrast, Christians are exhorted to “awake from sleep” and to “stay awake” (Ro 13:11-14; 1Co 16:13; *it-2 980*)

Not to be deceiving ourselves; we reap what we sow (Ga 6:7, 8)

Face fact that we cannot afford to sleep as the world in general does (1Th 5:6)

WHY SOME DO NOT KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE (10 min.)

Humans in general are preoccupied with things of life and the world around them (Mt 24:37-39; *w89 10/1 12-14; w87 5/15 20; su 50*)

Though Jehovah provides an abundance of spiritual food, most people today fail to take seriously and apply the counsel repeatedly given (*w87 5/1 16; re 21*)

Like people in Noah’s day, they ‘take no note’

Many allow themselves to become spiritually blind and deaf though claiming to be God’s people (Isa 42:18-20)

Thus, spiritually asleep, they take no note (Isa 42:25)

Some are lulled to sleep because the world seems to carry on normally (*w87 5/15 17-19; w76 441-3*)

Economic upturns, lessening international tensions, and so forth, cause them to feel nothing has changed (2Pe 3:4)

They try to ‘make full use of the world’ (1Co 7:31)

Some allow their ears to listen to false teaching (1Jo 4:4-6; *w86 7/15 20*)

They fail to recognize and heed the voice of the Fine Shepherd (Joh 10:4, 5, 16)

HOW TO KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE (15 min.)

Recognize need to remain spiritually awake

“Be vigilant with a view to prayers” (1Pe 4:7)

“Keep on the watch and pray continually” (Mt 26:41)

“Let us stay awake and keep our senses” (1Th 5:6)

“Keep your senses, be watchful” (1Pe 5:8)

“Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall” (1Co 10:12)

Keep up with “food at the proper time” from Jehovah’s organization (Mt 24:45)

Be determined not to miss a single spiritual meal (Mt 5:3)

Both private study and meeting attendance are urgent for all

Feed on spiritual food with eagerness

Follow theocratic ways, procedures, and policies (*rs 282-4*)

Recognize the organization that Jehovah is using (*wt 131-5*)

Be respectful of and obedient to those taking the lead (Heb 13:17; *w89 9/15 20-5*)

Refrain from criticism or careless talk

Find your place in God’s arrangement and stick to it

Do not quibble about assignments and arrangements (Ro 12:4, 6-8)

Perform well whatever assignments you receive (Ec 9:10)

Trust God’s angels to make changes where necessary (Mt 13:41; Re 1:16)

Persist in prayer (Ro 12:12)

Jesus was outstanding in his constancy in prayer (Mt 14:23; Mr 1:35; Lu 23:46)

Be whole-souled in field ministry and financial contributions

Jehovah has done much for us through his organization

We can show love for him by full support with our time and finances (*w92 1/15 14-16*)

Such support was prophesied (Isa 60:5; 61:5, 6; *w85 3/1 15*)

Show love to all, and act loyally (Eph 4:1-3)

NOW IS THE CRUCIAL TIME FOR STAYING AWAKE (12 min.)

Like Jeremiah, faithful and discreet slave sounds out warning (Jer 4:19-31)

Jeremiah was severely pained at calamity he saw coming

He gave warning, but the people took no note (Jer 4:22; *sl* 156)

If they had taken note, they would have survived events of 607 B.C.E.

This generation faces similar calamity

Those who respond to proclamation of Jeremiah class have the reward of a spiritual paradise (Isa 29:17-19; *sl* 150)

Now is crucial time because Satan knows his time is short (Re 12:12)

Faced with “the increasing of lawlessness,” our love may cool off (Mt 24:12; *w*84 10/1 31)

Increased vigilance needed to combat selfishness, materialism, fleshly desires

Material prosperity and more leisure time often prove spiritually devastating

Some who survived persecution later fell prey to other traps of Satan

We dare not become overconfident (1Co 10:12)

As Har-Magedon nears, it is especially important to keep awake

There is a special warning to all of us now living at this crucial time (Re 16:15)

Happiness will result from our staying awake (*re* 231-2)

Being awake involves full, alert participation in Kingdom service

Those sleeping will suffer shame, spiritual nakedness, everlasting death (Re 21:8)

USE TIME REMAINING TO INCITE OTHERS TO SPIRITUAL WAKEFULNESS (3 min.)

This is harvesttime, which brings added responsibilities

We need to work longer hours; the harvest is urgent (Pr 10:5; *w*78 6/1 18)

Teach others to know Jehovah, to pray regularly (Col 4:2)

At congregation meetings, ‘incite others’ by being prepared to make positive contributions to the meeting (Heb 10:24, 25)

This requires diligent personal study, which is so important in remaining spiritually awake

Keep spiritually awake by paying attention to yourself (Lu 21:34-36; *w*92 5/1 19-23)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)