

Awakening: Life According to Convictions

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It's time to wake up! Get Up! Show Up! And be present in your life!

Ephesians 5:14-16

Therefore He says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine (make day dawn) upon you and give you light.

[Isa. 26:19; 60:1, 2.]

15 Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people),

16 Making the very most of the time [buying up each opportunity], because the days are evil.

In this new year, God is calling you and I to wake up out of our sleep. To rise above direct line of sight and see things the way God sees them!

What is your standard for living?

Conviction: A fixed or firm belief

Matthew 6:24 AMP

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever is trusted in).

James 4:17 AMP

So any person who knows what is right to do but does not do it, to him it is sin.

Let's Study the first chapter of James this week. It talks a lot about life according to convictions.

James Chapter 1 AMP

JAMES, A servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes scattered abroad [among the Gentiles in the dispersion]: Greetings (rejoice)!

2 Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials of any sort or fall into various temptations.

- 1 Corinthians 10:13 AMP

For no temptation (no trial regarded as enticing to sin), [no matter how it comes or where it leads] has overtaken you and laid hold on you that is not common to man [that is, no temptation or trial has come to you that is beyond human resistance and that is not adjusted and adapted and belonging to human experience, and such as man can bear]. But God is faithful [to His Word and to His compassionate nature], and He [can be trusted] not to let you be tempted and tried and assayed beyond your ability and strength of resistance and power to endure, but with the temptation He will [always] also provide the way out (the means of escape to a landing place), that you may be capable and strong and powerful to bear up under it patiently.

3 Be assured and understand that the trial and proving of your faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience.

4 But let endurance and steadfastness and patience have full play and do a thorough work, so that you may be [people] perfectly and fully developed [with no defects], lacking in nothing.

- Romans 12:12 AMP

Rejoice and exult in hope; be steadfast and patient in suffering and tribulation; be constant in prayer.

5 If any of you is deficient in wisdom, let him ask of the giving God [Who gives] to everyone liberally and ungrudgingly, without reproaching or faultfinding, and it will be given him.

6 Only it must be in faith that he asks with no wavering (no hesitating, no doubting). For the one who wavers (hesitates, doubts) is like the billowing surge out at sea that is blown hither and thither and tossed by the wind.

7 For truly, let not such a person imagine that he will receive anything [he asks for] from the Lord,

- Quit living happily in ignorance. Sometimes, we don't work on learning what the Bible has to say and the principles for living it contains because we know it will require something of us!

8 [For being as he is] a man of two minds (hesitating, dubious, irresolute), [he is] unstable and unreliable and uncertain about everything [he thinks, feels, decides].

- If you constantly go back and forth on things, you will wear yourself and others out. DID GOD SAY IT? That settles it! Quit trying to dig around the Word of God. Set your course and Stay the Course!

9 Let the brother in humble circumstances glory in his elevation [as a Christian, called to the true riches and to be an heir of God],

10 And the rich [person ought to glory] in being humbled [by being shown his human frailty], because like the flower of the grass he will pass away.

11 For the sun comes up with a scorching heat and parches the grass; its flower falls off and its beauty fades away. Even so will the rich man wither and die in the midst of his pursuits. [Isa. 40:6, 7.]

- Remember you can't take the stuff of life with you, so why not bless others and build others with the "stuff" while you are here.

12 Blessed (happy, to be envied) is the man who is patient under trial and stands up under temptation, for when he has stood the test and been approved, he will receive [the victor's] crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him.

- No matter what happens, we must be FIRM in our convictions and FIRM in our faith!
- 1 Corinthians 15:58 AMP
Therefore, my beloved brethren, be firm (steadfast), immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord [always being superior, excelling, doing more than enough in the service of the Lord], knowing and being continually aware that your labor in the Lord is not futile [it is never wasted or to no purpose].

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted from God; for God is incapable of being tempted by [what is] evil and He Himself tempts no one.
 14 But every person is tempted when he is drawn away, enticed and baited by his own evil desire (lust, passions).
 15 Then the evil desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is fully matured, brings forth death.
 16 Do not be misled, my beloved brethren.
 17 Every good gift and every perfect (free, large, full) gift is from above; it comes down from the Father of all [that gives] light, in [the shining of] Whom there can be no variation [rising or setting] or shadow cast by His turning [as in an eclipse].
 18 And it was of His own [free] will that He gave us birth [as sons] by [His] Word of Truth, so that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures [a sample of what He created to be consecrated to Himself].

- Deviating from the Word of God starts with a thought!
- Genesis 3:1-24 AMP – The Progression of Sin

NOW THE serpent was more subtle and crafty than any living creature of the field which the Lord God had made. And he [Satan] said to the woman, Can it really be that God has said, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden? [Rev. 12:9-11.]
 2 And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat the fruit from the trees of the garden,
 3 Except the fruit from the tree which is in the middle of the garden. God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.
 4 But the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die, [II Cor. 11:3.]
 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing the difference between good and evil and blessing and calamity.
 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good (suitable, pleasant) for food and that it was delightful to look at, and a tree to be desired in order to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she gave some also to her husband, and he ate.
 7 Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves apronlike girdles.
 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.
 9 But the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, Where are you?
 10 He said, I heard the sound of You [walking] in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.
 11 And He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?
 12 And the man said, The woman whom You gave to be with me—she gave me [fruit] from the tree, and I ate.
 13 And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled (cheated, outwitted, and deceived) me, and I ate.
 14 And the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all [domestic] animals and above every [wild] living thing of the field; upon your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust [and what it contains] all the days of your life.
 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring; He will bruise and tread your head underfoot, and you will lie in wait and bruise His heel. [Gal. 4:4.]
 16 To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply your grief and your suffering in pregnancy and the pangs of childbearing; with spasms of distress you will bring forth children. Yet your desire and craving will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.
 17 And to Adam He said, Because you have listened and given heed to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it, the ground is under a curse because of you; in sorrow and toil shall you eat [of the fruits] of it all the days of your life.
 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.
 19 In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you shall return.
 20 The man called his wife's name Eve [life spring], because she was the mother of all the living.
 21 For Adam also and for his wife the Lord God made long coats (tunics) of skins and clothed them.
 22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of Us [the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit], to know [how to distinguish between] good and evil and blessing and calamity; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever—
 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.
 24 So [God] drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep and guard the way to the tree of life. [Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19.]

19 Understand [this], my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear [a ready listener], slow to speak, slow to take offense and to get angry.
 20 For man's anger does not promote the righteousness God [wishes and requires].
 21 So get rid of all uncleanness and the rampant outgrowth of wickedness, and in a humble (gentle, modest) spirit receive and welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls.

- Quit being SO MAD at people! People aren't your problem!
- 22 But be doers of the Word [obey the message], and not merely listeners to it, betraying yourselves [into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth].
 23 For if anyone only listens to the Word without obeying it and being a doer of it, he is like a man who looks carefully at his [own] natural face in a mirror;
 24 For he thoughtfully observes himself, and then goes off and promptly forgets what he was like.
 25 But he who looks carefully into the faultless law, the [law] of liberty, and is faithful to it and perseveres in looking into it, being not a heedless listener who forgets but an active doer [who obeys], he shall be blessed in his doing (his life of obedience).
 26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious (piously observant of the external duties of his faith) and does not bridle his tongue but deludes his own heart, this person's religious service is worthless (futile, barren).
 27 External religious worship [religion as it is expressed in outward acts] that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the Father is this: to visit and help and care for the orphans and widows in their affliction and need, and to keep oneself unspotted and uncontaminated from the world.

- You can't just listen or read! Once you know better, it's time to do better!
- Dig in to the Word to find out what you should be doing!
- Start with the 10 commandments. See if your lining up your life in that manner, and branch out from there!