

## Sleeping Saints

**Ephesians 5:14** Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Have you ever had trouble staying awake? It can be humorous to watch someone fighting sleep ...

- PLA Course at UNB
- Certain staff member at UPBI
- Falling asleep while driving
- People falling asleep in church

*One day Mrs. Jones went to have a talk with the minister at her church. "Reverend," she said, "I have a problem, my husband keeps falling asleep during your sermons. It's very embarrassing. What should I do?" "I have an idea", said the minister. "Take this hatpin with you. I will be able to see when Mr. Jones is sleeping, and I will motion to you. When I do, you give him a good poke in the leg."*

*In the church the following Sunday, Mr. Jones dozed off. Noticing this, the preacher put his plan to work. "Who has been better to you than you've been to yourself?" he shouted, nodding to Mrs. Jones. "My Lord!" Jones cried as his wife jabbed him in the leg with the hatpin. "Yes, you are right, Bro. Jones," shouted the minister.*

*Soon, Mr. Jones nodded off again. Again, the minister noticed. "Who knows more about you than you know about yourself?" he asked the congregation, motioning towards Mrs. Jones. "My God!" Mr. Jones cried out as he was stuck again with the hatpin. "That's right, Bro. Jones," said the minister, smiling. Before long, Mr. Jones again winked off. However, this time the minister did not notice.*

*As he picked up the tempo of his sermon, he made a few motions that Mrs. Jones mistook as signals to stick her husband with the hatpin again. The minister shouted, "And what do you tell that mean old pitchfork-waving devil when he comes to tempt you?" Mrs. Jones poked her husband, who yelled, "You stick that stupid thing in me one more time and I'll break it in half and shove it down your throat!"*

Sleep – it's wonderful and peaceful, it's relaxing and restful, but it also can be dangerous! The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) reports that 43 percent of adults say they are so sleepy during the day that it interferes with their daily activities at least a few days a month. This can be especially hazardous on the road. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that fatigued drivers contribute to 100,000 highway crashes, causing 71,000 injuries and 1,500 deaths each year.

Like drugs and alcohol, sleepiness contributes to collisions because it slows reaction time, decreases awareness, and impairs judgment. One reason that driving drowsy is such a danger is that it's difficult to stop yourself from nodding off when you haven't slept enough. While you may feel that you can force yourself to stay awake, you can easily doze off without even realizing it. And, when you're driving, closing your eyes for even a second can be disastrous. At 55 miles an hour, you can travel more than 100 yards while you're taking a five-second nap.

Although sleep is a natural physical process, Scripture also uses sleep as a spiritual symbol of **DEATH** and as a negative symbol of **LAZINESS**. In other words, spiritual sleep is even much more dangerous than dozing off in a moving vehicle because you endanger not just your body or your life, but your eternal soul.

Churches can also fall asleep at the wheel if they are not constantly vigilant. There are so many influences in our society that can contribute to spiritual drowsiness. The lullaby of hell is "What does it matter?"

*Six hundred thousand children, between the ages of 3 and 18, are involved in child pornography. Twenty thousand of them will disappear each year, never to be seen again. And 300,000 pulpits are silent.*

*The networks make a mockery of Christians, the Christian faith and Christian values with nearly every show they air. Greed, materialism, violence, sexual immorality are standard fare. Program after program, movie after movie contains anti-Christian episodes and plots. News articles condescendingly refer to the "fundamental, right wing Christians". Those who speak out for the sacredness of life are branded as extremists. And 300,000 pulpits are silent.*

*Teenage suicide is the highest it has ever been. The number of teenage alcoholics and drug addicts is the highest ever. Christian morality cannot be taught in schools but atheistic immorality can. Divorce is taking approximately one of every two marriages. The number of children living in broken homes is fast becoming a majority. And 300,000 pulpits are silent.*

*Rape has increased 700 percent in the last fifty years, and that takes into consideration the population growth. One in four 12-year-old girls will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime. Pornography has become an eight billion dollar business, with some of the largest companies in America involved -- CBS, RCA, Coca Cola, 7-Eleven, Time, Inc. And 300,000 pulpits are silent.*

*Rock music fills the airways and our children's minds with music which legitimizes rape, murder, sado-masochism, adultery, satanic worship, etc. And 300,000 pulpits are silent.*

*Thousands of so-called Christians are succumbing daily to the pressures of a politically-correct society, compromising for personal convenience and societal acceptance the non-negotiable principles of Scripture. They have surrendered holiness because it is too burdensome and laid truth to rest in the cold grave of tolerance because it is too exclusive and inflammatory. And 300,000 pulpits are silent!*

**Luke 22:46** And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

**1 Thessalonians 5:6** Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

**Proverbs 10:5** He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.

Horrible consequences are incurred when we fall asleep on the job ...

**Matthew 13:25** But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

**Matthew 25:5** While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

**Matthew 24:43-44** But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

One of the most unusual stories about falling asleep is in Acts 20 ...

**Acts 20:7-12** [7] And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. [8] And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. [9] And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. [10] And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. [11] When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. [12] And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

- Eutychus means “fortunate”
- He was in a place where there was lots of light
- It was getting close to the midnight hour
- But he was sitting too close to the edge and he fell asleep
- Thank God the church was there to pray for him!

The disciples fell asleep just before the greatest manifestation of God's glory on the Mount of Transfiguration – they almost missed it because they were weary from the long climb up the mountain!

**Luke 9:32** But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

If we are not alert, we can climb the mountain for many years and then fall asleep just before the greatest manifestation of God's glory the world has ever seen!

Not every individual will be involved in endtime revival!  
Not every family will be involved in endtime revival!  
Not every church will be involved in endtime revival!  
Not every organization will be involved in endtime revival!

It's entirely up to us!

Sleeping saints! They're dangerous behind the wheel! Drowsy pastors! They are the terror of the road! Dozing Christians! If they don't snap out of it, they can do so much harm to the Kingdom of God.

In twenty years of ministry, not once have I ever had an emotionally-charged conversation with a Christian who was upset over an eternal issue! But I have had literally hundreds of conversations with someone who was upset over temporal, trivial, inconsequential issues!

That's spiritual sleep!

**Romans 13:11** And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

What does a loving parent do when a child is sleeping but must wake up? That parent takes his child gently by the shoulders and shakes him. If the child doesn't wake up immediately, the shaking then becomes a bit more firm and serious - because the parent knows the child will suffer if he doesn't wake up. That's just what God is doing right now to the church! At first, He shook us very tenderly. But now His shaking has become violent - because He has still not succeeded in waking us up!

WAKE UP!