

Title: AWAKE, O SLEEPER, EPHESIANS 5:8-14  
(Chatham, NJ; 03/30/13, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: Paul's exhortation to the church echoes the discussion in John which demonstrates that humanity is caught in the grip of a stifling blindness.

Purpose: To awaken us from the slumber and blindness that keeps us in our sin.

Introduction:

1. People who don't know God are not stupid; they are blind.
2. The blindness is caused by the deceptions of Satan so that people believe lies.
3. Only through Christ and his teachings is the deception lifted.
4. Ephesians 5 will be our framework; John 9 will provide some of the details.

#### I. Awake, O Sleeper, Ephesians 5:14

##### A. Wake up!

1. Several times (51:17; 52:1; 60:1) Isaiah exhorts Israel to awake and arise.
2. 60:1ff. employs the imagery of God shining on them to dispel the darkness.
3. Ephesians would make an appropriate baptismal exhortation: rise from the dead.
4. It might make a good reminder for the faithful to arise from their doldrums.
5. It reminds all of us to be alert to being lulled to sleep by Satan's lies, 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober-minded; be watchful."

##### B. Who are the sleepers? (John 9)

1. The disciples pose the question about the man's blindness, 1. They are confused by a theological debate.
2. The neighbors (8) are unable to cope with the man's healing. It takes time for people to process incredible and new things. People were amazed (perplexed?) by the demon-possessed man's healing as well.
3. Pharisees (16) were divided (discuss this) so they put the burden back on the man (17); they gave in to uncertainty and group pressure
4. His parents (18-23) also deferred their judgment; fear drove their blindness
5. The loudest, angriest, most forceful voices won out (24-34)
6. The man is amazed that they can't accept what has happened, 30-33

#### II. You Were Darkness, Now You Are Light, Eph. 5:8

##### A. The passage, Eph. 5:8

1. Once the Ephesians were dead in their trespasses, 2:1
2. Like the rest of mankind, their understanding had been darkened, 4:18
3. Christ enlightened them and made them, like us, the light of the world

##### B. The blind now see, John 9

1. Jesus came to dispel the darkness: "I am the light of the world" John 8:12
2. Jesus exposes the darkness of the human condition
3. He also tells us that the truth will set us free; free from the lies that keep us perpetually in darkness and fear
4. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, 2 Cor. 11:14
5. He also comes as a wolf in sheep's clothing, Mt. 7:15
6. We must recognize these disguises

#### III. Things exposed to the light become visible, Eph. 5:13

##### A. Exposure and visibility

1. Paul has exposed some of those things in verses 3-5

2. Sexual immorality and impurity
3. Covetousness (idolatry in verse 5) – not even to be spoken of among the saints
4. Foolish or crude joking and language, 4
5. Not to mention Eph. 4:25-32
6. God's judgment coming as a result of these things, 5:6

B. These are exposed by Jesus' judgment, John 9:39

1. Judgment here seems to contradict John 3:17
2. Judgment, however, issues from his presence; he did come, after all, to separate the wheat from the chaff, to show who is on God's side and who isn't
3. To give sight to those who don't see: Jesus opens their eyes
4. The blind cannot see because they haven't yet used their sight
5. That those who see may be blinded: "those who think they have spiritual vision are shown up for the blind men that they really are"
6. By willfully confining their vision, some men thus become blind; they can't see because they refuse to turn their gaze to the truth.
7. John 15:22 – there are no more excuses left for sin from either group

Conclusion:

1. Christ's light exposes the darkness.
2. The Word of God exposes our true thoughts and intentions, Hebrews 4:12-13
3. Awake, O sleeper! Walk in the light and come out of the darkness.
4. Christ welcomes, forgives, and restores your sight.