

A Sermon on Sleeping

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. "Well that's just what we need!"

1. Sorry, not going to discuss sleeping in services.
2. It is ok for babies to sleep; it is understandable when a sick person or someone heavily medicated nods off; there is no blame when a brother worked midnight shift and comes to services instead of going to bed, or when a caregiver is exhausted but comes to worship anyway, etc.
3. Not going to spend time today on those who are poor stewards of their time, or those who think the services are tedious; they need all of the sleep they can get in this life, for it will be hard to sleep in Perdition.
4. This is a different kind of sermon on sleeping.

B. Matt. 13:24-30

I. PARABLE OF THE TARES

A. This parable used by some to excuse tolerance of sin and error in the church.

1. Not the point of Jesus' explanation - Matt. 13:37-43
 - a. Sower of good seed is the Son of Man.
 - b. Good seed are the sons of the kingdom.
 - c. Field is the world, not the church.
 - d. Tares are sons of the evil one.
 - e. Enemy who sowed tares is the Adversary.
 - f. Harvest is end of the world.
 - g. Though we must purge sin in the church (1Cor. 5), God will judge the world at the end.

B. "While men slept" -- How sin and error gained a foothold.

1. Occurred while all slept.
 - a. True with regard to daily life: burglaries, vandalism, fires.
 - b. True with regard to problems for nations:
 - 1) Babylon overtaken during night by Medes,
 - 2) During night is common time for a putsch,
 - 3) Attack on Pearl Harbor while most slept in.
 - c. Sleep is metaphor for neglect.
 - 1) Matt. 26:36-45 - Prayer vigil of Jesus; disciples slept.
 - 2) Luke 12:35-39 - Not prepared for master or thief.
 - 3) Isa. 56:10 - Israel's watchmen like sleeping dogs.
 - d. Spiritually, evil gains access when all sleep.
 - 1) Sleeping, plus failure to prepare, leads to tragedy.
 - 2) Matt. 25:1-13 - Bridegroom came as foolish virgins slept.

II. THE NEED FOR WAKEFULNESS

A. Need for spiritual wakefulness is obvious:

1. 1Cor. 15:34 - Awake to truth in midst of error.
2. Eph. 5:7-15 - Must see nature of error and truth.

3. Rom. 13:11-13 - If not awake, sin will grow.
4. Must wake up to the reality of error and the danger of sin around us.
 - a. Some are in perpetual sleep and will not awake (spiritual coma).
- B. Be sober in thought: 1Peter 5:8; 1Tim. 3:2; Titus 2:2, 12; 1Peter 1:13
- C. Be watchful and alert - 1Thes. 5:1-7
 1. One is seldom surprised by that for which he watches. Many are saved from tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods by watchfulness.
 2. Acts 20:28-31; 1Cor. 16:13

Conclusion:

- A. "You must stay vigilant. You must take care of yourselves and not rely on the whims of great men to decide your destiny, for that is when you will be deceived—not with a threat but with a treat." (Benjamin Ellefson)
- B. "We must be vigilant, but mostly of ourselves. What my time taught me is that the ultimate life-and-death struggle is with ourselves. Foreign invaders might kill my body, but I can kill my spirit by sleeping." (Viet Thanh Nguyen)