

## Acts 20:7-12 - Asleep in the Light

### Good morning Church family

A) Turn to Acts 20 - We are about 10-11 weeks away from completing our study in Acts

B) In our last study before Christmas we left off with Paul arriving in the city of Troas -

1) that is where we are going to pick it up today

C) Title of the message today is **asleep in the light!!**

<sup>7</sup> Now on the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. <sup>8</sup> There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. <sup>9</sup> And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. - PRAY

### How many of you ever fallen asleep during Church?

A) Never here and never when I was preaching right?

B) When I pastored in Oregon - the Keyboard player in our worship band used to always sit in the 2<sup>nd</sup> row.

1) He would sit down and put his arm around his wife,

2) She would nuzzle up under his arm and close her eyes during the whole sermon

C) I don't know if she was actually sleeping - but it used to drive me crazy.

1) There were times I want to yell - Carol it is time to wake up!

### Reminded me of a story about a man who would always sleep in Church

A) Somehow he had trained himself to respond when the pastor would say let's stand at the end of the message.

B) He would wake up and stand up

C) Well one particular morning - the Pastor was preaching up a storm - on the subject of apathy

The Pastor said- if you are here today and you are so apathetic that you really don't care what God thinks

A) You really don't care that you could spend eternity in Hell

B) If that is you - I dare you to stand to your feet and admit that to all of us today

C) This guy who was sleeping heard the word - Stand and on cue he shot up -

1) problem was he was the only one standing

D) He looked around the room and realized he and the pastor were the only ones standing -

E) He blurted out - pastor I don't know what it is we are voting for,

1) but it looks like you and I are the only ones who are for it.

Well if you have ever fallen asleep in church or during a Bible study or a prayer meeting you are not alone.

A) Even the apostles of Jesus fell asleep during the prayer meeting in the garden of Gethsemane

B) In our text today we see a young man named Eutychus, who fell asleep during a Bible study by the great Apostle Paul

C) Our text gives us some insights into how this happened

1<sup>st</sup> Paul got long winded. - Occupational hazard some preachers

A) Not sure when this message started - but Paul was still going strong around Midnight -

B) So it is Safe to say Paul had been preaching for several hours - preaching all night

C) Now on average on a Sunday morning I preach between 40-45 minutes

1) So I don't ever want to see any of you checking your watches again. ☺

The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing to note is this Bible study was taking place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the building they were meeting in

A) In the middle east - it gets hot - and heat rises.

**B)The worst type of setting to preach in is one that it is hot and stuffy -**

1)People get sleepy - Prefer it really cold than really hot

**C)And the room is packed full of people - which makes it even more stuffy**

1)so crowded Eutychus doesn't have a seat so he is sitting in the window

**D)Not only was it hot and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> story - it was lit with lamps - (oil lamp -warm lighting- dimly lit**

**E)The perfect scenario for a tired you guy to fall asleep.**

**So this young man Eutychus starts to nod off**

A)He falls asleep and falls out the window - 3 stories to his death.

**B)From this point on in the history of the Church whenever the name Eutychus is mentioned**

1)It is related to the guy who fell asleep during a Bible study by the Apostle Paul -

2)fell out a window to his death

**C)How would you like that legacy? - Attached to your name**

**D)Eutychus story did have a happy ending -**

<sup>10</sup> But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, "Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him." <sup>11</sup> Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, **and talked a long while, even till daybreak,** (another 5-6hrs) he departed. No one else fell asleep <sup>12</sup> And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted. they were greatly relieved

**You know it is one thing to fall asleep in Church -**

A)truth be told it has probably happened to all of us at one point or another.

**B)Falling asleep in Church is not a Sin -**

**C)But being asleep in the Light is a completely different matter**

**D)That is what I want to consider today - How some people can be in the light -**

1)surrounded by the light of Jesus and yet be completely asleep spiritually speaking

**E)Four Reasons Why & How to Change if you have and how to avoid it.**

**Why are some people asleep in the Light?**

**#1 Some people are asleep because they have never been awake.**

A)I am familiar with that state because I was once in it myself.

**B)Mom dragged me to church – boring!**

**I was simply present where others worshiped. I was on the outside. I was not alive to spiritual things.**

A)A lot of people today are in that place – go to Church – habit – duty – religious routine/

**B)A Wife, Husband, parent or friend begs them**

**C)Thinking Somehow God is going to reward them because they sat thru a hour church service.**

1)But it is all boring – not really interested – and there is a reason for that. **Boring preachers? -**

**D)But there is another reason: Spiritual reason**

**1 Corinthians 2:14 - "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."**

**The Bible is a Spiritual book - have to be spiritually alive to understand it**

A)Hear the gospel - Jesus died and Rose - You embrace that –

**B)You are a Sinner and you need a savior - you put your faith in Jesus to save you- BORN AGAIN**

**C)Being born again - The Spirit of God comes to live inside of you and He takes your spirit that was dead - 1)no relationship with God**

**D)The Holy Spirit of God starts to stimulate your spirit - teaching - stirring bringing to life -**

1)giving understanding - Conviction - Encouragement -

E) Suddenly you are becoming alive to spiritual things

**If the Bible and the things of the Lord are boring to you -**

A) It is a good indication - you have not been born again - Still Spiritually dead - not spiritually alive

**“The safest road to hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”**

C. S. Lewis *Screwtape Letters*

B) If you are thinking: I am ok - because I go to church or I am a good person - God will accept me

1) The Devil would love for you to continue to live in that deception

C) and when you die he will gladly welcome you into hell.

**If that is the place you are in today - Not alive to the spirit -**

A) That can change for you today - Embrace Jesus - open your heart

B) Opportunity before we end today

C) So some people are asleep in the light - because they have never been awake -

1) they need to wake up today. - BORN AGAIN

**#2 Lack of Spiritual exercise.**

A) Physically if you eat and eat and eat and never exercise – lethargic, unhealthy.

B) Even just walking is helpful – but if all you did was eat – lay on the couch – go to bed. {Lacking life!

**C) The same thing is true spiritually – we need to not just eat – we need to exercise OUR FAITH**

“Train yourself in godliness. **NKJV EXERCISE** <sup>8</sup> For the training of the body has limited benefit, but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:7-8

**In Israel, there are two major bodies of water, both fed by the Jordan River:**

A) The Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

**B) The Sea of Galilee is full of life, fish and other creatures abound.**

C) The Dead Sea is completely the opposite - not even single-celled beings can survive in there.

1) Why?

**Because, although the Jordan River flows into both, it only flows out of the Sea of Galilee.**

A) The dead sea has no outflow - Thus, the Dead Sea is devoid of life because there's input but no outflow.

B) You and I will either be like the Sea of Galilee, where the Love and life of God is flowing out of us

1) bringing life to others

C) or we will be like the Dead Sea, taking in but, because we don't give out, lacking spiritual life.

1) **Follow through and exercising our faith is essential**

**Highway patrol man and the Nuns**

A) Following instructions for driving on the HWY is key for safety and avoiding tickets

B) Follow through in regards to the Word of God is essential for your Spiritual life and health

C) In The book of Ezra Ch.7 we are told something 3 times about this man - **The good hand of the Lord was upon his life**

**Listen the reason that Ezra's life was blessed and he was a blessing to so many others**

A) Was directly connected to two things

B) 1<sup>st</sup> His approach to the Word of God - 2<sup>nd</sup> His follow through concerning the Word of God

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel. Ezra 7:10

C) He prepared his heart to seek God in the Word - **didn't pick it up randomly or casually -**

1) Prepared his heart - there was a seriousness in his approach

D) And **Prepared his heart to DO IT** - follow through - put it into practice and to teach it to others

**The best way to stay awake – be full of life is to give out spiritually!**

A) Share what you are learning with others

B) Parents share with your kids - what did you learn today

C) Students Share it with your friends - I read this today - really blessed me - Post it on social

1) Saturate IG and FB and tick tok with the Bible

**Share it with your co-workers**

A) I learned something really cool at church yesterday -

B) Or I read something really amazing in the Bible today - can I share it with you?

1) You might be surprised that they are interested

C) Treat non believers like they are interested in spiritual things - you might just discover they are

1) So full of hopelessness and despair - looking for hope

D) "Evangelize, or fossilize!" G. Laurie

**Every year I challenge us as a church in January to start praying for at least one person - you want to come to Christ**

A) One person you would like to Share Jesus with -

B) Some of you do that - you take that challenge to heart -

1) You pray and look for those opportunities to share - open doors for communication

C) Sharing our faith with others - stimulates us - Heart pounding - They get saved - Exhilarating

**D) Some of you experience that - but some of you - just let that go in one ear and out the other. -**

1) Will 2024 be different for you? I hope so

**In order to stay Spiritually awake we need to Exercise our faith**

A) And one of the best ways to do that is to Share it with others

B) Years ago a pastor in Florida named D James Kennedy created an evangelism program that was

1) centered around asking 2 questions

1<sup>st</sup> If you died tonight, do you know for sure you would go to heaven?

2<sup>nd</sup> And if God asked you, why should I let you into my heaven, what would you say?"

C) Effective in leading 10's of thousands to Christ

1) I like to use that one in a setting short time probably never see the person again

**I like this one if it is someone I see frequently or on a regular basis -**

A) After I have got to know them a little - Do you have any spiritual belief's

B) Then listen - nod - smile -

C) They ask what about you? - There is your opportunity - Based in the Bible

D) Or I will ask people this Question: Do you believe in God? If yes - what do you think he is like

**If no - If you did what do you think he would be like? - Again listen**

A) Then ask - Can I take a few minutes and tell you what the Bible says about God -

**B) Start with John 3:16** For God so loved the world that he gave his only son - that whosoever would believe in Him - Have everlasting life

C) You know why God gave his Son? - Sin issue - 1) Gave him to Die

D) If we believe everlasting life! Question if we don't believe? What happens?

E) So you want to stay awake spiritually - Exercise your faith - share your faith

**#3 Sin, and compromise!**

A) Some people have experienced an awakening and are truly Christians

B) But have slipped into a spiritually comatose state.

C) Sometimes we hear of Christians who have fallen to unimaginable depths

1) although they regularly attended church.

D) We are blown away and taken by surprise!

1) What happened

**E) Know this/ that doesn't happen overnight**

**In my 40 yrs of being a Pastor I have never met anyone who said - I think I am going to leave my wife tomorrow**

A) Have an affair - blow up my family and ruin my kids

B) I have seen that happen many times - but never overnight -

1) Instead it happens gradually through little acts of compromise

C) Little compromises eventually lead to bigger compromises - you become desensitized -

1) Things that at one time used to have a conviction toward - I would never do that.

**Have you ever met anyone who can sleep through an alarm?**

A) They somehow learn to ignore that - sleep through several

B) The Holy Spirit is like an Alarm - convicts our hearts of sin and compromise

C) But if we ignore that conviction - we can become desensitized - no longer feel that conviction

**The Frog in the kettle.**

A) You drop a frog into a pot of boiling hot water - he will immediately jump out

**B) But if you put a frog in a pot of room temperature water & slowly heat it up over time it will stay there**

1) Until it cooks to death

C) That is how sin and compromise is - You sit in it long enough you get comfortable in it

D) Pretty soon - **you are so far away from the Lord - and in deeper than you could ever imagine**

E) Usually it takes some big tragic thing to happen to wake you up and bring you to your senses.

**If the Holy Spirit is convicting you right now - Alarm is going off - it is faint -**

A) I want to encourage you to respond.

B) Don't ignore the Loving conviction of the Holy Spirit for another minute

Be on your guard, so that your minds are **not dulled** from carousing, drunkenness, and worries of life, or that day will come on you unexpectedly <sup>35</sup> like a trap. Luke 21:34

C) Dulled through sin and compromise like carousing and drunkenness - but notice the last thing he mentions - the worries of life

**#4 Full of other things!**

A) It is easy to become spiritually asleep when our hearts and minds get so consumed by other things.

**B) Jesus told a Parable called the parable of the sower - the seed that represented the word of God**

1) being sown into 4 different kinds of hearts

C) One of the types of soil was the thorns - Jesus said the word of God would get choked out in the soil of that heart

D) Defined it this way: <sup>18</sup> Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word, <sup>19</sup> and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. Mark 4:18-19

**Living in the age of overstimulation!**

A) Studies have been done - that talk about when our brains are being fed from too many directions

B) Causes stress, fatigue, and even depression.

C) It is possible to fall asleep spiritually - spiritually dulled - because we are too full of other things

**Week of Prayer and Fasting is about**

A) Removing things from our lives that can distract us from what is really important - Our relationship with Jesus

B) Fast from food - from tech - from entertainment - recalibrate our hearts to the Lord

### C) Reignite our spiritual antennas -

#### Exhortation from the Lord to us today

<sup>11</sup> Besides this, since you know the time, it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, because now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

<sup>12</sup> The night is nearly over, and the day is near; so let us discard the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us walk with decency, as in the daytime: not in carousing and drunkenness; not in sexual impurity and promiscuity; not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. Romans 13:11-14

#### Back in 1964 Mick Jagger sang "Time is on Our Side"...

A) 60 years later, I'm not sure if they still sing that today? –

B) The Bible teaches us that "Time is ticking away, tic, tic, ticking away!"

C) It is time to WAKE UP

Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." <sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Ephesians 5:14-15

#### ARISE = To rise UP from a lying or reclined position

A) To stand up or to stand again.

B) Time to stand - Pray

#### Twofold invitation:

A) Unbeliever: Dead in your sins – separated – You are in Darkness

B) Jesus who loves you – died for you – Rose to give you life – says Follow me

C) I will give you the light of life!

D) Ready to embrace him - Stand

But this is also an invitation to anyone who is a Christian – lulled asleep by the world

A) Wandered back into darkness sin and compromise

B) Doing old things – Miserable – too much of Jesus to be happy in the darkness

1) Too much of the Darkness to really enjoy the Lord

C) Miserable – Felt stuck in that place

#### Maybe you have been dulled - just too distracted by the worries of life

A) Cares of this life -

B) To caught up in other things - STAND

#### AFTER THE STUDY AND COMMUNION

A) Our Pursuit of Discipleship

#### We Celebrate

A) We worship in Song and we worship by studying the Word

B) We Connect:

1) Community is important

C) Easy to isolate - Denise and I conversation

1) Working in the yard

D) Need community - Life giving

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

#### We Contribute

A) We give - being a part of something bigger than yourself - what the church is - Kingdom of God is

B) We give resources, give time, give our talents - We serve

C) Our confidence is in the Holy Spirit