

Awake to Righteousness!-_{gm}

By B. D. Tate

This following verse speaks about the **believer awakening to righteousness**. When we sleep and then wake up, we are re-awakening to who we are and the body we are in. In other words, we are waking to the position we have. We are waking to what belongs to us and what we have been given.

1Co 15:34 **Awake to righteousness**, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak *this* to your shame.

Wake up in our mind, in our heart, in our believing; in our behaving to the **gift of righteousness** we've been given! Stop slumbering in the old ways, under the law, and in bondage to sin nature, wake up!

Ro 5:17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive **abundance of grace** and of the **gift of righteousness** will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

To sleep is to be unaware, to slumber is to ***be intoxicated*** with sleep, to be drowsy is to be mixed with some awareness but distracted by the old ways. When we are sleepy **we do not think right**, we are tired, and unable to concentrate **being carried away** by our sin nature; **we are forgetting what manner of man God has made us in Christ!**

2Pe 1:9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and **has forgotten** that **he was cleansed from his old sins**.

To sleep *is to forget* that we have been cleansed from our old sins. Cleansed is past tense; it is done, finished, completed, and fulfilled in Christ.

Ro 6:6 knowing this, that our **old man was crucified with Him**, that the body of **sin might be done away with**, that we should no longer be **slaves of sin**.

Awake to righteousness means to begin to live to the new life and the new creation we have been given when we became born again. **It is not automatic; we have a part to play in living to righteousness within us.** The scriptures teach us to consider the old man as crucified, dead, and no longer ruling in our lives; it means the body of sin, that is sin nature, might be done away with. The admonition is that sin should not rule over us, that the old ways should be done away with, and we should **no longer be slaves of sin itself**. One of the major ways that we stop living to sin, and the old ways, is to dismiss the law from our life (Rom. 7:6).

Grace Is Greater Than Sin!

Often our Christian experience has led us to believe that sin in our lives overpowers and pushes God's grace away, or to the side. We've been taught that sin in the camp causes the Spirit to leave, or to withdraw, because God will not fellowship with sin. This **was true under the law**; but, under grace, this has all changed. **Now, in Jesus Christ, where sin abounds, grace much more abounds!**

Ro 5:15 But the free gift *is not* like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, **much more the grace of God and the**

gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

Ro 5:17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, **much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life** through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Ro 5:20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, **grace abounded much more**,

The “much more” is not readily understood, but it is saying, in essence, that grace has been poured out in such power ***that it causes sin to be put away and put to the side!*** We haven't seen this very well, but things ***have absolutely changed!*** Where sin used to dismiss grace under the law, now under grace in Jesus Christ, sin is dismissed! It is God's grace, having been given to all who are in Christ, ***that the law has been removed*** and made obsolete (Heb. 8:13), taking away the power of sin (I Cor. 15:56).

The power of sin is the law and where the ***law has been fulfilled, there is no longer*** any payment or prosecution, or condemnation necessary from it—***it loses life in us as we awaken to righteousness!***

Ro 8:4 that the **righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us** who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Awake to righteousness means understanding that Christ is in us, and walking accordingly. By walking in the Spirit, this means having our mind set on the things that God has done in us and being committed to them. The righteous requirement of the law has been fulfilled in Christ's atonement, and when we

become **born again, it is fulfilled in us**—as we walk in it! Again, there is a part we play in the determination, or outcome, of righteousness (how much) being awakened in us.

We Have Often Been Fighting the Wrong Fight

We have been fighting the law, thinking it was God. We have been accepting condemnation from our own hearts and resisting, in ignorance, the gift of righteousness and what that means. We've been recriminating ourselves, believing that God is disappointed with us, and we keep trying harder only to fail again and again. We know we don't love God enough, **but we didn't know that God solved the problem by sending Jesus into our hearts.** His love now flows through us as the branches receive the sap from the vine.

We've been fighting a battle that was already won, instead of fighting the flesh. We have been asking God to do things He's already done. We've been assessing that God hasn't delivered us yet, or healed us yet, and putting the blame or failure to receive on us, or in some mysterious and unknowable will of God. We've been misled to believe that God is allowing the enemy to have power over us. We've been led to believe that God is holding back, choosing if, or when, He'll intervene or answer prayer.

The fight we should be fighting is against the flesh and resisting evil; **it is fighting to believe God's word, that truth and grace are revealed in us in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.**

1Ti 6:12 **Fight the good fight of faith**, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2Ti 4:7 **I have fought the good fight**, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

The Good Fight Is the Right Fight

We should know who Christ is in us, and **what we've become in our spirit man** in the new birth! When we forget and begin to live as Christians, in carnal and flesh driven ways, we are like ***dogs returning to its vomit!*** We are forgetting what manner of man we've been made and living life as mere men, **as if God's blessing in Christ means nothing (or very little).**

2Co 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.**

To fight the right fight is to behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **who is in us to live through us** and transform us into the SAME IMAGE! Our sin nature doesn't receive the things of the Spirit, nor recognize the glory of the Lord in us. Therefore, by faith in the promises of God, we accept and act on the Word of grace.

Our Challenge Is To Choose Which Identity We Are Going To Live To!

Are we going to live to the natural man, the sin nature, to continue to be flesh driven; or are we going to identify with the new man made in the same image as Christ? This passage spells it out quite clearly, once we realize what grace and truth has made us:

James 1: 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness **the implanted word**, which is able to save your souls.

22 **But be doers of the word**, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But he who looks into the **perfect law of liberty** and **continues in it**, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, **this one will be blessed in what he does.**

We, by abundant grace, have the power to lay aside all sin (this means to not give it power, presence, and prominence any longer). Grace empowers us through the **gift of no condemnation** to overcome all sin in us (John 8:11). Grace leads us to dominion over sin! Grace leads us to cast away the law and live to newness of life!

Ro 7:6 **But now we have been delivered from the law**, having died to what we were **held by**, so that we ***should serve in the newness of the Spirit*** and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

The Word of God has been implanted in us when we were born again! The Word, when we live to it, fighting against the sin nature, **has the power within itself to save us!**

When we are doers of the Word, which is to say, awake to righteousness and stay spiritually minded (and behold what manner of man we are in Christ), we will be blessed! When we see Jesus in us, we are seeing the Word of God **and observing the image that has been born into us.** We are observing our true

selves and looking into the ***perfect law of liberty***, which is **grace upon grace poured out in the gift of righteousness.**

As we continue in it, (***that is, fight the good fight to not forget***), to not relinquish to sin nature, to not give in, and to stay in faith despite what we see in the flesh, we are doers of the word and blessed because of it. We decide, we think, and we act upon grace instead of what we've lived to in the flesh.

Awaken To Righteousness!

This means we are not mere men who are ***easily entangled with the law***—in fact, we cast it away! We are ***not continuing*** to judge according to the flesh, others or self (Matt. 7:1). When we judge, it is God's judgment we judge with, as in the Spirit. This means we do not become offended, we are forgiving and forbearing; we live to God's love in grace **that is constant** in joy, peace, kindness, longsuffering, self control, and patience. This is because, not only ***can*** we do ***all thing*** through Christ who strengthens us, **we are to do all things through Him!**

Php 4:13 **I can do all things** through Christ who strengthens me.

Ga 2:20 "**I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;** and the *life* which **I** now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Stand in who we are in Christ instead of what we are provoked and tempted to be in the flesh! This is the good fight! It isn't that God is providing more and doing more for us; it is that we are **accessing what God has done** in us in the gift of righteousness more!

Who is Jesus? He is the same yesterday, today, and forever! God's Spirit is constant in love, grace, and truth. **If we are up and down based upon our problems, having hurt and pain, and moody, we are not fighting the right fight.** We are not in the Spirit, we are in the flesh. We don't have to be that way anymore, in fact, awaken to righteousness; we have the Spirit of God! We are not to see ourselves, or anyone else, in the flesh any longer, **but as one in Christ, as one joined in the Lord.**

II Cor. 5: 6 Therefore, **from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh.** Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

We Are Not Mere Men

We should not be just like the world in the way we respond, or react to life. Does God panic? Does God get offended? Is God easily disturbed and lose His peace? We are not only human; we are ***a new creation in Christ.*** We are to respond and be proactive the way Christ would act or respond.

We should not fall apart when bad things happen, as if there is no God, and we have no hope. We should not be quick to anger, quick to react, quick to criticize, quick to judge; we should be steadfast in God.

Trials and tribulations **should not shake our foundation.** We are founded upon the rock of Christ and we should not be disturbed. ***The winds may blow, the waves may roar, but we have the Lord!*** We are not damaged in our spirit, we are not injured, and we are not broken anymore because we have been made a new creation!

II Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, **he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

18 Now **all things are of God**, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

Self Centeredness Is The Cause Of All Pain, Fear, And Defeat

We get hurt and become offended, we are ready to defend and argue and correct, because we are too self centered and too sensitive. In our flesh, we take the bait and judge when we should not judge at all! We are not the center of the universe and the whole world does not owe us right treatment and a proper living. If we are Christ centered, we will not become entangled again to the law, or be angry in sin, and want revenge.

We are letting our circumstances, situations, and other people, influence **who we are and how we live**. This is wrong. God has made us righteous in Christ. ***We cannot be depressed in Him***; we cannot be down because of what He's made us! We may be persecuted, hard pressed, having to do without, and all the while rejoicing in the Spirit. We need to realize we have righteousness in us! We need to stop acting like the world and having pity parties; in essence, sending out invitations to every demonic spirit in the area.

We've been made righteous, we've been made just like Jesus, and we have the same Spirit to do the same things Jesus did. For example, when someone asks "How are you?" We often respond as if we are just natural men: we check our identity in the

flesh to answer, this is wrong. We need to see who we are in Christ and identify with the Word of God implanted in us!

Freely We Have Received, Freely Give!

These verses speak to grace being received and given.

Mt 10:8 “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. **Freely you have received, freely give.**

Ro 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also **freely give us all things?**

Freely we have received being born again, being made righteous in Him, having received the Holy Spirit, and being given all things that pertain to life and Godliness (II Pet. 1:1-3)! Freely means without merit, without earning any of it, it was given through the work of Christ, through His blood and atonement.

Freely we receive not because we qualify, not because we prayed hard enough, long enough, quoted the right verses, or acted in the right ways. We don't earn our standing in Him and therefore, pleasing God, we've become eligible for His blessings.

Freely means we believe Him, that we were lost in transgressions and sins, lost in unbelief and doubt, lost in fear and anxiety and could not save ourselves even to some portion (Heb. 7:25). It means we believe He bought our forgiveness, He bought our freedom, He bought our deliverance, He bought our acceptance, He bought our right standing with God, **and He bought our new position to receive all things freely given!**

Freely God has poured out His love and bestowed (as a gift) righteousness to those who accept Jesus as Lord. Freely God heals, restores, reconciles, and delivers, not by any act or strength of our own, but through what Jesus has purchased for us.

I remember going to McDonald's as a boy and mom purchased a hamburger, fries and coke, and then gave it to me. You know, I didn't ask to earn it; I didn't promise I'd do something good, or bargain with her so that I felt I could take the meal. I accepted it. I didn't go to the counter and beg the man to give it to me. I didn't take out some pennies in my pocket in order to pay for some of it, so that I could feel that I'd done all I could to help pay for it. I didn't feel guilty about taking the meal from mom, I really believed that she bought the meal for me, and wanted me to have it.

When we feel unworthy in accepting God's blessing, we are ***not accepting what Jesus did for us in the cross***. We are still ***allowing the law to condemn us***, to rule over us, and letting our own hearts remain in a sin conscious attitude. We may think we are being humble, not wanting to presume upon our Lord; however, there is no glory in it to deny the full pardon, to deny the full gift of righteousness. It would be like taking only the fries and telling my mom I'm not worthy of anything more; we simply are forgetting that we've been cleansed from our old sins.

How would you feel in preparing a full meal for your son or daughter to have them refuse to eat it? You know they are hungry, but because they were bad they won't eat it, they do not feel worthy of forgiveness? Is that humility? Would you as a

parent want your son or daughter to feel they must earn your love?

It is the law that demands our obedience in order to be accepted or worthy. If we feel unworthy it is because the law has us under condemnation. We may be guilty of sin; we may be wrong in our heart about things, but just know that when we are wrong, guilty, and unworthy it is not our born again spirit that is involved. It is our sin nature rearing its ugly head to dominate us again. Fears, anxiety, frustration, worry, doubt, resentment, all of these are **the fruit of sin nature and selfishness**. Love, joy, peace, faith, acceptance, comfort, forgiveness, worthiness, come from the fruit of the Spirit in our spirit.

Freely we have received. You know everything belongs to the Lord in the first place; there is nothing we have that we didn't receive! We are the Lord's heart, soul, and body; there is nothing hidden from Him. To think that we must earn His love and blessing is foolish; we were made for His pleasure, we were made for His love. We were made to worship, love and respond to Him, freely we receive; therefore, freely give!

Eze 18:4 **"Behold, all souls are Mine;** The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son **is Mine;** The soul who sins shall die.

The Soul That Sins Shall Die!

The soul who sins shall die. Do you realize why the law was given? It was given to expose the nonsense of taking ownership and pride in our works, ***as if we have anything to do with good, as if we are somehow responsible as a source for good.*** Only God is good (Matt. 19:17), only God is the source of all good things.

The law was given so show us that we are not the source of anything: we don't love God enough, we don't love our neighbor enough, we fall short in every way when compared to the law and God's holiness, and it's not even a contest. **We are hopeless in this effort to find grounds to stand in His presence.**

The soul who sins shall die. We immediately think that God intends for us to keep all of the law and to measure up, and if we don't, He'll be mad and disappointed with us. We think that God expects us to take responsibility for our souls and make our own way to Him, ***no, a thousand times no!***

God knew from the beginning that He is the source of life, all things, **and that we were made to respond to His love always.** When sin entered, pride entered, blindness entered **and the law was necessary to bring sinners to their senses.** It is so that we'd see we could never measure up.

The soul that sins will die, meaning any soul that is in violation of the law, **but now that has changed too.**

The soul that sins shall die. That means the soul that doesn't see their hopelessness, that trying to keep the law is fruitless, that denying Jesus is Lord and Savior, **is sinning against God and self.** The soul that doesn't surrender to God is sinning against him or herself, because he/she are denying the truth. Freely all of us were born into the world, given life, a body and soul, a mind, will, and emotions, talent, reason, and every other aspect of life; **but, the soul that sins has not returned to the God that made us.**

Freely we have received life, and when sin entered, and we became blind, we were given the law to sober us up to our need for God's love. But, if we refuse love, that soul shall die. We shall die in never coming to know our creator. That soul shall die in never giving God glory. That soul shall die in never being thankful—remaining blind forever. That soul shall die in never coming to the knowledge of the truth; in never finding peace, never finding joy, and most of all, never finding God's love. How awful will it be to be surrounded by God's provision, gifts of life, knowledge of the Lord, His offering of salvation, the free gift of forgiveness, peace, and love, and never accepting it?

The Right Fight and the Right Works!

What is the challenge for us? Is it not that we should freely accept all that Jesus has done for us? We must fight against our pride and the temptations of the flesh, to earn, to qualify, to drive ourselves to be worthy of anything, ***as if we have to do our best to receive God's best.*** When I'm reduced to thinking that I must do my best and leave to God the rest, I'm satisfying my flesh and it brings a peace that comes for a season. It is not a lasting peace, because it is dependent upon my effort to do my best. It is placing a good part of the equation upon my effort. In a real sense, it is resignation that is bringing about peace to our souls, and it is temporary. We are accepting our limitations and relieving our worried heart from trying to control the uncontrollable.

What is the fight for us? It is to stay in the gift of righteousness; to not take the bait to judge according to the flesh anymore. To stop having to defend ourselves, to stop being

responsible to correct others and hold them to account, but give ourselves over to the One who judges righteously.

When we are anxious and fearful, we are identifying with the flesh and not with the Spirit. When we are insecure, it is because we are **too worldly minded**, and our hearts are attached to earthly things too much. We need God's love period. We need to remove all the things that are distracting us from living to faith in God's love for us. If we are struggling to embrace or feel God's love, it is because we are flesh minded and sense driven too much.

This is the fight of faith, the good fight, to stay in faith in God's grace for us. The good fight is **to live to and see God's abundant grace and poured out love, through His Word, through the cross, in the gift of the Spirit!**

Conclusion:

The law, and life, demands of us what we cannot fulfill; however, God's grace **supplies to us** all that life is, it is Jesus in us and full of glory. It is God who supplies what we need to receive, to be healed, to be freed, to find peace, love, and joy—all through the work of the cross in Christ. Freely we have been given and receive newness of life, let us awaken fully to all that God has done in us. It is the gift of abundant grace; the gift of righteousness; it is the gift of salvation saving us to the uttermost through the abiding and constant love God has poured out on us who believe.

There is nothing wrong with God's word and promise, He had finished the work and removed all the stumbling blocks; there is nothing wrong with God's Spirit in us, full of grace and truth;

and through the blood of Christ having made us a new creation, there is nothing wrong with us, having completely saved us and removed the law's demands, having fulfilled them in the atonement; freely you have received, freely give.

Awake, therefore, to Righteousness that there is nothing between us and God. There is no hindrance of sin; no condemnation of the law. There is nothing between us and the love of God. It has been poured out upon us in Christ, and is accessed through faith in God's grace. We awaken to our inheritance, as we accept our acceptance in the beloved—we are made righteous in all that it means. It means we are just like Jesus because He is in us, joined in our spirit as one: I John 4:17 reports, "...because as He is, so are we in this world.

Consider the following "just as" scriptures: all are from Jesus' prayer **for all of us** before He was glorified. Just as means just like, in the same way and capacity, in every way the same...

The First "just as" statement makes us one with Jesus, as He and the Father are one:

Joh 17:11 "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that **they may be one as We are.**

The Second statement reminds us of our home, our source, and who we belong to, and what our real purpose is about:

Joh 17:14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, **just as I am not of the world.**

The Third statement substantiates the whole purpose of Jesus reproducing Himself in us, as a grain of wheat which dies and produces much grain. We are sent into the world just as Jesus was sent, to do the same things by the same Spirit:

Joh 17:18 "**As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.**

The fourth statement reaffirms that as a born again believer, we are not on our own, or alone, that the Father and the Son, with the Holy Spirit, are in us!

Joh 17:21 "that they all may be one, **as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us**, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

This fifth statement is amazing! The glory of Jesus, from the Father, has been given to us by Jesus! What is that glory? It is everything He lived for, did in His ministry, spoke on the Father's behalf, His power, authority, wisdom, signs, wonders, and miracles:

Joh 17:22 "And the **glory which You gave Me I have given them**, that they may be one **just as We are one:**

This last statement is crazy! That God, the Father, according to Jesus, loves us, you and me, as He loved the Lord!

Joh 17:23 "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that **You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.**

Awaken to Righteousness because if we see Jesus as He is, so are we in this world. Our righteousness through the blood of

Jesus comes with great sacrifice; however, as a gift given to those who believe in His name, it positions us as being in the same place, the same level, as if when we speak in Jesus' name, it is Jesus speaking through us. We need to believe right! We need to accept and acknowledge what God has planned and ordained even from the foundation of the world; that we were predestined to rule and reign with Christ.