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Stay Awake!

“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!” (Rev. 16:15)

Our culture’s wisdom today would have you “follow” or “live” your dreams to fulfill yourself—and whatever you do, “don’t give up on your dreams!” But our conscious dreams of ambition, aspiration, and desire actually have more in common with our unconscious dreams, which are “a series of thoughts, images, and sensations occurring in a person’s mind during sleep” (Google Dictionary).

Dreams excite and frighten us. They feel very real while we are sleeping, but we recognize them as very foolish when we are awake, because they are not real. Dreams are VANITY because in a dream we respond to illusions of the heart and mind as if they are true. Solomon declared that all the ambitions, aspirations, and desires of mankind were vanity: “I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind” (Eccl. 1:14). For in the end, everything “will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it” (Eccl. 12:7), so “what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” (Mark 8:36) Satan uses earthly dreams to lull us into spiritual sleep. He showed Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘I will give You all this domain and its glory...if You worship before me’” (Lk. 4:5-7a). But Jesus knew that all the power and wealth of the world was destined for dust—an illusion compared to the eternal glory of an inheritance in God. In the same way, our earthly ambitions are simply the unconscious fantasies of the sleeper compared to the real treasures of eternity.

Unlike the world, God does not call you to “live your dreams,” but to “wake from sleep” (Rom. 13:11), “stay awake” (Luke 21:36a), and “live a godly life in Christ” (2 Tim. 3:12b). To be awake is to be conscious: “aware of and responding to one’s surroundings. Having knowledge of something—aware” (Google Dictionary). The woken Believer is to have “the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” (2 Peter 1:2b). They are to be aware of their surroundings and responding to them, witnessing to the knowledge of Jesus’ return. Jesus told us to especially be awake and watching for His return in the second and third watches of the night—a time when few, if any, people are awake and all are pursuing their dreams in the deepest states of sleep.

While Eleanor Roosevelt declared, “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams,” God’s Word says, “those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land” (Psalm 37:9b). “Blessed are the humble, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5). “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34)—“imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:12b). God says, “He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son” (Rev. 21:7).

May we not set our hearts on earthly dreams, but pray from our hearts, “Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity, And revive me in Your ways” (Psalm 119:37). Jesus did not come into the world for His interests, but to serve and die for His Father’s will. He was fully AWAKE to His Father’s ways.

May the Bride not be asleep to her Beloved, “living her dreams,” which are only “real” to the unconscious. Instead, may she be fully awake to Jesus and found watching for Him at the hour when He comes. Even so, Amen.

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