

## Introduction

- The “*this*” of 13:11 refers to everything Paul has taught from 12:1-13:10. He has told us how we are to live as “*living sacrifices*”; now he tells us why we should have an urgency about it.

## Don’t Waste This Short Season

13:11 *Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.* 13:12a *The night is almost gone, and the day is near.*

### This Season Is the Last

- The New Testament teaches that the “last days” began with the ascent of Christ into heaven, and will conclude with His return.<sup>1</sup>

### This Age and the Age to Come

- This Age, between the first and second comings of Christ, is variously referred to as “*this age*” (Luke 16:8; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 2:6-8), “*this world*” (2 Corinthians 4:4), “*this present evil age*” (Galatians 1:4), and “*this present world*” (2 Timothy 4:10). In his letter to the Ephesians, where he also speaks of light/day and dark/night (5:8-14), he says we are to make “*the most of [our] time, because the days are evil*” (5:16).
- We are not just citizens of heaven living on earth, but people of a future, eternal Age living in this last Age.

### The Urgency of the Moment

- “...*it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep...*” READ 1 John 2:15-19. John says it is the “*last hour*” because “*the world is passing away, and also its*

<sup>1</sup> Acts 2:17; 2 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 1:2; 9:26; James 5:3; 1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:3; 1 John 2:18.

*lusts.*” He describes an apostasy, an abandoning of the Church and true Christianity.<sup>2</sup>

## The Deeds of Darkness

13:12b...*let us lay aside the deeds of darkness...* 13:14b *and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*

### The Six to Be Put Aside

- Paul gives us clear examples of “*deeds of darkness*” that cannot abide in a believer’s life.<sup>3</sup>

#### Carousing and Drunkenness

- READ Luke 21:34-36 (see also Galatians 5:21).

#### Sexual Promiscuity and Sensuality

- “*Sensuality*” occurs in other lists in Mark 7:22; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:19; 1 Peter 4:3; 2 Peter 2:7,18; Jude 4.

- Paul has just quoted the seventh commandment (13:9; Exodus 20:14//Deuteronomy 5:18). These sins are connected to violating this commandment.<sup>4</sup>

#### Strife and Jealousy

- Jesus (Matthew 5:21-26) and James (4:1,2) compares anger and strife with murder, forbidden

<sup>2</sup> Compare Paul’s entreaty here with Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:14.

<sup>3</sup> For other such lists, see Romans 1:29-31; 1 Corinthians 5:10,11; 6:9,10; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:31; 5:3-5; Colossians 3:5,8; 1 Timothy 1:9,10; 2 Timothy 3:2-4; Titus 3:3.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin Keach’s *Baptist Catechism* (1693) teaches this on the seventh commandment:

Q. 77. What is required in the seventh commandment? A. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbor’s chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior.

Q. 78. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment? A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

in the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment (Romans 13:9;  
Exodus 20:13//Deuteronomy 5:17).<sup>5</sup>

### No Provision for the Flesh

- Remember that Paul uses the word “*flesh*” not to refer to our physical bodies, but that sinful nature within humanity that opposes God the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup>

### Put on the Lord Jesus Christ

13:12c...*put on the armor of light*...13:14a*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*...

#### Gospel Life Is Better Than Mere Rules

- The Scriptures contain many commandments of God that forbid certain behaviors and attitudes. The faith of the Bible, however, is so much more than “don’t do this” rules. Every command that forbids something is meant to free us to replace that which is laid aside with Someone infinitely better and more satisfying than the sin forbidden: that Someone is Jesus.
- Believers aren’t called to put “*carousing and drunkenness...sexual promiscuity and sensuality...strife and jealousy*” out of their lives just because God says so (though that’s a legitimate reason by itself). We are called to put these things out of our lives because we weren’t created for these things; these things are part of the twisting of God’s good creation that is broken because of our sin:
  - God’s good provision of food, drink, and joyful fellowship (Psalm 104:14,15; Ecclesiastes 2:24; 3:13; 5:18; 8:15; 9:7) is perverted in our sin to become gluttony, drunkenness, and immoral partying (1 Corinthians 10:7). Our dissatisfaction with God’s good provision leads us to covet what we don’t have (or what others have), and that often leads us to “*strife and jealousy*.”

- God created sex to be a good thing for humanity – and He clearly and repeatedly ordains the context and boundaries for that good creation. READ Genesis 2:24 (quoted as authority by Jesus in Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7,8; Paul cites it as authority in 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31).
- “...*strife and jealousy*” come out of our desire not to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:21), our sinful refusal to imitate His self-emptying for our good (Philippians 2:1-14), and our violating the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment (Exodus 20:17// Deuteronomy 5:21; James 4:1,2).
- We are called to put these out of our lives in Christ, because He is a better and more satisfying God than food, drink, sex, or domination. When we over-indulge or inordinately desire food or drink, when we seek sexual pleasure outside of marriage between one man and one woman, or when we fight to get our way or to control all things, we are confessing Christ to be inadequate as a Savior, Provider, Lord, and Supreme Joy. These things are part of a life that is short; preferring them to the Eternal Jesus is a sign you don’t really know Jesus.

#### Armor of Light

- The metaphoric language of being equipped for warfare with armor and weaponry is used several times in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 6:7; Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:8).

#### The Clothing Metaphor and Christ

- See also Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10).
- “...*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*” (13:14) is a baptismal statement elsewhere in Paul’s writings: READ Galatians 3:27.

<sup>5</sup> These two are also paired in 2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:20.

<sup>6</sup> Romans 7:5; 8:1,5-9,13; Galatians 5:19-21; 6:8; Ephesians 2:3.