

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

December 21, 2008

Be sober

by David King

"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation" (1 Thess. 5:4-8).

On the night that He was betrayed, Jesus spent the entire night in fervent prayer. He knew what was about to happen, and was determined to be prepared for it. Sleep was a luxury He could not afford. It was a long, hard night, but when the soldiers came to arrest Him, He was ready for the ordeal that was to come.

His apostles, on the other hand, accompanied Jesus in the garden, but as the night grew long, they grew weary. Instead of arming themselves with prayer, they relaxed in the cool night air. Soon, they drifted off to sleep. When the soldiers came, the apostles were unprepared for the crisis. Roused from sleep, with their minds still foggy, they reacted in the only way they were prepared to react: they abandoned Jesus and ran away.

The behavior of Jesus and the apostles in Gethsemane is a literal representation of the broader lesson that Paul taught the Thessalonians: "be sober." Paul is not condemning intoxication (although it is condemned elsewhere); and he is certainly not condemning

physical sleep. He is warning against a casual, relaxed attitude in the practice of our faith. If we are not careful, our faith can drift into a lazy stupor that gives little thought to the dangers that surround us. We can settle into a comfortable religion that is based more on habit than conviction, but leaves us unprepared for the confrontations with Satan that will surely come our way. Like the sloshed bar patron or the drowsy apostle, when the crisis is sprung upon us, our minds will be too muddled to respond appropriately. And we will fail.

That's why Paul in our text twice admonishes us to "be sober." Like Jesus in the garden, we must train ourselves to stay focused, to keep our minds sharp and alert. We must pray often and intensely. We must become students of God's word, drinking deeply of its wisdom. Some day, we will encounter a trial that will severely test our faith; it's not a matter of "if" but "when." And when that test comes, it will be too late to dust off our Bibles and get a crash course in resisting temptation. We will have to face the crisis with whatever we have at hand. If we have not been sober and watchful, the results could be catastrophic.

Peter taught the same lesson, but used a more chilling metaphor to underscore the danger: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). We may be lulled into forgetting it, but it's a jungle out there, and the threats to our spiritual welfare are real. For the sake of our souls, we must train ourselves to "be sober."