

ECHO CHURCH
No Games. No Gimmicks. Just God.

Lock In

Wake up, stir up what God gave you, and live like you understand the moment

Worship & Word | Year 1, Month 10, Week 2
Sunday, October 11, 2026

THE ANCHOR TEXT

Romans 13:11 through 14 NKJV

"And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

2 Timothy 1:6 through 7 NKJV

"Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

THE HEART OF IT

**You cannot stay spiritually asleep while neglecting what God entrusted to you.
It is time to lock in.**

Lock in before you are locked out, not because grace is running out, but because grace was never meant to be an excuse for spiritual indifference.

INTRODUCTION

When you lay these two passages side by side, they begin to preach to one another. Romans 13 confronts our awareness of the moment, and Second Timothy confronts our responsibility for what God has placed in our hands. Paul is dealing with two dangers that often live in the same person: the danger of being asleep to the demands of following Christ, and the danger of holding a gift you never fully exercise. Read together, they leave us with one unavoidable word. You cannot stay spiritually asleep while neglecting what God entrusted to you. It is time to wake up, stir up what He has already given you, and live like you finally understand the moment you are in.

Where Paul places Romans 13:11 is part of the message. He has already walked the church through justification, grace, and the work of the Spirit, and in chapter 12 he turns the corner into transformed living, presenting your body, renewing your mind, loving without hypocrisy, fulfilling the law through love. Then he says, and do this, knowing the time. That is not a motivational aside bolted onto the

end of a theology lesson. It is Paul telling the church that everything he just described is not something you get around to when it becomes convenient. It carries an urgency, and the urgency is the point.

Hold on to one distinction, because it keeps this honest. Paul is writing to people who already believe. He never tells them to get saved again. He tells saved people to wake up. That means it is entirely possible to have real faith and still be asleep to the seriousness of living it out, because possessing faith and walking in daily spiritual alertness are not the same thing. The whole message moves the way a man moves when he gets up in the morning: he wakes up, he gets dressed, he stirs the fire, and he stands up ready for the day. Wake up. Get dressed. Stir it up. Stand firm. That is where we are going.

MOVEMENT ONE: RECOGNIZE WHAT TIME IT IS

Romans 13:11 NKJV

"And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed."

Paul begins by appealing to what the believers already know about the time they are living in, and the word he reaches for is *kairos*. He is not talking about the hours on a clock. *Kairos* is a weighted season, a moment heavy with the purposes of God, and Paul says this is that kind of moment. Then he tells them it is high time to awake out of sleep. The word for awake is *egeiro*, to be roused and raised up, and he uses it the way you would shake somebody who has slept through something important. He is not asking the church to manage its calendar better. He is asking it to grasp the spiritual weight of the hour. Christ has come, salvation has already broken in, and its final fulfillment is nearer now than it was the day they first believed. They were already justified by faith; what Paul wants is for them to live awake to everything that is still coming.

The truth is that we have made peace with postponement. We tell ourselves we will get serious about prayer next week, we will deal with the conflict eventually, we will start serving once life settles down, and we will surrender that habit when we feel ready. We know exactly what we are supposed to do, and somewhere along the way we started treating knowing as if it were the same as doing. But a person can be wide awake physically and sound asleep to the responsibility God has laid on his life. Some of us are not waiting on another word from Heaven. We are simply refusing to respond to the word we already have.

Keep this where Scripture keeps it. Paul is not teaching that every believer is carrying some secret assignment they have to scramble to uncover before it is too late. He is calling ordinary Christians to live faithfully in light of Christ's return, and from that same urgency we take responsibility for what God has already made plain. This is not a call to panic. It is a call to come alert. The hour is simply too significant to sleep through.

You cannot keep living like you have unlimited tomorrows.

It is possible to have genuine faith and still be asleep to the seriousness of the moment. Paul does not say get saved again. He says wake up.

MOVEMENT TWO: REMOVE WHAT IS KEEPING YOU ASLEEP

Romans 13:12 through 14 NKJV

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

Paul shifts the picture from sleeping to getting dressed, and the logic is plain. The night is almost over, the day is almost here, so take off the clothing of darkness and put on the equipment of light. The Greek holds two deliberate motions: *apotithemi*, to strip off and lay aside like an old garment, and *endyo*, to clothe yourself with something new. That is worth sitting with, because real spiritual awakening is never only about what you quit. It is always rejection and replacement together. A believer cannot simply announce, I am going to stop being distracted, without deciding what obedience is going to take the place of that distraction. You will not win by emptying your hands. You win by filling them with something better.

And notice Paul does not hand us ordinary clothing. He calls it armor. The word is *hopla*, the weapons and gear of a soldier, and it tells us how serious this struggle actually is. But let me be careful here, because the confidence is not that you have become stronger than the enemy. The confidence is the victory and authority of Christ, which were settled long before you ever showed up to the fight. And much of this particular battle is not out there somewhere; it is the appetites and reactions inside you that simply do not match the life you now carry. Some of us keep asking God to equip us for war while refusing to take off the very things that keep tripping us.

Then look closely at the list in verse 13, because Paul does something we tend to skip over. He names revelry and drunkenness, lewdness and lust, and then, right beside them, he names strife and envy. He sets conflict and jealousy on the same shelf as the loud, obvious sins. That matters, because we have a habit of measuring our complacency only by the scandalous things. But a man can avoid drunkenness and still nurse envy. A woman can keep a spotless public image and still leave a trail of conflict everywhere she goes. A person can perform every religious duty on the schedule and still tolerate attitudes that flatly contradict the character of Christ. Which means being locked in was never about getting busier. It is about refusing to live carelessly with what God actually called you to do.

Verse 14 brings it home. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh. The word for provision is *pronoia*, which means forethought, planning ahead, making arrangements. And this is where it gets uncomfortable, because our problem is often not that temptation ambushes us out of nowhere. Our problem is that we quietly arrange the conditions that make disobedience easy. We hold on to the relationship that keeps pulling us under. We refuse to set the boundary we already know we need. We build a schedule with no room left for prayer, for Scripture, for the people we are responsible to. Locking in is not leaning harder on your own willpower. It is intentionally ordering your whole life around Christ.

You cannot lock into what God is calling you toward while still making provision for what He is calling you away from.

Grace did not remove your responsibility. Grace is what makes faithful obedience possible. So stop making room for the very thing you keep asking God to take away.

MOVEMENT THREE: STOP NEGLECTING WHAT IS ALREADY IN YOU

2 Timothy 1:6 through 7 NKJV

"Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Romans 13 gives us the urgency; Second Timothy gives us the responsibility. Paul is writing to Timothy, his younger partner in ministry, and he is writing from suffering and from a prison cell, near the end of his own race. Yet before he corrects a single thing, he remembers Timothy's sincere faith, the faith he first saw in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Only then does he say, stir up the gift of God which is in you. That order is intentional. Paul is not building this charge on the accusation that Timothy has no faith. He is building it on the responsibility that always comes attached to faith.

Stir up is a single word in Greek, anazopureo, and it appears nowhere else in the entire New Testament. It means to rekindle, to fan into flame, to tend a fire until it burns bright again. So picture a fire that is already lit but has been left alone too long, the coals still warm but the flame gone low. Paul is not telling Timothy to go find a gift he never had. He is telling him to tend the one God already placed in him. The word for gift is charisma, a gift given by grace, and here is the revelation I do not want you to miss: the fact that God gave it never canceled Timothy's responsibility to keep it burning. Divine gifting and human responsibility are not rivals. God gives the fire. We are the ones who tend it.

There is a world of difference between having something and actually exercising it. A musician can own a beautiful instrument and never practice. An athlete can be born with ability and never build the endurance to use it. And a believer can carry a genuine, God-given gift and still fail to steward it faithfully. Some of us keep begging God to send a fresh fire when He is plainly telling us to tend the flame He already lit. Do not confuse possessing a gift with faithfully stewarding one; they are not the same, and the moment you treat them as the same, the fire starts to die.

Then in verse 7 Paul reminds Timothy that he has everything he needs to answer the call. The word for ties it directly to the command: because you are to stir up the gift, remember what God has already put in you. He did not give us a spirit of deilia, the timidity and cowardice that shrinks back from responsibility. He gave us dynamis, real divine power for faithful witness under pressure; agape, the self-giving love that keeps the gift pointed at people instead of at our own ego; and sophronismos, a sound mind, disciplined judgment and steady self-control. That last word may be the most important one for us, because spiritual boldness was never just the nerve to do something. It is the character and self-control to carry your assignment faithfully once you start. God did not give you power so you could live without discipline. If your assignment truly came from God, then how you treat people along the way still matters. And a sound mind takes intention, because you will never live out your God-given responsibility while every distraction, every fear, and every impulse gets a vote in where you go.

You keep asking God to send another fire when He is telling you to tend the flame He already gave you.

The assignment does not become less important because you have grown more comfortable postponing it. Stop waiting to feel ready to obey what God already made clear.

CLOSING

Two images, one call. In Romans 13, Paul tells the church to wake up from sleep. In Second Timothy, he tells Timothy to rekindle a fire. Both of them require the same thing: deliberate, intentional attention. And notice that neither one asks you to manufacture anything. You do not have to create the light; you only have to wake up and walk in it. You do not have to invent the gift; you only have to cultivate what God already placed inside you. All of it is a response to something He has already done.

- Recognize What Time It Is. You cannot keep living like you have unlimited tomorrows.
- Remove What Is Keeping You Asleep. Take it off, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Stop Neglecting What Is Already in You. Tend the flame God already lit.

So lock in before you are locked out, not because God's grace is running out, but because His grace was never meant to become your excuse for spiritual indifference. When Jesus warns about being shut out, it is a sober word about the kingdom, not a threat that God snatches back salvation every time one of His children procrastinates. But as a call to examine our lives, lay down our presumption, and take Christ seriously, that warning still stands tall. Grace did not erase your responsibility. Grace is the very thing that makes faithful obedience possible.

A CLOSING WORD

Do not mistake the patience of God for permission to postpone. If He has already made plain what obedience looks like, the only thing left to decide is whether you will lock in.

No Games. No Gimmicks. Just God.

MY NOTES

What is God saying to you today? Write it down.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.