

4.

Rom. 13:11-14

Put On The Armour of Light

I recently heard a veteran homicide detective tell how he and his wife had been married for 36 years. It was only after 18 years of marriage that they both became Christians. He stated that if you were to ask them, which has been easier for you - the *first* 18 years, or the *second* 18 years, they would say without hesitation - *the first!* The reason he gave for this was that when they were both non-Christians, many of their choices in life were *easy*. But when they became Christians they had to live differently, which meant making difficult choices and even denying themselves certain pleasures they once enjoyed without a qualm. The section of Paul's Epistle to the Romans we are now considering, may help us to understand this Christian detective's answer and perhaps even why we may have found the Christian life to be a *difficult* life.

Wake Up!

When Paul wrote to the Romans, the Empire was enjoying a time of peace. But in just a few short years, all that would change when Caesar Nero would begin his murderous rampaging against Christians and the city of Jerusalem.

1. Considering Romans 13:11, when Paul had earlier told the Corinthians to 'wake up' in First Corinthians 15:34, in what way did he have in mind for them to *wake up*?

In Hebrews 8:13, the writer to the Hebrews tells his readers that although the New Covenant had made the Old Covenant *obsolete* it had not been done away

with. The elements of the Old Covenant - *the temple, the priesthood, and the sacrifices* - were indeed done away with in A.D. 70 when the Romans sacked Jerusalem destroying the city and the temple. This then fulfilled the prophecy of Hebrews 8:13. But the time leading up to this was a terrifying time for followers of Christ. Indeed, for many, their salvation was nearer than when they first believed.

2. Considering Romans 13:12, what did Paul write to the Colossians about what they had to put away? (Col. 3:8)

3. Romans 13:12 also refers to the armour of light in contradistinction to the works of darkness. What might this *armour of light* be then?

4. What distinction did Christ make about whether people were attracted to darkness or light in John 3:20?

5. Not the list of evil deeds which Paul gives in Romans 13:13. What surprises you about this list?

6. Does the consumption of pornography fit into Paul's list given in Romans 13:13? Discuss.

7. Read Romans 13:14 and identify both the positive and negative actions required for the follower of Christ from this verse.

I once heard a skeptic who was becoming convinced of the truthfulness of the claims of the Bible, that he just wished this God wasn't "so interested in what he did in his bedroom!" He was yet to see that the God of the Bible was not the 'Bedroom Police' as much as He is our all-loving, utterly-beneficent, Protector.

Amen.