

## Wake up

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Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your presence:  
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Our text may be found in the Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 13, verse 12

**'the night is far gone, the day is near.'**

Are you a morning person ? Do you like to go to bed early and get up early ? Or do you prefer to stay up late into the night, enjoy the evening to the full and then have a good lie-in in the morning ? Me, I am definitely someone who prefers to get up early, often before sunrise, and, before breakfast, I do my best, my most creative work like writing today's sermon. So our text today, **'the night is far gone, the day is near.'** speaks directly to me, speaks to me of the sort of life I like to lead. Get up and get going for: **'the night has past and the day lies open before us'**. And those words are the opening sentence at the start of Morning Prayer – a call for us to open our eyes and to start the day by being God-connected.

One of the favourite passages, chosen to be read at weddings, is part of the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of St Paul's First Letter to the church at Corinth. It is Paul's well known

hymn of love in which he defines the nature of spiritual love – agape – sixteen qualities: eight positive; eight negative, ending with the assertion that love never ends. Well part of our passage today is another of his takes on love. It's Paul reiterating Jesus' summary of the Law. With 613 commandments, not just ten, a teacher of the Law rightly asks Jesus what Jesus thinks is the most important commandment. So Jesus gives him two guiding principles: love of God and love of neighbour. And Paul mirrors this when he simply repeats the idea that to love is to do what God wants us to do. Love, to love, is what we owe each other, our obligation, our debt repaid. On Mothering Sunday, I often think that the way we love our parents best is best expressed in the way we love our children. It's a sort of passing on the love we have received, mirroring love by how we reflect people's love for us in the way we cherish them. If you love someone, then you won't try to kill them; you won't steal from them; you won't sleep with someone' else husband or wife especially if you yourself are married nor will you enviously resent and want to take what someone else has from them.

So Paul wants us to wake up and engage in what the new day brings. In the light of the new dawn, we should be striving to bring light to others, actively to oppose the expressions of darkness we so often hear about on the news. And two things to oppose: getting drunk and casual sex. Alcohol is a gift: wine, beer, spirits all can raise our spirits but taken to excess can lead to drunkenness and stupid behaviour. Sexual intercourse is a way two people may become as one, a union of heart and mind through being in touch physically with someone we love but casual sex, something just for instant personal gratification, connected but not switched on, can cheapen and debase what is potentially a holy act.

So the message from Paul to us today which I like to leave with you is simply this: wake up; get up; get going; and may all that you do be properly informed by love.

I have spoken in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
Amen.

*Preached at the Eucharist*

*St Bartholomew's, Dinard*

*10<sup>th</sup> September, 2017*

G: Sermons 36 :Wake up

