

# How A Christian Should Start the Day

## A Morning Poem

I woke early one morning,  
    The earth lay cool and still,  
When suddenly a tiny bird,  
    Perched on my window sill,  
He sang a song so lovely,  
    So carefree and so gay,  
That slowly all my troubles,  
    Began to slip away,  
He sang of far off places,  
    Of laughter and of fun.  
I stirred beneath the covers,  
    Crept slowly out of bed,  
Then gently shut the window,  
    And crushed his little head,  
I'm not a morning person.

– Unknown

If you are like me, the poetry above may represent you as well. I am not much of a morning person. If you ask me, if the good Lord wanted us to enjoy sunrises they would have come at nine o'clock in the morning. However, having a good morning is the only real way to start the day.

In contrast, the Bible is filled with evidence that successful men of God arose early in the morning. Abraham rose early to worship the Lord. "So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him" (Gen. 22:3).

Jacob rose early to worship the Lord (Gen. 28:18). Moses rose early to serve the Lord: "And the Lord said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh"" (Ex. 8:20). And Joshua rose early to worship the Lord. David rose early to worship the Lord (Ps. 5:3). Job rose early to worship the Lord (Job 1:5). And Isaiah rose early. Daniel rose early. The apostles rose early. The women who came to the empty tomb of Jesus arose early (Mark 16:1,2). Even Jesus rose early to worship the Lord and spend time in prayer and study. "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed" (Mark 1:35).

Don't misconstrue the point being made here. Getting up early does not make you righteous. We can find other examples of the righteous staying up late and even sleeping in all day at God's command. The wicked can rise just as early to do their deeds. The selfish can rise early to do whatever they please. Many Christians are guilty of giving God only what is left over after a hard day's work.

Most people who have jobs that require them to be there at a certain time do not give a second thought about arising early to start the day. Getting up is just the first part of their every day morning routine. If it wasn't, they would be taking their shower and getting dressed while still in bed. We gulp down a cup of coffee, and rush to shower and get ready for work. Then the kids have to be awakened, dressed, and fed. Once all is gathered, the children are loaded up, taken to school or day care, and then there's the rush to daily employment. Life has become a routine.

Christians need to rise early, so they can have a spiritual routine. In fact, our soul's salvation may just depend upon a daily spiritual routine. "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" (Rom. 13:11). Christ is the morning light that will shine on us: "Therefore He says: 'Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light'" (Eph. 5:14). So, the first part of your daily morning routine is to AWAKE! Just because you are awake physically does not mean you are awake spiritually.

There is no better way to start your day than with a smile. "Sometimes I wake up grumpy; most of the time I just let her sleep in." The fact is, when I awake in the morning, I often repeat this Psalm 118:24 in my mind, "This is the day which the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it." No matter how bad it was yesterday, today is a new day. "Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning" (Ps. 30:5). So wake up with a smile and a positive, happy attitude.

Remember how your spiritual life began. Your filthy sins of yesterday were washed away in baptism (Acts 22:16). Start off the day with a clean slate. Remember your shortcomings of the day before, and turn from them. Confess your sins to God, and pray for cleansing. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

All of us get dressed for the day. What we are determines how we dress. For example, fireman, policeman, carpenter, lawyer, preacher, plumber, etc. all will dress according to the profession. Christians are Soldiers and must put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17). A good soldier does not arrive late at the battlefield in his pajamas in bare feet waving a toothbrush around and throwing an alarm clock. The enemy is not going to be beaten back by such an attack. They might laugh themselves to death. How successful can a Soldier of Christ be if he crawls out of bed half-naked and unarmed? Here is what you do before your feet hit the floor: mentally dress your soul for battle by putting on the Belt of Truth, then the Breastplate of Righteousness; next the feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace; after this the Shield of Faith; next the Helmet of Salvation; and finally the Sword of the Spirit.

Remember what they say, "Breakfast is the most important meal of the day." Our morning devotions are just as vital. Jesus Himself had a habit of morning devotions with the Father. "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed" (Mark. 1:35). Toward the end of His life, "early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him" (Luke 21:38). We need a strong spiritual appetite (Mt. 5:6). A longing for God's Word like a baby will cry out for his milk when he is hungry (1 Peter 2:2).

We have prescriptions for everything. Taking our daily doses of medicine is part of most American's daily morning ritual. Some medicine is hard to take. Christians are told to take a daily dose of dying. "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross

daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23). Paul wrote, “I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily” (1 Corinthians 15:31), and “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). The only way you can possibly live for Christ everyday is to die to self daily. So, put self in the electric chair of self-denial and throw the switch first thing, every morning.

Most people get up to go to work. God commanded His servants to get up and obey Him first thing in the morning. Abraham was to take Isaac and sacrifice him first thing in the morning. He was also told to be circumcised and to circumcise Ishmael and his servants first thing in the morning. The Battle of Jericho was to take place in the morning. David killed Goliath in the morning (1 Sam. 17:20). The Apostles “entered the temple early in the morning and taught” (Acts 5:21). Why get a good start at work in the morning? Jesus said, “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4). Furthermore, we need to give our work everything we’ve got. “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going” (Eccl. 9:10).

Before getting to work, many meet with the boss to talk about their work for the day. As Christians, we communicate with our Master through prayer. This must be done daily, because Christ commanded us to pray for our daily needs. “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11). Paul told us to “pray without ceasing” (1 Th. 5:17). According to the Psalms, it appears the Jews had morning prayers. “My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up” (Ps. 5:3). “Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice” (Ps. 55:17). “But to You I have cried out, O Lord, And in the morning my prayer comes before You” (Ps. 88:13).

A minister asked a little boy whether he prayed every day. "No, not every day," said the boy. "There are some days I don't WANT anything!" Mature Christians understand that prayer is not just for what we want from God, but for help and an understanding of what He wants from us.

An artist was found creating a great mosaic with tens of thousands of pieces. He was asked how he ever hoped to finish such a monumental task. His reply, “One piece at a time.” The billions of the world are to be reached one soul at a time. You will make the journey to Heaven one day at a time. Isn’t it time to start a morning spiritual routine?

– Daniel R. Vess, The Forum, September 2, 2007