



Snooze Series

Small Group Material

Leader Guide

Part 3 - "Rise & Shine"

January 21st, 2018

Bottom Line: *To watch and pray is designed to empower action.*

Study Verses: *Matthew 26:39-46, Isaiah 60:1-3, Ephesians 5:14*

Define The Win: *Participants would recognize where indecisiveness is making an appearance in their life and what is fueling their hesitation. They would understand the danger in not coming face-to-face with their circumstances. Group members would pinpoint where they need to submit their will to God and trust Him with their next step of faith.*

Key Points

- *A decision provides action for your belief.*
- *A decision is a conclusion to act after consideration.*
- *Christ's call to "sleep later" isn't a call to hustle, but rather wake up.*
- *Be decisive: (1) Decide to decide (2) Define the decision (3) Do what you decide.*
- *We love the safety of "what has been."*
- *Many of us know what God is asking us to do or where He is leading us, but we refuse to take that first step.*
- *We'd rather avoid reality than coming face-to-face with our circumstances.*
- *God's direction requires our action.*
- *A crossroad can serve as a catalyst for change.*

- Our new identity in Christ is perfectly willing to do God's will.
- Don't worry about the fifth step, just pinpoint your next one and take it.
- Attempting to maintain the way things are is an exercise in futility.

ENCOUNTER

- If you had the opportunity to hit pause and freeze frame a time in your life, what one would you choose and why? What's the danger in trying to maintain the way things were?
- Would you describe yourself as a decisive person? Why or why not? What leads you to take action or what fuels your indecisiveness and hesitation?
- Can you think of a time where one of life's crossroads served as a catalyst for change and transformation?
- What are some warning signs that alert you to the fact that you are avoiding reality or coming face-to-face with your circumstances?

FORMATION

- Read Matthew 26:39-44. How does our willingness to "watch and pray" open our eyes to fully see what is at stake in our lives?
- Read Matthew 26:45-46. What did Jesus want His disciples to understand when He said, "Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand"?
- Read Isaiah 60:1-3 and Ephesians 5:14. What does it look like to awake from our slumber and become spiritually aware?

EXPRESSION

- On a scale of 1-7, how spiritually awake are you right now: (1) completely asleep to (7) fully awake? What makes you answer in the way that you do?
- What important decision are you facing or possibly avoiding? How can you begin to define the decision and act?
- His direction requires our action. Where do you need to respond to the direction you have received? What is your next step of faith?
- Where does a shift need to occur from "not my will, but Your will be done"? What causes you to fight for your way and your will?

LEADER INSIGHT: *In life, we face crossroads all the time. Situations appear that force us to consider, decide, or choose. They show up in different ways: a job promotion, a health diagnosis, unpaid bills, a strained relationship, getting into college, moving to a new city, finding out you're pregnant, becoming an empty nester, etc. The list could go on and on.*

Sometimes these moments are significant and noticeable. Other crossroads present themselves as feelings of being tired of the status quo, worn out by the daily grind, sorrow that won't go away, indifference, or a lack of overall passion and purpose.

How will we respond to what we see? Will we stick our head in the sand and pretend like it doesn't exist? Will we distract ourselves from the decisions before us? Or, will we view these circumstances as an opportunity for growth, change, and transformation?

The hour is at hand. Life moves forward whether we want it to or not. Attempting to maintain the way things are is an exercise in futility. Even though we love the safety of "what has been," the growth we ultimately crave, doesn't reside there.

Throughout Scripture, the imagery of sleep is used to describe the state of being spiritually unaware. Jesus understood the devastating effect our slumber has on our heart so He commands us to watch and pray. He is urging us to open our eyes and fully see what is at stake. He's addressing the places where we are intentionally distracted.

A crossroad can catalyze change, but only if we're willing to pay attention. To watch and pray is designed to empower action. Christ's call to "sleep later" isn't a call to hustle, but rather wake up. God's direction always requires our response.

Many of us know what God is asking us to do or where He is leading us, but we refuse to take the first step. The fifth step along the path is irrelevant if we remain paralyzed with the first one. Rather than being bogged down by the unknown, we've got to decide to decide. A decision is a conclusion to act after consideration. A decision provides action for our beliefs. It propels us to move in a direction when faced with a crossroad.