



Teens, Wake Up!



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***To the amazing teens
who face a
challenging future***





Other Wake-Up Books
By J. J. Turner

Shepherds, Wake Up!
Deacons, Wake Up!
Preachers, Wake Up!
Christians, Wake Up!
Parents, Wake Up!
Seven Ways to Wreck a Marriage





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Preface

Wake up! This is a verbal phrase or noun that means “to come alive; to rouse from sleep or slumber; doing something; listen and become involved, etc.”

The apostle Paul wrote, “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now your salvation is nearer than when we first believed” (Romans 13:11). This is a spiritual wake-up call, a call that is always relevant.

How will the following two portions of Scripture become a reality in the lives of young people today? Parents, how do you answer? Young person, how do you answer? Church, how do you answer?

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them” (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Timothy 4:12).

The purpose of *Teens, Wake Up!* is to help young people apply these two scriptures, as well as others, to their lives. It is an effort to apply Solomon’s advice: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

The teens of today are amazing. They have talent, insight, and opportunities that no other generation has had. Most want to be involved in meaningful activities. However, today’s young people are facing challenges no other generation has faced. This calls to our attention—as parents, youth, and church leaders—the challenge to wake up to the need to ground our teens in God’s Word, to help them grow up in Christ.

This book contains fourteen wake-up calls on vital and core subjects in which our youth need to be grounded. It is designed to help the student get involved in the study: “Be a doer of the word.” Each wake-up call contains an in-depth Bible study, an applica-



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tion section, and a real-life story for discussion. The material is adaptable to both boys and girls. Each student needs a book.

Teens deserve a serious and in-depth study of subjects that relate to their lives. The material in this book makes a contribution to fulfilling this challenge. Teens need to learn how to live the Christlike life, bring honor to the name Christian, and share the gospel with others.

May God help us to raise a generation of young people of whom it may be said when they are older, "From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). It's time to wake up!





Introduction

Bad Press for Youth

It has never been easy to be a teenager, especially between ages twelve and nineteen. I don't know where ragging on youth started. I know it was a topic of discussion as far back as 450 BC. Here is an interesting quote by Plato of remarks attributed to Socrates:

The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers.

It may come as a surprise that I was once numbered among the youth. I can recall some of the bad press we were receiving as all youth were placed in the same barrel.

- "The young people have gone to the dogs."
- "Young people are lazy and worthless."
- "We need to do something with those young rebels."
- "Those kids are nothing but a headache."
- "We can't trust those teenagers."

Obviously, anyone who is honest and has open eyes knows that all young people don't fall into one of these categories. And yes, some do. The irony is that the same things could be said about some adults.

It is easy to take a turkey approach to rejecting, putting down, and finding fault. So how do turkeys do it? If one of the gang gets a spot of blood on its body, his fellows will peck him to death. Jesus referred to this fault-finding practice as finding the speck of



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sawdust in another person's eye but failing to see the log in their own eye (cf. Matthew 7:3).

Perhaps you are wondering where I am going with these observations. I want to clarify what I am emphasizing when I encourage teens to wake up. Not every youth, perhaps only a few, fall into the negative category.

You, the youth of today, face challenges no other young people have faced. I observe teens in congregations going on mission trips, participating in work projects, and doing many other acts of service. Young people are great!

My mission in this book is to share exciting and biblical truths that will open your eyes, heart, and soul to God's love and call you to work in the vineyard of Christ. Teens can make a difference.

It is easy to be lulled into sleep by Satan as he tries to blind your eyes. He is "like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). It is wake-up time!

Bad Boys Mauled by Bears

Negative behavior by youth is not a twenty-first century phenomenon. There is an interesting event recorded in the Bible about some bad boys—forty-two to be exact—and the consequences of their behavior toward Elisha, the prophet of God:

Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" So he turned around and looked at them, and pronounced a curse on them in the name of the Lord. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths. Then he went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria (2 Kings 2:23–25).

Why did the prophet respond to being mocked with such a drastic punishment? God had condemned mocking: "Now therefore, do not be mockers, lest your bonds be made strong" (Isaiah 28:22; cf. Psalm 35:16). Behavior has consequences.

Good Boy Became Champion and King

If you have ever attended a Bible class, you have heard the story of the shepherd boy who killed the enemy of Israel's army and God's people. Israel's King Saul tried to discourage David, a



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shepherd boy who wanted to confront the giant Goliath in hand-to-hand combat: “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth” (1 Samuel 17:33). Saul had a preconceived idea about youth.

David countered his argument, “Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God” (1 Samuel 17:36). David’s past victories were based on faith in God. He had reason to believe he could defeat the pagan giant; he trusted God.

Action speaks louder than words:

Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth (1 Samuel 17:49).

The giant, God’s enemy, was dead. There’s no telling what a faithful young person can do if he is committed to God and trusts in His power. God is calling you to be that young person—a giant slayer.



Application



1. Discuss the boys and the bear story. What is the lesson for the youth of today?

2. Discuss the story of David and Goliath. What is the lesson for the youth of today?

3. What are some of the frequent things you hear being said about teens?





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4. What has someone said to you about the youth of today?

5. What do you believe are the three biggest challenges the teens of today are facing?

6. What are some ways today's teens can change the negative concepts some people have about youth?



Discussion Story



George, who is a Christian, invited his friend Shawn to attend a youth rally. Several of the speakers continually presented negative pictures about the state of youth today. They didn't give any clear positive solutions. Shawn brought up the youth rally and some of the negative remarks by speakers. How would you reply or respond to Shawn's valid criticism? Think about your answer.





1

Wake Up To Who You Are

Who Are You?

Someone may answer, “I am a Jones.” Another may say, “I am an American.” There are those who answer by giving their occupation: “I am a plumber.” A believer in Christ may reply, “I am a Christian.”

The context of the question “Who are you?” is answered many times with some of these negative statements: “I am a loser,” “I am poor,” “I am dumb,” “I am not sure.”

Who am I? That is personal. It has been observed by psychologists, sociologists, and ministers that most people deep inside want the answers to these four questions:

1. Who am I?
2. Where did I come from?
3. Why am I here?
4. Where am I going?

Biblically speaking, the answer to the first question, “Who am I?” determines the answer to the other three questions. As a young person, it is essential to your happiness, successes, and joy, that you know who you are.



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How Men Answer the Question

Like any question, this one about our identity is answered in numerous ways, depending on the views of the person answering. Here are some of the answers men give to the question, “Who am I?” It will be easy to see that most of these are from the realm of metaphysics, cults, and other areas contrary to the teachings of God’s Word.

1. I am a cosmic being and part of the vast universe, connected to all the other parts of the universe.
2. I am nothing more than the sum total of my intelligence.
3. I am a perfect part of the divine existence called God; I am a lesser god.
4. I am a being who has existed eternally and continues to re-incarnate through various life forms.
5. I am the result of a random evolutionary process that has occurred over millions of years.
6. I am an animal who has evolved to the top of the species chain; I am one with the animal world.
7. I am the offspring of the ape family, having evolved over millions of years.
8. I am a special person in a special place, at a special time, relating to others in special ways.
9. I am a being in a loving universe where everything is created for me in order to be at oneness with all others.
10. I am a combination of elements called chemistry or atoms. For example, I am 57 percent water, 11 percent hydrogen mass, and 67 percent atom mass. I am a DNA riddle.
11. I am but a cog in a universal machine that is slowly winding down.
12. I am self-identity. I exist because I exist. Everything in the universe seeks to make me happy and prosperous.

As a believer in God and the Bible we may smile or even laugh at these answers to “Who am I?” I assure you, however, that the



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millions who hold to these views are serious. Most of them have years, if not hundreds of years, in their development.

Metaphysics is a complicated philosophy that seeks to explain the various phenomena in the universe and its relationship to man. It was first used in the works of Aristotle in ancient Greece. As with all philosophies, it has continued to evolve through the centuries.¹

What are some of the other answers given to the question, “Who am I?”

How God Answers the Question

As we just noted, there are numerous answers men give to the question, “Who am I?” Obviously, these answers have caused confusion and misplaced beliefs as mankind has continually asked this question.

For the correct answer, you must turn to the Bible. That is where you will find a complete answer to the question, “Who am I?” as well as answers to, “Why am I here?” “Where am I going?” and much more. The apostle Peter reminds us in 2 Peter 1:3 that we have been given “all things that pertain to life and godliness.”

Knowing your true identity is the key to your total being. It determines your attitudes and behaviors. Here are some of the answers given by God:

1. *We are beings created by God:* “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female’” (Jesus, Matthew 19:4).
2. *We are beings created in the image of God:* “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air,

1. I suggest you read an interesting article on <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=metaphysics>.



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and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis 1:26).

3. *We are beings who are formed in our mother’s womb:* “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb” (Psalm 139:13; cf. Jeremiah 1:5).
4. *We are beings who were planned and designed by God:* “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well” (Psalm 139:14).
5. *We are beings given freedom of choice by our Creator:* “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:15; cf. Genesis 2:15–25).
6. *We are beings under commands to obey our Creator:* “So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone” (Deuteronomy 4:13–14; cf. John 14:15; Hebrews 5:8–9).
7. *We are beings susceptible to the voice of Satan:* “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil’ . . . she took of the fruit and ate” (Genesis 3:4–6).
8. *We are beings whom God loves:* “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).
9. *We are beings commanded, blessed, and allowed to worship God:* “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23–24).
10. *We are beings who are the apple of God’s eye:* “For thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye’” (Zechariah 2:8).



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11. *We are beings, if we are Christians, who are joint heirs with Christ:* “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (Romans 8:16–17).
12. *We are beings who are in Christ and identified as kings and priests:* “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:5–7).

These are only a few of the numerous truths related to the true identity of man, especially those who are in Christ. They obviously refute the belief that man is nothing more than an evolved animal, part of the cosmic universe, or on a reincarnation journey. The truth about our identity, as defined by God, should be an incentive to love, obey, worship, and serve Him faithfully all the days of our lives.

Application

1. List additional marks of identity given to us by God.

2. How does our concept of our identity impact our lives?

3. Discuss some of the false teachings of metaphysics.

4. Why is it important for a young person to know the answer to the question, “Who am I?”



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5. What questions do you have about this subject?

6. How do you plan to use this lesson in your life?

Discussion Story

Betty was having a discussion at school with a new friend, Amy, who was from India. Amy was sharing her belief that we are all in the process of being reincarnated. She believes that in a former life she was a cow and her goal was to continue to reincarnate until she reached Nirvana—her at-one existence with the universe. If you were Betty how would you respond to Amy's belief in Pantheism and reincarnation?





2

Wake Up To Why You Are Here

“Why am I here?” is another important question most people ask sooner or later? Have you ever asked yourself that question? If so, what was your answer?

This question is one about your purpose or purposes for existing as a citizen of planet earth, and if a Christian, as a citizen of the body of Christ, the church. The previous twelve marks of identity relative to who you are contribute meaning to your earthly existence.

When you discover your purpose for being here at this time, you then have reasons for getting up in the morning with energy and a desire to tackle the day. As the song says, “Got a good reason for living.” We say with the psalmist, “This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24).

Why Do You Say We Are Here?

Place a check mark next to as many of the following that apply to why you are here. Some blanks have been provided at the end to write any reasons not listed.