

Season 6 – Week 13 (January 5, 2014)
Arise, Shine

Good morning and Happy New Year – 2014! With only 5 days into it, it is shaping up to be a very memorable year with some unusually cold and harsh weather hitting much of the USA. In case you had not noticed, more than 200 new laws went into effect in Illinois as of January 1st. Now, as I spend about ½ my time in California, I am likely further behind in keeping up with the new laws here as I am amazed at what passes for laws out there but we have a few quirks of our own. I am not sure that I even saw the day coming when Marijuana (medical doses) would be legal and incandescent light bulbs would be banned. We now have the ability to carry concealed hand guns with us but we are banned from even holding our cell phones while driving (I am not sure which kills more people, hand guns or texting while driving...). We are increasing the speed limits to 70 miles per hour (which is about 5-10 miles per hour slower than what people are driving at the posted 55 mph). Then we are banning more foods in schools to reduce the number of food allergy related health issues. We will give 17 year olds the ability to vote; we will restrict drones from use in hunting; we will approve cameras on buses to catch those who try to pass them illegally; and about 190 more. As we have said before, while I do try to obey the laws, I am sure that I don't even know half of them but I am glad that I live under the Gospel and under grace which covers my sins even if it doesn't get me out of parking tickets... those I can handle.

Last week we finished up the series entitled **A Wake-up Call**. It was selected verses from Psalm 34. Those are the white papers being passed around as we will do a quick review of the last 3 verses from that series. It seems only fitting that the series after **A Wake-up Call** should be **Arise, Shine** and that is what we will look at for the next few Sundays of this New Year. It will be based on several verses using the words **Arise, shine** or both words in the verse. It is a way to get us up and moving when the cold world outside would want us frozen in our tracks. Those verses are on the cream colored papers so take one and bring it for the next few Sundays.

Our first verse last session was from **Psalm 34:9** (repeat together) **“Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing.”** (NIV ©2011) **Fear** in modern day movies means ‘to frighten’ or ‘to be afraid of: expect with alarm’ (from Merriam-Webster online dictionary). In the Bible, it means ‘to have a reverential awe of’. God was (and still is) the most ‘awesome’ force in the universe. Next, it describes us as **‘you his holy people’**. We have already learned that **‘holy’** means to be ‘set apart for a purpose’. So, if we can remember that we are **‘his holy people’**, then the next part of the verse makes great sense where it says, **‘for those who fear him lack nothing’**. When God blesses us with an abundant life, it doesn't mean that you get more ‘stuff’. The truly abundant life may look very simple with family, friends, a solid faith, lots of fun, and a hope for the future. We talked about remembering the chapter **34**,

