

Is there anyone who yearns for life ?

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Patristic reading

Let us open our eyes to the light that comes from God, and our ears to the voice from heaven that every day calls out this charge

Let us get up then, at long last, for the Scriptures rouse us when they say: It is high time for us to arise from sleep (Rom 13:11). Let us open our eyes to the light that comes from God, and our ears to the voice from heaven that every day calls out this charge: If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts (Ps 94:8). And again: You that have ears to hear, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches (Rev 2:7). And what does he say? Come and listen to me, sons; I will teach you the fear of the Lord (Ps 33:12). Run while you have the light of life, that the darkness of death may not overtake you (John 12:35).

Seeking his workman in a multitude of people, the Lord calls out to him and lifts his voice again: Is there anyone here who yearns for life and desires to see good days? (Ps 33:13). If you bear this and your answer is "I do," God then directs these words to you: If you desire true and eternal life, keep your tongue free from vicious talk and your lips from all deceit; turn away from evil and do good; let peace be your quest and aim (Ps 33:14-15). Once you have done this, my eyes will be upon you and my ears will listen for your prayers; and even before you ask me, I will say to you: Here I am (cf. Ps 33:16; Isa 58:9; 65:24). What, dear brothers, is more delightful than this voice of the Lord calling to us? See how the Lord in his love shows us the way of life (cf. Ps 15:11).

St Benedict, *Rule*, Prologue 8-20