

AWAKE AND ALIVE

“I’m at war with the world and they try to pull me into the dark.” I decided to share with you the words of another song as well: Evanescence’s “Wake Me Up Inside.” It’s interesting to compare the lyrics of the two songs. They are two sides of a coin. They both want to wake up. But, Skillet understands that we are engaged in spiritual battle. Amy Lee is trying to wake up. But Skillet IS awake, trying to stay awake. That makes a huge difference.

“You breathe into me at last.” The Holy Spirit is the Breath of God. But that Breath is also FIRE. Fire covered the followers of Jesus as they received POWER - strength. And what is the result? Amy Lee is begging for someone to breath life into her, to wake her up and make her alive. But not Skillet.

You HAVE breathed life into me. You DO breathe life into me

I AM AWAKE. I AM ALIVE.

“Now I know what I believe inside.” What do I believe?

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.” I believe for lots of reasons, because faith is not blind. Christian faith is reasonable - God’s gift. I believe that God created because the human mind that wonders if all life came about by chance could not exist by random chance. I believe because the “explanation” of how life came about by random chance makes no sense. I learned something the other day.

I did not know that even Darwin admitted that his theory of evolution could not explain the existence of the eye

It's a system, and a system like the human eye cannot come about by successive approximations. It doesn't

work. The eye exists because God made it. The galaxies we observe through the telescope exist because God

made them. The telescope we use to observe them exists because WE made it

Complex things are designed and made.

"I believe in Jesus Christ." Why? Pretty simple really. He rose from the dead. How do I know?

Because there is tons of evidence that He rose from the dead. Christian faith is not blind. It is reasonable. I

believe Jesus is God - because He said so and He rose from the dead. I believe Jesus is the only way to heaven,

because He said so, and He rose from the dead. I believe that there is a real, actual Satan, the devil that must be

resisted, because He said so, and He rose from the dead.

Do you know what the odds are that one person would fulfill 8 Old Testament prophecies? They do.

10^{17} . That's 10 followed by 17 0's. OK maybe this will help. If you had 10^{17} Thin Mint Girl Scout cookies,

that would be enough Girl Scout Thin Mint cookies to cover the entire state of Texas two feet deep in Thin Mint

cookies [POINT]. The chance of one person fulfilling 8 Old Testament prophecies is the same as licking the

chocolate off 1 cookie - throwing it back in - mixing it all up - wandering blindfolded and picking that one cookie.

But Jesus did not fulfill 8 OT prophecies. He fulfilled about 300, over 20 on a single day! I believe in Jesus

Christ.

“I believe in the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is the Breath of God who moved over the waters at creation.

The Holy Spirit is the Fire of God who poured down upon Jesus’ followers like a Tsunami. Our God is a

consuming fire. And the Holy Spirit is that divine fire. The Holy Spirit brings Jesus to us, and brings us to

Jesus.

“Now it’s your time.” That is what we are doing here today.

“I’ll do what I want ‘cause this is my life.” Scary.

I think John Cooper has read St. Augustine. Back in the day, Augustine said something controversial, even

shocking. He wrote, “Love Jesus, and do whatever you want.” What? He meant it. Because, IF you

love Jesus, (to know Him is to love Him) you will want to want what He wants. Your choices will begin to

conform to God’s will NOT because you have to, but because you want to.

“I’m at war with the world.” They try to pull me into the dark, but I ain’t never gonna sell my soul; I can’t be

bought or sold

Remember lemmings? Lemmings just follow along doing what everyone else is doing no matter the

consequences. But we have a shepherd who loves and cares for us.

We have a shepherd who never leaves us.

“In the dark, I can feel you in my sleep; in your arms I feel you breathe into me.”

The difference between John Cooper of Skillet and Amy Lee of Evanescence is: Trust, Courage, Hope and Truth

- BUT especially HOPE. How do I know? She told us. Remember the interview Amy Lee gave. In it she shared her message to young people all over the world.

“There is no hope in life. There is no meaning or purpose to life. The only way to get through it is to huddle together with the rest who have no hope and support each other.”

Evanescence means to disappear into nothing like mist or fog. There is no hope in that.

No mere man can wake her up to life. But Jesus is no mere man. Jesus is the man who is also God.

“Faith is the assurance of what we hope for - the evidence of what we can not yet see.” Our God IS a fountain of hope, filling us with peace and joy as we continue to believe, and trust, that we may always be filled with hope, but the power of the Holy Spirit - the Fire of God - the Breath of God - who has breathed God’s life into us.

Five Iron Frenzy wrote in “World Without an End”

“The very spark that burns the stars drew near to me today! The God of everything that is whispered in my ear that His love is boundless.” That is Truth, and where Hope is found.

“Forever hold this heart that I will give to you.”

Also from Five Iron Frenzy, “Take my heart, let it be forever Yours.” Recently I wrote Christian lyrics to Lady

Gaga's "Poker Face." Seriously - I did. This is how it ends.

"Peace will guard your heart IF you lay it before the throne."

The favorite New Testament memory verse of confirmation classes over the years has been James 4:7.

It's short. But I'm fine with that. It's also powerful:

"Submit yourselves to God.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Notice: There is a real devil - And - you can win.

But only IF you first submit yourself to God.

"Take this heart, let it be forever Yours."

And now may that peace of God which is beyond all human comprehension guard and protect your hearts and

your minds in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.