

It is real (part 3)

Living spiritually alert

Central text: Acts 12:1-17

Peter didn't just wake up physically, but he also woke up in a spiritual sense: he saw spiritual things like God's glory and an angel who miraculously led him out of that prison. Every bit of that experience was supernatural: chains fell off his hands, prison doors opened without keys and 16 soldiers never saw Peter leave.

Like Peter, we need to wake up and live spiritually alert. Some of us live mostly in the natural, one-dimensional. We may be spiritually alive (because of Jesus) but dormant to the things of the spirit.

We need to recapture the spiritual vigour and the spiritual tenacity of the early church. We need to recapture their alertness to the things of the Spirit. We need to become people spiritually switched-on and spiritually clued-up.

God wants you to be someone “spiritually switched on”

The 'Urban Dictionary' defines the expression 'to be switched on' as 'to be in zone'. I like that definition. When you are spiritually switched on you are in the zone for miraculous, you are in the glory zone. That is where the victory is won, that is where we see God at work.

If you live constantly in the natural, thinking in the natural, talking about natural things all the time, you can't expect to be someone spiritually switched-on.

Hebrews 5:11 AMPC *Concerning this we have much to say which is hard to explain, since you have become dull in your spiritual hearing and sluggish even slothful in achieving spiritual insight.*

The 4 enemies you are up against

As you take steps to becoming 'spiritually switched-on', you need to know the four enemies that will fight you all the way.

1. The devil

Jesus said that he is not mindful of the things of God above but the things of man only (Matthew 6:23). He wants you to live at an earthly level all the time, unaware of the glory and the power of God above.

James 3:15-17 speaks of “*wisdom from above*” and the wisdom from beneath that is “*earthly, sensual, demonic*”. The earthly level is where the enemy operates, and he fights to keep you always at this level – always mindful of the mundane and the natural.

2. The 'weights' of this world

Hebrews 12:1 - *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*

There are many things that can weigh us down: the pressures of life in all its complexity (our material needs, careers, relationships, etc). Those 'weights' will push you down (like weights on a balloon), away from the glory zone. We need to learn to cast our weights upon the Lord and access what is ours in Christ.

3. Sin

Sin will always draw you away from a life in the Spirit.

4. The flesh

1 Corinthians 2:12-16 - *¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But **the natural man** does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is **spiritual** judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. ¹⁶ For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.*

- a) The natural man is the man without Christ yet. He is spiritually "switched-off".
- b) The spiritual man is the born-again believer, switched-on to the things of God, with the mind of Christ, able to discern spiritual things etc.

There is still a 3rd man the bible talks about;

- c) The carnal man

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 - *And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. ² I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; ³ for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?*

The carnal man is born again, saved, but he is a babe. He has not matured, and he is governed by the flesh. The word 'carnal' comes from the Greek *sarkikos*, which describes the inclination and the pull in our flesh towards appetites and actions that God doesn't approve.

Romans 8:5 - *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*

The devil, the world, sin and the flesh are the enemies constantly fighting to keep you and I, carnal and not spiritual.

3 powerful benefits of being a spiritually switched-on person

1. Guidance

The voice of God will become crystal-clear in your life. You will be aware of the presence of God.

Genesis 28:16 - *16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."*

Like Peter, Jacob woke up not just in a physical sense, but he woke up to an awareness of the presence of God. He became spiritually switched-on.

Verse 17 - *17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"*

Jacob wasn't lost anymore. He located the Glory Zone. In the vision he even saw a ladder. The ladder was an invitation to go higher and access that place.

A spiritually switched-on person will always have a sensitivity to God's presence and His voice. They will be able to identify the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

2. Discernment

When you are spiritually switched-on you are able to interpret your circumstances, you are given discernment regarding 'behind-the-scenes' activity – whether angelic or demonic.

Peter received insight into the activity of an angel. You can read well your circumstances as if with peripheral vision. You will know when the enemy is behind something or not.

3. Confidence

One of the benefits of being a person spiritually 'switched-on' is that you will walk in high-level kind of faith, in great levels of confidence and assurance – not with uncertainty and fear.

Peter said, "*Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel*" (Acts 12:11).

Jacob said, "*surely the Lord is in this place and I didn't know it*"

When both Peter and Jacob woke up to the reality of God's presence and power, there was a certainty and a surety, an unshakeable confidence within them.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 - *5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance...*

When you are spiritually switched-on you walk in assurance. You know what belongs to you and you walk in in high-level faith.

*12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 1
Corinthians 2:12*

Conclusion

Make the decision to become a spiritually alert person. As you do, expect to walk in Divine guidance, discernment and high-level faith.