

RECAP

1. God really wants to speak to us – but often we're not listening; our spirits are asleep, or we don't know how – we no longer trust our hearing.
2. Why does God want to speak to us? Because God is a relational God. The one thing that separates Christianity from every other religion is the concept of a PERSONAL GOD – among us in the person of Jesus and in us through the Spirit. God has reached down to us desiring our company and our cooperation with Him in the world.
3. We are spiritual people.
Everyone is spiritual – whether Christian or not we are made with this capacity.
 But because the physical is so 'real' – concrete - we are dominated by it - it deadens us according to Ephesians 2:1-2; but it's transient.
In fact the spiritual dimension – could we see it - is far more real.
4. To hear God is a spiritual exercise – a matter of becoming attuned to how God speaks; to understanding the nature of spirituality –and also a matter of believing and obeying when He does speak.
5. But – John 16:12: *I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.* And Hebrew 5:11: *We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand.*
 These verses tell us we are babies, spiritual ignoramuses; given up; don't trust – we don't know the truth of: **Royalty is my identity.**

Christian spirituality believes:

According to Ephesians 1

1. A relationship with God is our birthright (what we are born into) and eternity...life forever is our inheritance.
 - Verse 4 Chosen in Him
 - Verse 5 Adopted as children
 - Verse 7 Forgiven and freedom
 - Verse 13-14 He sealed us with the Spirit
2. Verse 11-It's in Christ we find out who we are and what we're living for. Jesus is the One who bridges the gap between us and God.

3. This is only possible because of the role **of Jesus** and the **power of the resurrection**. Without the resurrection Jesus was nothing but a good man, prophet, teacher – but human like any of us. The resurrection is what makes Christianity different. No other religion can claim power over death.

What was Jesus doing on the cross? **He was destroying the work of the devil.**
1 John 3:8: *The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.* And **in Christ** Christians have the same power over evil and everything that sticks its ugly neck up to oppose God.

**Before the powers of hell I am a ruler with no tolerance for their influence.
Royalty as a child of God is my identity.**

Why?

Because Jesus delegated His authority to us so I can pray against evil in HIS NAME and as a **legal** child of God they have to listen.

Royalty really is your identity.

RESISTANCE

Thinking about exercise and stretching is hard for us.

It hurts! so – I don't do it at all or

I stop before it hurts

But if I push/pull against the resistance over time it will yield – I'll make ground.

The spiritual nature is exactly like this.

It's very resistant. Our flesh, old nature, does not want to be 'spiritual'. It's not natural.

We procrastinate, avoid, doubt, are skeptical, excuse ourselves, get hurt, give up.

My spirit constantly checks out – disconnects, falls asleep – especially when I don't regularly pray.

Consequently most Christians are I suspect trying to survive on lentils and peas when we could be eating steak! Our spiritual capacity is low or non existent BUT worse than this as a result we are **not** alert or awake to what is coming against us.

1 Peter tells us to resist the devil – he prowls around like a roaring lion (without teeth or substance), seeking to **devour our spirituality**. And we are such babies, we are so ignorant that we lie down under it and go to sleep.

Awake sleeper

Arise from the dead!

And Christ will give you light. Eph 5:14

WE NEED TO PUSH AGAINST THE RESISTANCE – to increase our understanding and capacity to be spiritually minded, this is my part. We need to desire this and to crave it so much we will go after it.

Ephesians 2:1 says: *We are dead in our disobedience and sins.*

Spiritually dead, lifeless, not awake, insensitive to the Spirit.

Yet **we are alive** in the power of Jesus' resurrection – this power of Jesus' resurrection – this power is our inheritance **but** we are not using it.

And God says we have help! The power of the Spirit is ours, but it is our journey to discover how to walk in this.

The **normal** Christian life begins by us being **ENCOUNTERED by Christ and then EMPOWERED by the Spirit.**

1. Know who you are - IDENTITY

Your rights -

- Royal child
- Believe he wants to speak to you.

Base 1 Have invited Jesus into your life.

Base 2 Wake up! Christians are slumbering in spiritual ignorance, disappointment and apathy.

Base 3 Be filled with the Spirit.

Open your life up to God's influence.

Believe and obey.

There is an exciting Christian life to lead.

Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:8-20, Romans 8:5-17

The Spirit is given as a deposit but wake up...be filled.

Those who are led by the Spirit are sons and daughters

Discussion

What is the nature of "being spiritual" according to these scriptures?

→ **FEEDBACK**

Emma

What does it mean 'to be filled with the Spirit'?

We express spirituality in basic spiritual practices:

1. Worship
2. Prayer
3. Opening ourselves to God's word

Ephesians 1:18 Eyes of my heart need to be awakened and opened to ENCOUNTER CHRIST.

DO THIS NOW – Pray for one another for the spirit of worship, wisdom, revelation and enlightenment.