

Wake Up!

How many of you had coffee this morning? From Wikipedia we get this about caffeine.....

Caffeine is a central nervous system and metabolic stimulant, and is used both recreationally and medically to reduce physical fatigue and restore mental alertness when unusual weakness or drowsiness occurs. Do I hear an "AMEN!?"

Spiritual drowsiness is a much more serious problem, and we will be thinking about our state of alertness this morning. Maybe you could think of the next hour and fifteen minutes as a God-given and timely stimulant to wake you up from your spiritual slumber. Let's start by asking the Lord to wake us up, shall we?

Shake This Place

What does "wide awake" look like? Remember Nehemiah in the Old Testament? He was cupbearer to the king of Persia, and in a fact-finding conversation regarding the state of things in Jerusalem, he found out that they were in a very bad way. Here's what being wide awake looked like for him.....

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Then I said:

"O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel.

I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name. They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant

and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man.
Nehemiah 1:4-11

PRAYER

Lord, this man didn't need to go there. He had a cushy life. And yet his heart was ready to empathize with the needs of his people in a far off place. He took on your concerns. You raised him up for that time. He was willing to put his reputation - even perhaps his very life on the line, in order to be obedient to you. We confess that even this last week we have been made aware of the need of others, and have done nothing. We even found it difficult to pray for them. Awaken us to the joy of being your hands and feet, of serving you by serving others. Even this morning, call to mind ways in which we can love others, even in this very room. Our hearts are badly in need of tuning, Father. Align them with your heart, even as we worship you. Amen.

Come Thou Fount

The church at Ephesus had fallen asleep. And Jesus grabbed them by their shoulders to rouse them. How so? Listen to His words in Revelation 2:2-5...

I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

Well, for a moment let's reflect through this song on the hour we first believed, and the grace of God that will act like smelling salts to awaken us from our slumber.

Amazing Grace

(after verse 3, have several share of some "dangers, toils and snares" that God has brought them through recently)

Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you

unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."
Luke 21:34

The sleeping Christian does not enjoy the Word. When reading the text, it seems meaningless. When listening to the preacher, they conclude that the preacher does not preach as he used to do. When singing, they cannot seem to throw their heart into it. In the prayer-meeting they pray, but never wrestle with the angel of mercy. As to their own prayer-closet, it is full of cobwebs. And concerning their own heart, they have not had an inspection of it for many days, because they are in a slumbering state.

C. H. Spurgeon

Watch And Pray

Hallowed Be Your Name

OFFERING **The Way Of Love**

SERMON

Fully Awake

"I want to see a focused vision of spiritual maturity -- the expansion of the soul is the best phrase I can use for it. That is, a renewed sense of the momentousness of being alive, the sheer bigness and awesomeness of being a human being alive in God's world with light, with grace, with wisdom, with responsibility, with biblical truth."

J. I. Packer, quoted in Christianity Today, 6 April 1998, page 40.

The Good Fight

