

FORGET THE INTERNET; CONNECT TO GOD INSTEAD



YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION CAN BE OFFLINE. WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR GOD CONNECTION GOES DOWN?

I recently watched a video clip of the effects of an internet connection that is offline. We really are very dependent on the internet, and it seems little can be accomplished if we do not have a working connection. We have become so dependent on it that we do not realise exactly how we have been ensnared by it. Of course, this was just an imaginary event.

However, just this week, a real event upset not just a few people. Some Akamai services, a web platform that many big companies depend on, was offline for a few hours, apparently due to a DNS update that had a bug. What is a DNS? In short, it is the internet's phone book but in reverse. With a phone book, you dial a number, and it connects you to a real person. With a website, you type an address, for example www.johnchapterthree.com and the DNS converts it to a number, for example 104.21.61.184, and then connects you to our website.

With the DNS error, it was chaos. Online bookings for some airlines not available, and online purchases for some major companies down as well. Even if you typed the correct address, the websites were still not available. Cloud-based storage systems were offline, and many could not access digitally stored information as they did not have locally saved versions.

The thing about the internet is that we do not really see it. It is invisible like air – we do not see it, yet we are utterly dependent on it. This unseen item makes or breaks us, but we take it for granted. What about God? The Word describes Him as invisible on many occasions:

¹⁵Who is the image of the **invisible** God, the firstborn of every creature: – **Colossians 1:15**

Here Paul refers to Jesus, who came in the flesh to present to us what the invisible God is like.

¹⁷Now unto the King eternal, immortal, **invisible**, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. – **1 Timothy 1:17**

Paul again refers to one of the characteristics of God as being invisible.

²⁷By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is **invisible**. – **Hebrews 11:27**

Here Paul describes how Moses who did what the invisible God wanted him to do.

To a large degree we often take God for granted. It is easy to become unaware of His presence in our lives until something goes wrong. However, unlike “the internet” or related services, God does not go offline. His is not a system that can fail. He does not need a DNS entry to be contacted. He is not dependent on hardware running or being maintained by technical staff. Paul described Him to Timothy using three very special adjectives. He is:

- **eternal**: He exists for all ages, outside of time itself.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. – John 3:16

- **immortal:** He cannot die, or “go offline”.
- **invisible:** He cannot be seen, except through His works.

It is this **eternal**, immortal and invisible God that we serve. He is present all the time. However, we should make the time and effort to constantly connect to Him. He is like the air that we breathe. Sadly though, we often neglect Him. Unlike not breathing air that would kill us in a few minutes, our spiritual disconnect to God does not kill us now, but it will in future. As I am writing this, the Holy Spirit is tugging at my heart to go outside and pray. I can ignore it, but ignoring it is sin, and sin, if not repented, leads to spiritual death (Romans 6:23). As believers we are blessed to have the Holy Spirit that intercedes for us:

²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. – **Romans 8:26**

When we connect to God, the Holy Spirit intercedes by making us aware of things we would not have figured out by ourselves. This is what it means to be connected to God. Think about your average day. How much time do you make to connect to God through **reading** your Bible to evaluate your life (Hebrews 4:12); **keeping** the Word in your heart (Psalm 119:11); **praying** (1 Thessalonians 5:17); **meditating** in the Spirit (Psalm 1:2); and **filling** yourself with the things that are above and not on the Earth (Colossians 3:2)? The amazing thing is that we do not need a working internet connection for any of this. You probably have a physical copy of the Bible, and if you do not, I recommend that you get one.

The five verses quoted in the previous paragraph can be summarised as follows:

- Read the Word as the standard against which your life is tested.
- While reading, memorise scripture that can be stored in your heart. If your Bible is not with you, or your digital copy is offline, it should be right here with you, and the closest place it can be, is in your heart.
- Pray regularly, at all times and in all places.
- Keep God and His Word in your thoughts at all times.
- Contemplate the things that are above – the eternal, immortal and invisible God, and His Word in us – and not the Earth – the things that are of a passing nature.

None of these need to be “online” in the digital sense. Through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives we have an online connection that never fails, requires no DNS updates, and never returns any error messages.

CONCLUSION

Maybe you had a difficult week. Systems or people failed you and the result was frustration. Spare some time to avoid online services (websites, email, social media, and the like) and instead spend your online time with a connection that will never fail you. Unlike man’s systems that fail when least expected, God’s Word says:

⁵Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.** ⁶So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. – **Hebrews 13:5-6**