

*Five Keys
To Deeper Intimacy
With The Lord*



a message for the Bride of Christ

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Kingdom Faith Ministries

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All Scripture is from the King James Translation unless otherwise noted. Use of lower case for satanic references is deliberate; he is under the feet of those who are led by the Spirit of the Living God.

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Dedication

*To the Minister of the sanctuary, our precious Lord Jesus Christ, and to His Bride,
arising out of every nation, and from every tongue, to her First Love.*

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Introduction

*...that they may be one,
even as we are one*

Embedded deep within every soul is the desire to be one with our heavenly Father. Created for His glory, and through intimate fellowship with Him, the urgent craving of the human heart for oneness with the Creator becomes satisfied. The quest for recognition, the search for meaning, and the longing for purpose manages to drive every soul, but finds no fulfillment until each soul personally embraces the Author of all life.

Pause and acknowledge Him. He is in your next breath; He is stirring the chords of joy and peace with each sip from His cup. There is life beyond our eyes, and fulfillment of all human desire beyond our consciousness. It rests in the Spirit of the Living God, Who reaches out to all who will pause and consider that His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts deeper than our thoughts. We become still to know Him. We quiet ourselves to address Him. We linger, listening for His whispered replies. We labor to enter His rest, ever accessible when we walk in the coolness of the day with Him.

There is no limit to His universe. There is no boundary that constrains Him. He created us for fellowship with Him, but left each of us to seek Him out by faith. How He longs for us to draw near. How He searches the world over for each ripening heart, ready for the Master's harvest. He is One. He broods over each precious soul, awaiting the fruit of years of patient labor, and continual investment of His love.

Quietly beside the still waters, He restores our soul.¹ He heals every disease, and strengthens every heart. He quickens our spirit, awaiting our willingness to tune our hearts to the frequency of His. He sustains, uplifts, and romances all who let down their nets in obedience to His counsel. "Do you love Me?" He inquires again and again. "Will you linger and converse with Me, and let me share My heart?" Daily searching the earth for perfect hearts,² His is an invitation that only a calcified heart can ignore – one that is hardened by sin, by contrary doctrinal walls, by deeply buried roots of mistrust, or merely by neglect to spend time with the One you are to love above all other things.

¹ Psalm 23:2-3

² 2 Chronicles 16:9

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Lovers are lost in each other. So too is the Lord lost in us, if we let Him. Is life too important to stop what you are doing this day, to spend an hour with Him? With penetrating love, He asks each soul directly, honestly, yearningly --

...could ye not watch with me one hour?

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1 ***The First Step***

Toward Intimacy With The Lord

One day in my prayer closet the Lord told me, “ The first thing I need to teach My people as they learn to come to a place of intimacy with Me and hear My voice is that

I will never leave them nor forsake them.

For some, this can take years to develop.”

When the Lord spoke these words to me, I realized that he had just implanted a familiar Bible verse (Hebrews 13:5b) into my spirit. How differently this feels than simple intellectual awareness!

So often as people learn the art of becoming still -- quiet enough in their spirit to hear the Lord's still, small voice -- they begin to enjoy episodes filled with rich, intimate sharings from the Lord.³ They rejoice in the depth and thrilling insights the Lord communes into their spirit. The next day they seek more of the same, and come up dry. Why? Aside from not being still from fleshly turmoil in their soul⁴, the biggest reason is fear.

So often with our initial encounters alone with the Lord in the garden, we treat them as discrete events rather than what they are meant to be: a continuing friendship complete with continuing

³ This little booklet begins with the premise that the reader has already experienced times of deep intimacy with the Lord, and is seeking to develop consistency in that relationship. If this has not yet been your experience, then three previous books by the author will be very helpful: *Dining At The Master's Table: Learning To Hear The Voice Of The Lord*, *The Voice Upon The Waters*, and *In The Secret Place*. Please see the resources section at back of this book for more information.

⁴ The soul is distinctly different from the spirit. I Thessalonians 5:23 and other verses (such as Hebrews 4:12) help make clear the distinction between spirit, soul, and body. For this study, the spirit is defined as housing the human will; the soul houses the intellect, reasoning, and emotions of mankind; the body incorporates such things as the cravings, lusts, and uncontrolled urgings of the flesh.

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dialogue and fulfilling companionship. Learning to allow the Holy Spirit to lead our hearts beside the still waters (Psalms 23:2) is the art of

- laboring to enter His rest (Hebrews 3:11-4:16),
- learning to eat full meals of the bread from heaven (John 6:35),
- dining at His table (Revelation 3:20-21),
- and dwelling in the secret place of the Most High (Psalm 91:1)

These are acquired skills. They are what the Apostle Paul, in spite of all of his scholarly instruction at the feet of Gamaliel, devoted the next 17 years of his life to develop after he met Jesus on the road to Damascus.⁵

But how does fear enter the picture to prevent consistency in hearing the voice of the Lord, and why is it necessary to know (as immovable revelation knowledge rather than mere intellectual knowledge) that the Lord will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5b)?

What often happens to us as we seek an audience with the King, is that we forget to enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise (Psalm 100:4). Having endeavored to come in unprepared (most often with pre-occupying thoughts, concerns, or complaints), we fail to connect with the Lord at sufficient depth to satisfy the longing of our hearts. We compare it to our last dose of joy in His presence, and find it not just lacking, but condemning. “What’s wrong with me? Where is the Lord? Is He not interested in speaking with me? What have I done wrong?”

Our human reaction to the failure to duplicate a prior intimate time with the Lord is fear. We are still insecure in our understanding of His love. We fear our insufficiency, and thus experience insecurity over the relationship we are trying to develop. This becomes self-doubt about our worthiness, or desirability. If our next connection with Him is not as intimate as the previous one, we fret over whether or not we have sinned, and obsess over whether He will speak to us again with such depth. Self-focus (pride) replaces the requisite humility and faith that is necessary to establish and maintain an intimate connection.

An on-again, off-again emotional state can characterize our efforts to connect deeply with the Lord. Progress in our relationship becomes stymied until we lose the fear, doubt, or anxiety and what it all leads to: a lack of faith in the constancy of His love and His eagerness to converse

⁵ Galatians 1:13-2:10

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with us. Isn't it faith that pleases God (Hebrews 11:6), and brings reward to those who diligently seek Him?

Why does it often takes years to develop confidence and consistency in hearing revelation from the Lord? It is because we forget this fact: the Lord wants to talk with you more than you even want to talk with Him. He must help each child learn that He will never leave them, nor forsake them. And they must learn this with their spirit, as a deposit written in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, not with their intellect.

We should recall that the primary purpose of the forty years of wilderness wandering was to enable Israel to learn how to live by the voice of the Lord (Deuteronomy 8:1-3). Joshua 5:6 records the failure to do so as the reason why most of them did not make it out of the wilderness alive.

Deuteronomy 8:1-3

All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

*And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; **that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.***

Joshua 5:6

For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD swore that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD swore unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

If there was a better way to try to get Israel to learn to depend upon the voice of the Lord, He would have done it. Sadly, Israel never made it. Their unwillingness to learn to live by every word that proceeds out of His mouth (and we should be aware that this is always a present tense activity, a continual speaking to His people who have learned to listen⁶) was not just unfortunate

⁶ Hebrews 12:25-26 - *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh [literally this word is a present participle in the Greek, i.e. "who is speaking."]. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake [i.e. "who is speaking"] on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh ["who is speaking"] from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.*

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disobedience. Living by every that proceeds from His mouth and obeying it was a necessary ingredient for survival in the Promised Land.

Learning to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God is just as necessary for believers to survive today as it was for Israel. Only our Promised Land of blessings has changed. The Lord doesn't change His purposes or methods for victory!⁷ Hebrews chapters three and four speak to our new Promised Land of spiritual rest, and reiterates this truth no less than three times:

Hebrews 3:7-4:11

Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

⁷ Malachi 3:6a - For I am the LORD, I change not...

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*Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, **To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.***

For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

The process of learning to hear the voice of the Lord with clearness, confidence, and consistency has everything to do with developing a tender heart for Him. Put another way, the reason some people hear well and others don't is hardness of heart. God saw fit to repeat this warning three times in the previous verses in Hebrews, and was quoted from Psalm 95, that a hard heart (literally a stubborn, obstinate heart) prevents His people from hearing His voice. This is a clear message for every generation! The door that no man can open, and no one can shut,⁸ is this door of intimacy with the Lord after one has acquired the key through the Holy Spirit.

For those who pass through the humility and meekness gates, and pursue eating manna from the Lord every day, years of hardness layers are softened, often very quickly. Layer by layer, what is unsanctified and unclean is gently washed in the *rhema* words that the Lord gives to cleanse the Bride, His precious church.⁹ Unblemished, without spot or wrinkle, each believer grows and changes into the image of our Beloved, our First Love.¹⁰

Why does this process often take years? Isn't that a little extreme? Sadly, no. It does often take years, not simply to hear the Lord occasionally, but to learn to truly seek out and live upon every word that proceeds from His mouth each day. Oddly, few are willing to go to Arabia as Paul did, setting aside everything in life in order to establish this personal friendship and confidence with the Master.

In His mercy, the Father gave His people forty years to learn to hear and obey His voice. Do we yet have such time? Might not our loving desires to really know Him be accelerated as we

⁸ Revelation 3:7; Isaiah 22:22

⁹ *Ephesians 5:25-27 - Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; **That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word** [rhema, i.e. words of spoken revelation from hearing Christ's voice],*

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

¹⁰ *2Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

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forsake all our busyness to follow Him to the still waters of His presence daily? How He longs for our company, and the joy of demonstrating that He will never leave us nor forsake us, for

...thou hast ravished my heart...

Song of Songs 4:9a

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