

*Scaling the Fish
Not Caught*

My life, My love, My Lord.

Jackie Rose Francis

Francis, Jackie Rose

SCALING THE FISH NOT CAUGHT

My life, My love, My Lord.

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Introduction

Honestly, I don't know who will benefit more from this book; you that will be reading it, or me that wrote it. I have enjoyed writing the rich deep things of God! I know you will get some of the richness of Christ!

See how God pre-ordains and keeps His servants, despite the struggles they may face in life at times; I am a perfect example of that; so I have let you inside of my natural and spiritual life to prove it to you. Get familiar with His voice as you get into a deeper relationship with Him. At times, life's disappointments leave us asking why, and how; we will see how an effectual prayer life, if properly developed, can get us the answers we so desperately need. A step by step lesson in the approach to God will help us to better understand how to pray. Also an anointed and word rich life can take us where we want to go.

Let's explore these pages together as we discover how obedience, good friendships, the anointing and knowledge in His word can help us to achieve victory over our circumstances. Discover what might be preventing you from achieving the

spiritual goal you desire. A blessing is pronounced on all who support and read this book; God bless you!

Remember: What seems to be impossible with us is possible with God! WITH GOD NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE!
Even the fish that's not caught can be scaled.

EPHESIANS 3:7

*... Whereof I was made a minister,
according to the gift of the grace of God
given unto me, by the effectual working of
his power.*

*Unto me, who is less than the least of
saints.....?*

*All that I am, all that I have
I lay them down before you, oh Lord
All my regrets, all my acclaims
The joy and the pain, I'm making them yours*

(Chorus)

*Lord, I offer my life to you
Everything I've been through
Use it for your glory
Lord I offer my days to you
Lifting my praise to you
As a pleasing sacrifice
Lord I offer you my life*

*Things in the past, things yet unseen
Wishes and dreams that are yet to come true
All of my heart, all of my praise
My heart and my hands are lifted to you*

*What can we give
That you have not given?
And what do we have
That is not already yours?
All we possess
Are these lives we're living
That's what we give to you, Lord.*

BY CLAIRE MOEN/DON MOEN

Letter to My Life

From: Sister Jackie Francis
Close to Jesus!



To: My Life
In the universe, in all living things and in ME.

From: Sister Jackie Francis

Close to Jesus!

To: My Life

In the universe, in all living things and in ME.

Dear Life:

God gave me you and only He can take you away from me. Thank you for the extraordinary effort that you through my parents, caused me to be here on the earth that you exist in. Thank you for extending yourself through me, that Reg and I could bring two living beings into existence.

I Thank God for you every day! I realize that I cannot go back and start a new beginning but I can start today, and create a whole new ending. Through your experiences, I have come to understand that you, even though short, are a long lesson in humility, unconditional love, and courtesy; there is still a lot of time yet, for us to extend love and courtesy.

I know that I can't have you without difficulties, so may God help me to remember and remind others about that. The most important thing about you is not the triumphs and the successes but the struggles. Having all these difficulties and disappointments, allowed me to understand that the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well. The apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only but unto all them also that love His appearing". So when I come to the end of your journey, I hope to have fought well and have kept the faith. I was meant to have an extraordinary you, and like a candle, I will burn brightly until my final day when I see you and say Amen, because all my struggles will then all be over.

But until then, I am going to be like the moon, I'm coming out from behind the clouds because I want to shine, I want to shine brightly.

I'm on a mission, and I want others to see my good works and come to glorify my father which is in heaven! Praise the Lord! I'm the light that is set upon a hill that cannot be hidden. When God breathed the breath of you into man, I became living a soul that is created to serve Him. I will live you to the best of my ability and may you that I have lived speak for me when I'm gone. I love you, Life!

Yours indebted,
Jackie

Life quotes:

“What is Life, if full of care and we have no time to stand and stare? No time to stand beneath the boughs.”

“The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit.”

“Two hardest things to handle in life are failures and successes”. Every blade of grass has its special angel over it that bends over it and whispers, grow, grow, and grow.”

The road to success is not straight: There is a curve called failure, a loop called confusion, speed bumps called friends, caution lights called family, and you will have flats called jobs; but if you have a spare called determination, an engine called perseverance, insurance called faith, and a driver called God, you will make it to a place called success!

Letter to My Love

From: Sister Jackie Francis
Close to Jesus!



To: My Love
Within my heart.

From: Sister Jackie Francis
Close To Jesus!
To: My Love
Within my heart

Dear Love:

I have come to understand that life is indeed a journey, and you are what help us to make the journey; also to be happy in life, we just have to give you and be ready to receive you. I have found you in the Lord, which is my first love; no greater love than you, have I experienced than for my Lord to lay down His life for me so that I could receive salvation. Thank you Lord for loving me when I didn't deserve it but you knew that was when I really needed it. Such love, such wondrous love that God could love a sinner such as I, how wonderful and precious is love like this.

I have found you love, in my husband, my children, my family and relatives; you are truly an awesome experience to have. To my husband Reg: to the world you are just one person, but to me (being one person) you are the world. I have found out that despite what others may believe, in dreams, and in love, there are no impossibilities; even if the fish is not caught, it can be scaled, that is, in my case. With your love, I have scaled the fish that I really hadn't caught; with God all things are possible. Reg, I love and respect you and I also appreciate your strengths so much that I am overwhelmed with joy; I pray for you every day, I don't only love you, I like you! I know I'm in love with you because I can see the world in your eyes and everywhere in the world I look, I see your eyes.

One day I was brought into the world knowing you only as what I had for my toys, my family and friends. Then I had my children, it altered my conception of you, and I don't know

how I had you for anyone or anything before because this kind of you is so precious, so pure and innocent.

Kayla, Kimberly and Kerisha; I love you my children, from the moment you began, I began all over again, in you, with you, and so there's something more added to the world again. My love for you is whole, no matter how many times I've divided it. So my children besides God, I am your truest friend; when trials fall upon you, when adversity takes the place of prosperity, when friends who were there for you in your brightest times desert you, I will cling to you, counsel you and pray to God for the dark clouds to go away and that peace may return to your hearts. Of course I love you my children. I have no favorites among you; each of you is unique in your own way.

Thank you love for allowing me to experience you; I hope I will be able to extend you to everyone that crosses my path.

Yours in Love,
Jackie (Donna)

Love quotes:

“True love has no limits.”

“Love cures people, both who give and those who receive it.”

“If you judge people, you have no time to love them.”

Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is a process and working together is success!

Letter to My Lord

From: Sister Jackie Francis
Close to Jesus!



**To: My Lord
Throne in Heaven; Footstool on Earth.**

From: Sister Jackie Francis
Close to Jesus!
To: My Lord
Throne in Heaven; Footstool on Earth

Dear Lord:

The greatest possession I have is Love and I didn't buy it, it's free, but it cost you your life. Thank you Lord that you came to make a way of escape for mankind, and also to grant us salvation; it is so full and so free. Thank you for my family and my friends; thank you for my enemies also. Thank you Lord that you impressed it upon my heart to write in this book my life's experiences so that others can be aware and be blessed by it. Lord you have been my strength, my provision, you are my all; you have been so good to me, the least that I can do is give you my best and live for you completely.

"I'm pressing on the upward way, new heights I'm gaining every day; still praying as I onward bound, Lord, plant my feet on higher ground. My heart has no desire to stay where doubts arise and fears dismay; though some may dwell where these abound, my prayer, my aim, is higher ground. I want to live above the world, though Satan darts at me are hurled; for faith has caught the joyful sound, the song of saints on higher ground. I want to scale the utmost height, and catch a gleam of glory bright; but still I'll pray till Heaven I've found, 'Lord please lead me on to higher ground.'

Lord lift me up and let me stand, by faith on Heaven's table-land, a higher place than I have found; Lord plant my feet on higher ground."

Lord you are my shepherd and I shall not want because you have made me to lie down in green pastures, you have led me beside the still waters where you restored my soul; Lord

you have led me in the path of righteousness for your name sake. Yes Lord even though I walk through the valley of death sometimes, I am going to fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, both comfort me. You have prepared a table before me in the presence of my enemies and have anointed my head with oil; my cup runs over with blessings. Surely I know that goodness and mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life and I promise to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever and ever.

Dear lord I've learned that you are the only one that can change the situation that we are around. You, God are the only one who can work out all things, even change the bad, to our good; you are awesome!

May the way I live, , the actions that I do and the words that I say be pleasing to and before you? Help me to live in love with you; and accept your will for my life and give me the right response to your revelation. Help me to realize that anything or anyone you bring into my life is for my good; you know what's best for me.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28.

Dear Lord, I pray that all who read this book may be blessed and benefit from it in some way. As the book of revelation pronounced a blessing on all who read it, even so I ask you to pronounce your blessings upon every person who supports and reads this book.

I come against every opposing spirit that would try to interfere or sabotage this book. You are the One who has inspired me to write and you also know with what intention I produce this book.

I pray that your strong hand be placed upon this book from the beginning; stop what needs to be stopped and allow what you want to go through. This book is totally in your authority and will.

“I will extol thee, oh Lord for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.” Psalms 29:1-3. Words are not enough on my tongue dear Lord, what I feel for you... I just want to thank you for making me, me.

Yours faithfully committed,
Sister Jackie

JEREMIAH 1:4-8

Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I obtained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I ah, Lord! Behold I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, say not, I am a child: for thou shall go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord...

CHAPTER ONE

My Genesis

I have often wondered if I'm in the right place and in the way of my duty also am I being useful to God in His service. I know I am here to fulfil a purpose, but, am I actually working with that purpose? Yes I think I'm operating within my calling; I was called to serve! I am called to reach the troubled and the puzzled.

“My LIFE, my LOVE, I give to thee. Thou Lamb of God, who died for me, Oh may I ever faithful be, My Saviour and my God! I'll live for Him, who died for me, How happy then my life shall be! I'll live for Him, who died for me, My saviour, and my God!”

As a child, one day as I took an afternoon nap, I had a vision in which at the time I didn't understand but as I grew older it became clearer. In the vision I saw a white bird on the handle of my bedroom door, the bird was so white and from what I could see it had no speckle or spot, it was just pure

white with clear soft eyes. It caught my attention so I began to stare in amazement. Soon the bird started to talk to me and as I listened I couldn't understand the language it spoke. I was confused, and tried my hardest to figure out what it was trying to say to me, I then saw a grand –aunt of mine looking on. I asked her what the creature was saying to me, then I saw it turn and I saw that it had two wings towards the back but the face was like a child. My aunt told me that it was an angel that was talking Hebrew and it's the heavenly language; she said she knew what the angel said. The message said that I'm a special child with a special work to do. I woke up and didn't say anything to anyone but kept those sayings pondering in my mind.

I was baptized in Jesus name and filled with the Holy Ghost! This didn't come about very easy in that my father didn't want me to get saved. He thought that I would be giving up my childhood if I got baptized and be a part of the church. He always said that if I do get baptized, all I would end up doing is to carry the pastor's briefcase for him and give him a glass of water before he preaches on Sundays; my dad was so funny, one couldn't help but love him. I had to wait until mother took us to a general convention in Mount Prospect, Manchester. On a Wednesday morning 6:30 am I was baptized; when we got home, mother was afraid to tell my father that I was baptized so she asked my little sister to tell him. He was angry for a short while but then he understood that it was all about God.

As I continued on in my Christian walk, I noticed that I was given tasks to do in church that would be considered 'grown-up tasks'. Tasks like writing minutes, teaching Sunday school, leading youth services and going to homes with

grown-ups to pray for the sick; but unlike what Daddy said, I didn't have to carry the pastor's briefcase etcetera. These duties I was given, was only because I was very responsible and a little gifted, if I should say so myself.

At the time I had a best friend Christine and we were in the children's choir. When there was no school or if I wasn't doing my daily chores, I would go to visit her but most times even though I went to visit her, I would find myself in the company of her mom who was an evangelist, talking about the Lord. I would ask a lot of questions about the things of God and how things worked. She told me of different healings that took place and the spiritual experiences she had, it was as though I couldn't get enough. No wonder the song writer, yearning to know more about Jesus, wrote the song "More about Jesus let me learn, More of His holy will discern, Spirit of God my teacher be, showing the things of Christ to me, ...More, more about Jesus! More, more about Jesus! More of His saving fullness see, more of His love who died for me." I just wanted to understand and know more! I was just fascinated with Kingdom things.

Of course my friend and I would find time to do kids' things but I just enjoyed being in the company of the older and wiser folks. My former pastor used to entrust me with duties that sometimes caused others to be jealous of me, but being so young I didn't give much attention to this. I had a copy of the church keys and I could go in and out of the building whenever I chose to. Having this opportunity, during the summer breaks, I would get together with the younger saints and we would go in the church to fast and pray. Whenever I was in the presence of the Lord I would always feel the power of the Holy Ghost and it was as if I

sometimes reached another realm. I spoke in tongues as the spirit gave utterance and I loved the experience!!! I wanted everyone I met to experience what I was experiencing but of-course it didn't happen! Each day coming home from school sometimes I would debate doctrinal scriptures and would be inviting somebody to our youth meetings.

Soon I started to get a bit shy or maybe too proud as I hit the teenage years. I would choose who to witness to and it was also important as to where I was. My friend Cynthia was a role model for me in my early teenage years. It is said that birds of feather flock together and this was true with Cynthia and me. We met in grade seven (first form) at high school and what brought us together was the faith we had in common. As I said before I started to get shy and ashamed to let the high school folks know that I was 'saved'. God was not going to let me continue that way because when he has a calling on your life, it doesn't matter where you go or what you do he is going to be there. I tried but I couldn't hide from God because He knows everything about me.

Psalms 139:1-7, "O Lord, thou hath searched me, and known me. Thou knows my down sitting and mine uprising, thou understands my thoughts afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knows it altogether. Thou hath beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too great for me, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the

uttermost part of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me”

One day in history class our teacher, Mr. Fakiata Utamsi asked us to talk about the church we attended. Thinking that my church was not very ‘popular’, I was hesitant to say the name of the church. When it was my friend Cynthia’s turn, she blurted out “I attend the Shiloh Apostolic church”, I then realized that she had said the name of the church that I attended also but I remained silent.

After classes we started to talk and I told her that I also went to the branch of that church. Thank God she wasn’t ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, knowing that it is the power of God unto salvation. From then we became good friends and we met each other’s family. Ever so often, we would get in trouble in class because we were being mischievous. Whenever we tried to witness to our classmates, sometimes they would tell us to sit down and be quiet because our message did not match with our actions so they were not interested. No wonder the bible tells us to ‘let our light so shine that men may see our good works and come to glorify our father which is heaven’. It showed us that the world is looking at our actions and not so much what we say. You can see that we were just normal kids who fooled around and got in trouble like everyone else.

Keeping in mind that the angel of the Lord told me that God wanted to use me in His service, nothing could stop me from ‘working’ for Him. I had never thought of becoming an evangelist or a missionary with title because I am from a humble family that was not well-known or had been ever in the ministry. Now I know that God chooses and uses the base

things of this world, I'm encouraged. 1Corinthians1:26-28 confirms that; 'For we see your calling, brethren, how that not very wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But has chosen the foolish things of things world to confound the wise; And has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of this world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are: That no flesh should glory in His presence'

Cynthia was also from a similar humble background so we had things in common and could identify with each other.

Even in our classes at school sometimes we would be treated differently. I remember our geography teacher would come in the class and it seemed as if she were teaching half the class and guess what, it certainly wasn't the side that we sat on. When she returned our assignments, she would throw it to each of us who were not 'favorable' and smiled, as she handed out the rest to the others. We would have to encourage ourselves that God loves us all and that He had His hands on us. We knew that we 'were fearfully and wonderfully made'.

I always knew that I was not alone and that would make a way for me because it only made sense that If He sent His holy angel to give me a promise then I must be of some significance and have a purpose to fulfill. Funny thing about this is that even though we didn't pay much attention in geography class, I still remember some of what she taught the other side. There are three Prairie Provinces in Canada; Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba; ah ha ah! I learned something, coincidentally, years later; I came to live in one of the provinces, Alberta; funny indeed, I guess I needed to learn that much.

God is faithful and true and is 'not slack concerning His promises'. So even from that tender age, I had started to learn to lean and depend on Jesus, knowing that He's my friend and He's my guide.

So the first vision that I received from God that I can recall was that of His angel that I saw at my door handle which spoke in Hebrew language, now I understand better that it was going to be the first of many that would follow.

1SAMUEL 3:8-10

And the Lord called Samuel again the third time, and he arose and went to Eli, and said, hear am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, go, lie down; and it shall be, if he called thee, thou shall say, speak, Lord: for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, speak; for thy servant heareth.

CHAPTER TWO

His Voice Makes the Difference

Most of us on the youth choir were spirit filled, but for those who were not, we would encourage them to seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit. The church mothers would always see to it that we were focussed and had a balance of good academics at school and participation in church.

One day it was the end of Sunday school and daytime service was about to begin when everyone started to sing; as we sang and worshipped I heard a soft voice speak to me and I turned to see who it was, but everyone close to me was worshipping and it didn't seem like it was any of them. The voice spoke again and I turned and asked who spoke and they said they did not. The third time was enough for me to acknowledge that it was the Lord!

The voice said so softly to me, "Sister Donna, Sister Donna, I have a work for you to do". I told no one but

thought about it over and over, and the vision that I had when I was much younger came back to my memory. The worship service became so filled with the presence of God that even the children behaved themselves and worshipped also. I felt a move to lay my hands on Christine my friend who had not yet experienced the Holy Spirit.

As I touched her she started to worship with stammering lips and in a short time spoke in tongues as the spirit gave her utterance! She was now filled with the Holy Ghost! Isn't God wonderful? To God be the glory great things He hath done; I was only a vessel for the Lord. Christine continued to serve the Lord and became a powerful evangelist. Just about the time that I migrated, she got married so I wasn't able to attend her wedding; nevertheless we continued to be friends via long distance. On one of my trips to Jamaica, my children and I stayed with her and her husband. Our friendship ended when she passed away and went on to be with the Lord.

So may her soul rest in peace with God.

In West Prospect where we lived and attended church, the roads were not always reliable after a heavy rain storm. So at that season it was raining a lot and the main bridge was impassable, therefore motorist had to use an alternate route which took longer to travel. Our pastor didn't live in the district so he too had to take the long route which caused him to be late that day. Upon arrival at church he called me to the rostrum to speak to me. He then related to me that he had an experience for the first time in his life. He said that as he was driving along the road, he heard a voice speaking to him clearly; the voice told him that he had a work for me to do. I was so amazed because it was about the same time of the day that I heard the voice telling me the same message.

I told him that it must be a confirmation because the Lord told me the same thing at about the same time he heard it on his way to church. I knew it was God because His voice makes a difference and when He speaks He gives assurance and comfort!

I am ever so amazed that God could use an insignificant person like as me to do a work for Him but it only confirms that “He use the base things of this world to confound the wise’.

The song says that “He knew me yet He loved me, He whose glory makes the Heaven shine, I’m so unworthy of such mercy, yet when He was on the cross, I was on His mind...”

Sometimes God might speak in a particular way that doesn’t seem normal or usual, but it doesn’t make it any less important because He is God, He can choose to speak however he wants. One may be looking for Him to speak softly and instead He speaks loudly: likewise, expecting Him to speak thundering, and instead He speaks in a whisper. At the same time, one has to be able to distinguish the voice of the Lord because there are so many imitations. For some reason people are claiming to hear God speaking to them, and use this medium to falsely lead believers astray. ‘Voices will call, voices will call but my Savior’s voice will be sweeter than all”.

Someone once asked me how I knew when God was speaking, and to this I gave no response because I knew the intent of the question and I know that He speaks in different ways to different people. Once you hear him speak and prove that its He who is speaking, then you become familiar with his voice. Even to this day sometimes when He speaks to

me, I still question if God really spoke to me, when I see some things that don't seem to add up; but I would then be encouraged that His ways are not our ways nor His thoughts our thoughts. He doesn't always seem to make sense but I know that my timing and His timing are different; He doeth all things well.

If God doesn't speak audibly, it doesn't mean that He hasn't spoken, because a lot of people go through their whole lifetime saying that God has never spoken to them when nothing could be farther from the truth. Even though one doesn't literally hear his voice, most times He is speaking to our hearts but we fail to listen and obey because we want to have our own will. Jesus said to Pilate in St John chapter 18:37 "...Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice". Therefore the voice of the Lord is the word of God! God is the Word, the Word is the Voice that speaks to our hearts, and the Voice is God. Every time we read the word, we are hearing the voice of the Lord likewise when we listen to him in messages, prophecies, visions and such like, we adhere to His voice.

What is sometimes challenging is for one to be able to block out the other negative voices. Some of these other voices could be anything from the enemy even just simply trying to confuse us by telling us that we can't when in fact we 'can do all things through Christ that strengthened us'. Other voices which sometimes speak loudly are such like malice, anger, jealousy, hate or any evil thoughts. There is a constant battle of the two opposite voices that speak; the scripture tells us of the voice of flesh that war against the voice of the spirit. Whichever voice we obey that's the voice that wins and is our master. Romans chapter 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye

yield yourselves servant ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto unrighteousness? The flesh not only stands against the spirit, it enters into conflict with the spirit. It speaks with a loud and compelling voice trying to deceive.

I just answered a phone call from someone who told me that last night; she dreamt that she got in trouble at work to the extent that she could be fired. She went to work today and received an email from a friend indicating to her that she had received some money just by clicking on a link that she forwarded. The person that called me said they were just about to click on the link when a voice told her not to open it. She was still curious and was about to open it again because she needed the money, again the voice told her in a more stern voice not to open it. Finally she obeyed that voice; afterwards she found out that her friend hadn't sent the email to her, it was someone hacking into her email account in order to gain access to this person's work confidentiality.

If she had not listened to the voice and had refused to open it, she would have been in trouble and possibly been fired. Thank God she listened to that good, small but firm voice which is the Holy Spirit! The devil will tell you to go ahead and have an affair in your marriage; he may even say to take that which does not belong to you because no one is watching but don't obey him, he is a liar and a deceiver. You will end up with a broken marriage or disease, you could end up in jail for stealing; a lot of prisoners are in jail because they listened to that attractive voice which speaks loudly. Listen to that still small voice that says no. God has never agreed with the devil, when the devil says no, God says yes!

I once had a dream that I went to the altar to pray for someone and when I laid my hand on the individual, she became demonic and wanted to attack me. In the dream I asked her who she was and she told me that her name was Jealousy. I think that such a work of the flesh starts out as a voice that encourages an individual to obey by starting to be jealous of others, and instead of that individual disobeying that voice, he or she nourishes it, and it becomes a giant tree with roots of bitterness. Even though it is challenging to block out or get rid of those negative voices which are dangerous to our spiritual growth, it certainly can be done through prayer and fasting. Developing a spiritual relationship with God helps us to know His voice “my sheep know my voice, and I know them and they know me” (St. John 10:27). We have to often ask ourselves the question “would Jesus tell us to do this and that? “Voices will call but my Savior voice is sweeter than all the world to me”.

I think of the well know bible story of Samuel as he was called by God. As a child, he wasn't familiar with the voice of the Lord. Nevertheless when God had a call for him, He spoke to him audibly. Samuel heard God call him and thought it was Eli but after Eli assured him more than once that he didn't call him but it is God and instructed Samuel how to answer. In obedience when God called Samuel the third time, he knew that he should answer God by saying, “speak Lord thy servant heareth” For Samuel it was the beginning of greater things that would take place.

I am encouraged always by this well-known bible event because there are some similarities to my call by the Lord. I know there are some skeptics who will say that God doesn't speak like that in our time but maybe until they have

experienced it, they will come to accept that God speaks however He chooses. Children should be taught to recognize the voice and the call of God, because we see that Samuel was only a child when God called him and used him. They have to be able to differentiate the voices, with so much peer pressures these days, if not sensitive to voice of the Lord they could end up in trouble that pulls them away from serving God. Let's face it, our children are significant and important to God; God has plans for them long before they are mature enough to understand. I was only a child also, when God called me in His service. Everything I do now for the service of the Lord stems from that call; for the sake of the call, I am laying down my all, no turning back because it's all for the sake of the call.

We should be sensitive to know that God can speak through anyone however young or old they may be. When God wants to speak, God speaks and no one or nothing can stop him, we read of him speaking through an ass in Numbers 22:28 "And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, what have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times". So many times we make mention of this same scripture and say if God can speak through an ass then who then can't He speak to or through. The ass heard the voice of the Lord and God told her what to say, let us not under estimate the power of God! Oh I feel the Holy Spirit as I write, isn't God sweet and wonderful?

Some will experience the voice of the Lord loudly and some softly, but in all cases it is the voice of the almighty God. The psalmist David described the voice of the Lord in Psalm 29 after he encouraged us to give the Lord the glory that's due unto His name.

“..The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: The God of glory thundereth: The Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedar of Lebanon.....

The voice of the Lord divideth the flames fire.

The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests. And in the temple doth everyone speaks of his glory”!!!

Thank you Jesus! When God speaks something happens and we are in awe sometimes. God has authority over every problem and every situation. Look at when the disciples were afraid as the storm was on the boat and they thought that they were about to perish, Jesus in an authoritative voice, whether soft or loud I don't know said “Peace be still” and the storm ceased: His voice makes the difference, when He speaks even the winds and the waves have to obey Him. Whenever the storms of life beat upon us, God in His own time will command it to stop; His voice is Word and God is the Word, hallelujah! What a thought! What a consolation!

When Jesus heard that his friend Lazarus was dead, He was grieved and even cried; I know what it is to lose a good friend. He assured the people that Lazarus would live again because He knew that His voice had authority even over the dead and the grave. Thinking that Jesus was talking about in the future resurrection, the people agreed, but Jesus was present with the authority because he is the resurrection and the life, so He wouldn't have to wait for another day. Jesus

called Lazarus to come forth, and Lazarus even in death knew the voice of the Lord and obeyed; He didn't command death, He commanded Lazarus! Lazarus came forth still bound hands and feet so Jesus again spoke and said loose him and let him live. Lazarus obeyed his voice and death had to obey His voice also by freeing him; He is powerful and all power is given unto him both in heaven and in earth.

If you noticed Jesus called Lazarus by name because He is so powerful that if He had only said "come forth" all the dead would come out of their grave. Just the voice commanding to come forth, the graves would have had to give up all the dead. Praise God! We serve a great big wonderful God who is all knowing and all powerful, thank you Jesus! When God is ready to deliver us He calls us by our names. Our blessings, our deliverance, our provisions, have our individual name on it and no one can take it. Thank you Jesus! He is still calling my name; He is still calling your name. Even though we have sinned and come short, he still is calling our names because of His tender mercies. We should say yes to His will and to His way, and when His spirit speaks to us, with our whole heart, we should agree while our answer is yes Lord.

I'm reminded of Elijah when He complained to God that he was left alone because all the prophets were slain and he alone was left, he fell into self-pity. Neither the earthquake nor the fire could let him cover his face in acknowledgement of God, but the still voice did. There have been multiple times that God has spoken to me through visions, a prophetic word or in messages to name a few. I have also heard the voice of discouragement, fear, confusion but I choose which one to yield to. This is where the choice is now made, do I listen to

God through the written or spoken words or do I listen to the enemy with his deceitful schemes?

Elijah heard the voice of fear from Jezebel and he ran away but when God spoke in that still small voice it made a difference and he soon surrendered to God in acknowledgement. When those loud voices of fear and discouragement sound in our ears, we should just tune into that sweet small voice that tells us that Jesus cares and loves us all. We have to remember that those voices are there to tell us that we can't make it, our children won't return to the Lord, our marriages will fail, God is not doing anything for us and such alike but God is not in those voices; He is in the small voice that tells us that we can do all things through Christ that strengthens us. Hallelujah!

1 Kings 19:12 'And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire and after the fire a still small voice'. Sometimes there might be people in an audience listening to a profound message but there sits a lonely soul that just thirst for God; but with all the music, the noise, the preaching, he is still is so lonely and doesn't get the message. Someone might just get up and walk over to him and in a sweet comforting voice, let him know that God loves and cares for him; he then gets the message through that soft and tender voice!

I remember an older sister from our church that is gone on to be with the Lord now, she testified of one of the ways God spoke. She said she was going through a very trying and difficult time in her life. She wasn't sure if He was aware of the storms she faced but as she was on her knees cleaning and praying one day, wondering if God really has been hearing her prayers; her employer came and handed her a cup of tea which she accepted, she read the writings on the cup which said "God answers prayer". She was so encouraged, that she

often testified that a ‘cup’ spoke to her; Hallelujah! God speaks through donkey and he also speaks through ‘cup’: He speaks through the fire at times like when he spoke to Moses in the burning bush and the bush was not consumed. He speaks through thunder and lightning and most of all through a still small voice! Let us listen, trust, and obey Him!

Easier said than done, I know but if you want direction you have to be willing to do what He asks. Sometimes the word that one gets from God can be unsettling at times; He told Naaman to go wash in river Jordan seven times to get the healing he needed; yes the dirty waters. God could send one on a mission which is hard and full of rejection and ask such a one to execute a life of faith with no guaranteed provision or comfort except that of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is a comforter which comes to “lead you into all truth and bring all things to your remembrance.” We want to hear God’s voice but we want to hear it comfortably or softly, we don’t want it to take us out of our comfort zone.

Abraham was accustomed to hearing God’s voice and learned to trust and obey God in all things. God told him to move to a far country which Abraham knew not but he obeyed and went by faith.

When Abraham heard the voice of God asking him to sacrifice his only son it wasn’t a comfortable request, but He knew enough to know that God’s voice is to be obeyed at all cost. As hard as it was, Abraham set out to accomplish the master’s plan even though it pained his heart. He was just about to use the knife when the voice spoke to him again, and now with a more pleasant message, that a lamb was provided for him so he didn’t have to sacrifice Isaac, his only son. Because Abraham obeyed and acted on the voice of the

Lord, God promised that his seed shall be blessed; out of obedience comes blessing! Until today we are encouraged by this act of faith and total obedience by Abraham, to know that we should obey the voice of the Lord.

Sometimes when the Lord speaks to my heart to do an act of kindness or do a service for him, I first wonder if I will be rejected or if my motives would be misunderstood. I remember going through a very hard time and was fasting and praying about it day after day but nothing changed. One day God impressed it upon my heart (His voice) to fast again and I thought to myself what would be different now from all the prayer and fasting I was doing.

I told myself that even though I have been doing these alms and nothing happened, I'm going to trust God because He told me to do it; whatever He tells us to do we should do it! After I obeyed His voice and did what He said, my prayers were answered almost immediately! I had a key for the church building and I went there to fast and pray by myself on Wednesday and on the following Sunday, a member whom I hadn't seen for a while came to church and after we talked for a while, he said that he had something to give to me. I had an outstanding student loan for over twenty thousand dollars, and to my amazement he gave me a cheque for ten thousand dollars!!! Hallelujah to the Lamb! His voice made the difference! I obeyed His voice even though I had tried so many times unsuccessfully.

I am reminded of Peter fishing all night and catching nothing but when Jesus spoke, His voice made the difference and he spoke with authority and power. Jesus told Peter to put out the net and Peter said even though he "toiled all night and caught nothing, Nevertheless at His word (voice)", Peter

obeyed. We know that the rest of the story that his fish net broke and he beckoned to others to partake. Again we can see that His voice makes the difference so we should obey Him despite how we may feel at the time; if He says cast the net, then cast the net; He said to cast our cares upon Him, so that's what we should do, just cast our cares upon HIM; He is always true!

I didn't literally hear His voice this time but He impressed the thought on my heart and I knew it was His voice because after a while I got to know the voice of my Lord! It's good to have a close relationship with God because you have the advantage of being familiar with his voice: sometimes when you have a close relationship with someone, for example, your spouse, they don't have to speak verbally for you to hear what they say. 'And He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me that I am His own, and the joy we share as we tarry there, no other has ever known'. Whether He speaks in a whisper, thundering, an earthquake, a prophecy, a sermon or an impression on my heart I know when He speaks! Thank you Jesus! Do I still doubt Him sometimes? Yes! Sure, but I ask Him for grace to trust Him more. Jesus keeps proving Himself over and over again in so many ways to me.

Once we went to the Apostolic Ark convention and, and in the meeting, the Bishop asked everyone to give a faith offering. I remembered him saying that if we give God will bless us seven folds. We didn't have much money but Reg said to write a check for a hundred dollars because it was impressed upon his heart to do so. We obeyed the voice of the Lord and gave the check in faith, believing God. I'm not exaggerating, this was done on Saturday, and in two days which was Monday, someone called me to say that he had

put a check for seven hundred dollars in the mail for me. I couldn't believe my ears and I asked why I was getting this check. The person said he was in the bank doing some financial transactions when a voice told him to give me seven hundred dollars and he didn't hesitate, he bought the money order right away. The voice didn't say six or eight hundred, it was seven hundred which is seven times the amount we gave to the Lord. Now will you call that coincidence or do you see the wonder working power of God? I won't doubt God, I know He is real! Isn't the voice of God to be obeyed? We OBEYED THE VOICE to plant that seed of faith, and gave the hundred dollars; this gentleman also OBEYED THE VOICE, and gave us seven hundred dollars. Yes people, if the voice of God tells you to give, then give and prove God once more; be careful not to give grudgingly, but willingly.

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