

Would You Like to See God?

By Paul D. Norcross

I'm not sure where the following story came from – I received it from a wonderful e-mail. But the lessons in it are tremendous. It is called "The Letter".

The Letter

Ruth went to her mailbox and there was only one letter. She picked it up and looked at it before opening, but then she looked at the envelope again. There was no stamp, no postmark. Only her name and address appeared on the envelope. She read:

Dear Ruth,

I'm going to be in your neighborhood Saturday afternoon and I'd like to stop by for a visit.

Love always,

Jesus

Ruth's hands were shaking as she placed the letter on the table. "Why would the Lord want to visit me? I'm nobody special. I don't have anything to offer." With that thought, Ruth remembered her empty kitchen cabinets. "Oh my goodness, I really don't have anything to offer. I'll have to run down to the store and buy something for dinner." She reached for her purse and counted out its contents. Five dollars and forty cents. "Well, I can get some bread and cold cuts, at least."

Ruth threw on her coat and hurried out the door. A loaf of French bread, half a pound of sliced turkey, and a carton of milk left her with a grand total of twelve cents to last until Monday. Nonetheless, she felt good as she headed home with her meager offerings tucked under her arm.

"Hey, lady, can you help us?" Ruth had been so absorbed in her dinner plans, she hadn't even noticed the two figures huddled in the alleyway. A man and a woman, both of them dressed in little more than rags.

"Look, lady, I ain't got a job, ya know, and my wife and I have been living out here on the street, and well, now it's getting cold and we're kinda hungry and, well, if you could help us, lady we'd really appreciate it." Ruth looked at them both. They were dirty, they smelled bad, and frankly, she was certain that they could get some kind of work if they really wanted to.

"Sir, I'd like to help you, but I'm a poor woman myself. All I have is a few cold cuts and some bread, and I'm having an important guest for dinner tonight. This is all I have to serve to Him."



"Yeah, well, okay, lady. I understand. Thanks anyway." The man put his arm around the woman's shoulders, turned and headed back into the alley. As she watched them leave, Ruth felt a familiar twinge in her heart. "Sir, wait!" The couple stopped and turned as she ran down the alley after them. "Look, why don't you take this food. I'll figure out something else to serve my guest." She handed the man her grocery bag.

"Thank you, lady. Thank you very much!"

"Yes, thank you!" It was the man's wife, and Ruth could see now that she was shivering. "You know, I've got another coat at home. Here, why don't you take this one." Ruth unbuttoned her jacket and slipped it over the woman's shoulders. Then, smiling, she turned and walked back to the street – without her coat, and with nothing to serve her guest.

By the time she got home, Ruth was chilled and worried. She reached the front door. The Lord was coming to visit and she didn't have anything to offer Him. She fumbled through her purse for the door key. But as she did, she noticed another envelope in her mailbox. "That's odd," she thought. "The mailman doesn't usually come twice in one day." She took the envelope out of the box and opened it.

Dear Ruth,

It was good to see you again. Thank you for the lovely meal, and thank you also for the beautiful coat.

Love always,

Jesus

The air was still cold, but even without her coat, Ruth no longer noticed.

So often we go through life and miss the things that are important to God. All the while that He wants to build relationships to Him, we are building relationships to the world. While the Lord wants us to dwell on things above that we don't yet see, we dwell on the things we can. Our children start to become entangled with the things of the world before our eyes, while we wish we could unplug them from new-age values learned in public school, television, and video games.

The Lord has an answer. He is visiting the earth now. Through the Holy Spirit, He is cementing, improving, and refining His relationships in preparation for His wedding.

Improving the Relationship

The difference between those who abide in the earth, and those who abide in Jesus Christ is much like the difference between Miriam and Aaron on the one hand, and Moses on the other.

Numbers 12:1-3

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

The pride of Aaron and Miriam almost knocks you over. They were jealous of Moses' connection with the Lord. They figured that since they were also prophets, they should receive the same status as Moses. After all, who was Moses to be getting all the attention? Very clearly, God put the next verse in place so no one would miss

the message: meekness is a very big deal to God. Moses was the meekest man in all the earth.

Moses often spent time alone with the Lord at the place of meeting in the tabernacle. Starting with the burning bush experience, Moses learned to hear the sound of the Lord's voice. He chose to cultivate it, and later spent a great deal of time before the Lord at his "meeting place" at the tabernacle. Moses' relationship with the Lord continued to grow during these times.

Not so with Aaron and Miriam. Instead of becoming enamored and completely wrapped up with growing in relationship with the Lord, Aaron and Miriam coveted what that relationship produced in Moses – increasing blessings and favor, and the exaltation God says He will give to the humble in I Peter 5:5b-6.

1 Peter 5:5b-6

... and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

The Lord heard the pride of Aaron and Miriam. Moses may have sensed it, but the Lord specifically took the time to note some important details in this passage. God hears the meek. It is the meek that will inherit the earth. It is the pure in heart that will see God. The difference between Aaron and Miriam's pride and Moses' meekness is the difference between hearing the voice of the Lord and not hearing it.

Numbers 12:4-7

And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

God was angry with Aaron and Miriam! Imagine how their knees must have trembled when He called them forth apart from Moses and questioned their prophetic ministries! Aaron and Miriam had been operating as prophets for the nation of Israel. Yet God, in His anger with their attitude against Moses, said, in effect, not only am I angry with your pride, but there is also a limit concerning how

intimate I can become with you. And unless you drop your unyieldedness, the best you can expect for a touch from Me is a vision or a dream.

Please don't get me wrong. A vision or a dream from God is awesome all by itself. But God is telling us that we can have more.

Meekness is a very big deal to God.

Psalms 37:11

But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.



We Can Draw More Into Him

Seeing a vision or a dream from God is certainly wonderful. But clearly for those who want more, more is available from God. The record continues to explain what God prefers.

Numbers 12:7-8

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

Not only does the Lord want to talk with His people (My sheep hear my voice – John 10:27) but God is willing to show people (meek people) His similitude!

What is a similitude? Strong's Concordance tells us it is a likeness, a portion, an image, a manifestation, an embodiment. Brown-Driver-Briggs-Genesius calls "similitude" a likeness, representation, form, or semblance.

Look, it is not experience-chasing to hunger after more of God. Does your heart beat faster when you come into the presence of the Lord? Is His presence what you seek? Is it the longing of your heart to be with the Lord, drawing ever closer into His rest around His dinner table? Do you desire above all else to spend time alone with Him? Even if you are not at this point yet, do you want to get there?

We serve an amazing God. He is more than willing to help us draw closer to Him than we ever have before. He wants this more than you do! This is the message of the Kingdom of God! This is what the kingdom is all about.

The Kingdom is His Presence

You see, the kingdom that Jesus came to preach is not a place, and it is not a time period. The kingdom of God is His presence.

1 Corinthians 4:20

For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

Romans 14:17-18

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

Luke 17:20-21

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

In the kingdom, we learn to hear the voice of the King. We learn to come into His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise (Psalm 100:4). Like Moses at the burning bush, we learn to be still before Him and know that He is God (Psalm 46:10). We learn to not harden our hearts as in the day of provocation in the wilderness wandering, and therefore be able to hear His voice (Psalm 95:7-8; Hebrews 3:7-8, 15, 4:7). And we learn that in order for God to be God to His people and make them a nation of priests they were to obey His voice and keep the covenant (Exodus 19:5-6).

Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant. Today, if we become meek as Moses, not having hardened hearts against the Holy Spirit, we will hear His voice as promised in Hebrews 3:7 and 8. We will hear His voice, open the door to His knock, sit at His table and fellowship with Him, and be invited to sit at His throne (Revelation 3:20-21). What a privilege! What a joy! What an incentive to press in to the things of the Holy Spirit through meekness, humility, and hunger for more of Him!

Psalms 16:11

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Seeking first the kingdom of God is a matter of seeking His presence. It is for the kingdom of heaven, the presence of the Lord, that a man will sell all that he has to buy the field of treasure. It is the presence of the Lord that is like leaven that leavens the whole lump, causing the body of Christ to rise.

It is the presence of the Lord in a person's life that is like a mustard seed which grows into a tree to which others will flock and seek shelter. It is the presence of the Lord that is the pearl of great price. If you read the parables of the kingdom such as noted in Matthew 13, realizing "kingdom" refers to His presence, then the gospels will open up to you in a wonderful new way. The kingdom of God truly is at hand because His presence is among us. He is in you.

God Wants You

The first lesson a person needs to know in coming into a wonderfully intimate two-way relationship with the Lord is that He will never leave you nor forsake you. Jesus is always

alongside you. You need never fear that He isn't listening. His message to the meek is this: are you willing to be still and listen to Him?

The second lesson people need to learn who would come into a close relationship with Him is that He is well pleased with them. He is well pleased with those who learn to hear Him, counsel with Him, and get revelation manna from Him each day around His table. The reason people need to know He is pleased with those who faithfully seek Him is because our flesh is quick to condemn us. We quickly lose our zeal to enter His presence and hear His voice if we do not realize that He is pleased with our diligent efforts to do so.

"Oh, I don't hear the voice of the Lord like you do" is a comment I hear at times. Some people even get offended by the concept of hearing from the Lord. But we must not make the same mistake the disciples made – the ones who chose to no longer walk with Jesus because they were offended by His teaching this very same lesson (John 6:45-66).

The Lord's heart is for you to come meet Him in the garden where He can speak with you, and you can be refreshed in His presence. He knows that man will not live by bread alone, but by every word (rhema, i.e. words of revelation) that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3). He knows we must each learn to eat of His flesh by learning to hear His voice.

Pride stifles intimacy. Pride can be very subtle. The Holy Spirit's primary job is to lead us into the presence of the Lord, and then help us to carry out the things He tells us to do. The Holy Spirit can help us surrender our pride, our reputation, our identities outside of the cross of Jesus Christ. He can reveal the hidden things of our hearts that prevent us from drawing closer into His heart. Why not ask for His help? Praise God for our Comforter, our Guide, our Helper given by Jesus to help us learn to enter His presence, and hear His voice.

Jesus is Waiting For You

Jesus is waiting for you in the garden. He longs for His bride to get ready. He is calling a people with whom He can be intimate, a lover who longs for the day of His wedding. Will He wed someone He cannot talk to, who will not hear His whispered love, and who spurns His caressing thoughts into their spirit?

Song of Solomon 6:2-3

My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

Song of Solomon 8:13-14

Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.

Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

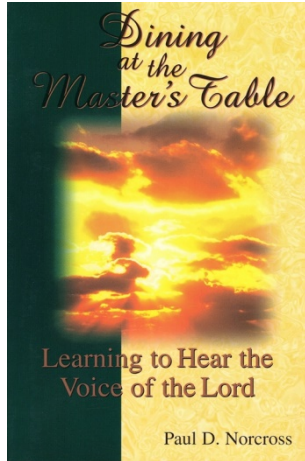
May the Lord fill you with His love and His presence as you seek Him first. May He

continue to be your first love, and the sole object of your desire, in Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

With all our love in His wonderful name,

Paul & Rita Norcross

New Book Release



A new book, Dining at the Master's Table: Learning to Hear the Voice of the Lord (220 pages) has just been released. This book carries a strong anointing to help people learn to hear and follow the voice of the Lord in their lives. If you would like a copy, please send a \$12 donation to Kingdom Faith Ministries, and include \$3.00 for shipping. I can't tell you what this book has been doing for people – it's amazing. By the way, children as young as 11 have been released powerfully in the Spirit as they read this book.

The Lord has said that Dining at the Master's Table will go over the nations because there is actually more hunger for this subject overseas than in the United States. The very next day after I received that message, I began receiving inquiries about this book from Israel and England through telephone calls and e-mails! God is so astonishing.

I have noticed that many saints who have read the book are often immediately ordering 10 or more copies to give out to friends. If you are led in this fashion, there are quantity reductions in the suggested donation levels. If you feel led to do so, please feel free to pass along this book to your local Christian bookstore to ask them to carry it. The Lord commissioned me to write this book, and I believe it is a message that is essential for the church to really hear in these end times.

(Author's update note: It is now 17 years that this book has been in circulation. It is currently part of the curriculum for over 80 Bible Schools and colleges in more than 25 nations. Over 8,000 pastors in East and Central Africa have graduated from a school of ministry built around this book in the past four years 20012-2015). This book has become a must-have reference for every member of the Bride of Christ. God did what He said He would do. **Hallelujah!**)