

Closer Than A Brother

“What was from the beginning, what **we have heard**, what we have **seen with our eyes**, what **we have observed** and have **touched with our hands**, . . . what we have seen and heard we also declare to you, so that you may also have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” (From 1 John 1:1-3 CSB) This shows the intimate relationship of Jesus’ disciples with Him.

My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:27 CSB)

Do you realize all the times when He is speaking to you? We know He speaks through the Bible; and that is the most reliable word.

He speaks through nature as indicated in

Romans 1:18-21. He speaks through others, through circumstances. He speaks through dreams and visions, even sometimes audibly though it is rare. He often speaks through a still small voice which is easy to miss if you aren’t tuned in; this is the voice of His Holy Spirit who resides in you. Do you recognize His voice? I didn’t for a long time.

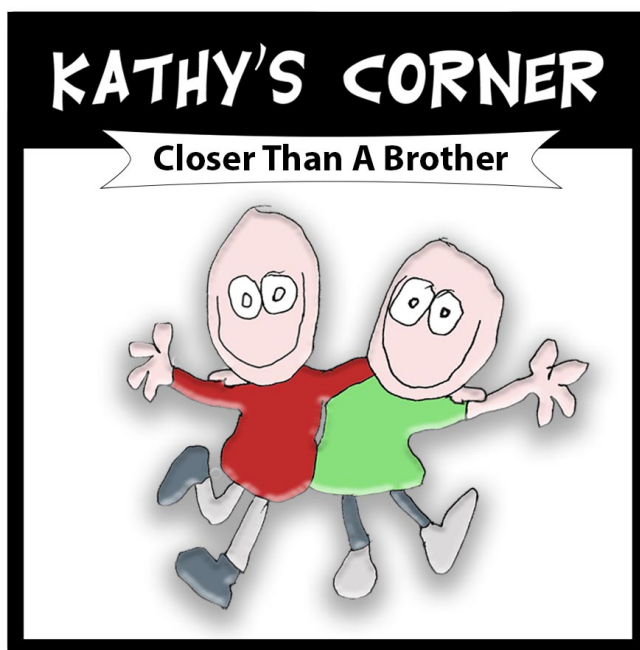
See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 CSB)

What a wonderful promise this is! It was given by Christ to the “lukewarm church” as he called them to repentance. We see the gentleness of One who doesn’t break the door down, but waits for us to open it. This is an invitation to us to have intimacy with Him. It is a fact that this verse has been effective in bringing people to the Savior—the first intimate moment with the Holy Spirit for many. It should just be the beginning of intimacy with Him; however, many savor this beginning while neglecting Him throughout much of the rest of their lives. Come back to your First Love! **Intimacy was never meant to be a one-time thing.**

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon defines the word translated as *eat* in this verse, *Strong’s NT 1172*, particularly for this verse in its completeness: “I will make him to share in my most intimate and blissful contact.” This is the life He desires for us.

“What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light. What you hear in a whisper, proclaim on the housetops.” (Matthew 10:27 CSB) Jesus was speaking to His disciples about the days ahead when He said this.

I don’t pretend to understand the whole of this little verse, but I do know many times I hear His voice in the early morning hours before daylight and before the busyness sets in. It is my desire that Christ live not only in me, but through me—not just sometimes, but at all times to just let Him live. I woke up in the wee hours Wednesday singing to Him spontaneously—nothing



sophisticated or memorable. I just started to sing a simple tune I hadn't heard before. I don't know that these are the exact words but it went something like this:

I love You, Lord. I praise You now.
I want to serve You, Lord, but I don't know how.

Before I could sing anymore I *heard*, "Include Me!" He was telling me **how** to serve Him. He wouldn't tell me to include Him unless I had been leaving Him out of some things, maybe many things. I have talked to Him off and on all day long, but this evidently was not the inclusion He desired. I repented. I am intentional now to be sure He is included. I invite Him into each activity as I would a close friend, so He is welcome with me in whatever I am doing, giving Him the opportunity to engage with others as He directs my steps. I am finding increasing opportunities as He opens people to converse with me. Probably many of you beat me to this realization. It is shameful that it took me so long, but these articles that I write weekly are a summary in part of what He teaches me each week, a journal of sorts. I can only share what *I hear, see and touch* concerning His life in me, in hopes that what I share makes Him more real to someone, and they will realize His availability to them. He truly is no respecter of persons. If He were, He would not include me.

His love is too beautiful to be ignored. His love is too precious to take advantage of or to be unappreciated. His *life* is the same—beautiful and to be appreciated.

Since we were created in His image, once we are reborn, we find that the new creation—our new selves fit us much better than the old. It becomes comfortable to live His way, to live by faith in the Faithful One. The freedom He gives is a comfortable thing. Thank You for it, Jesus! Like new shoes that need to be broken in, new life will become more comfortable as we continue to walk in it. Studying it, talking about it, isn't the same as walking in it by faith. Talking and studying do help us to know the One in whom we believe that we can learn to trust Him—our First love!

Jesus rescued us from our enemies to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness in his presence all our days. (*See Luke 1:72-75*)

You were made for more!

Sometimes I think that the devil believes more in us and who we are to become in Christ than we do in ourselves. That's why he fights us so viciously. You fall asleep when you read your Bible, You start to pray and the interruptions start. If you start to make a difference through Christ, your health, your loved ones, all the things most precious to you will be threatened and come under attack. In the last days even the heavens will be shaken. (*See Matthew 24:29*) What remains is what is truly eternal. Times of shaking will reveal what isn't founded on the solid Rock—Jesus.

Be on guard!

So, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall. (*1 Corinthians 10:12 CSB*) We have to find our stability in Jesus.

The Lord arranged a conversation with a man at Food Lion this week; what he shared reminded me of the way the devil works. He told me how when he was out walking he observed two hawks working together. Have you noticed many times you will see a squirrel, but when it sees you it will move to the other side of a tree out of sight. The hawks knew this. One hawk was

stationed high in a tree out of the sight of the squirrel. Another hawk made himself visible to the squirrel. The squirrel moved to the other side of the tree unaware of the danger of the hawk which was waiting in the tree—the hawk who swooped down and got him. He was ruined by the unexpected!

We are no match for the devil on our own. We learn from our mistakes, but the devil will have something different up his sleeve.

Be Intimate How?

Meditation. Meditation can be intimacy. I think David knew this well. Allow the word of God to bring that spark into your life—actually to become life as He reveals His word to you personally. Don't meditate only on His word but also on His creation, His molding of you, those people in your life (not coincidental), what he has allowed you to experience. Deep calls to deep. Will you continue in the shallows? Beneficial meditation is finding God in everything you are thinking about. He is always there. "God winks" are a reminder, and so is every blessing big or small. Take time to notice these. Being thankful is a form of meditation, praise is if our hearts match our lips. When we meditate we are nourished by what He is providing—our daily bread. We will grow and ultimately produce for His joy and glory.

There are times to be blessed and times to be a blessing. Look for these!