



Dear friends,

Greetings in Jesus' Name from sunny California! Thanks to frequent flyer coupons and the gracious hospitality of Jackie's family, we are enjoying a vacation -- first in L.A. and then San Francisco. It has been a long time since we've had a vacation, so we are really appreciating it. Jackie has been bone - tired - weary and in need of a break, and we wanted to attend her niece's wedding. Jackie also has wanted time with her mom, two brothers and sister (and families) who all are here. Furthermore, the Lord was telling me to wait on Him for a while, so it has been good to be here in a different environment.

Furthermore, thanks to a laptop computer, faxes, phones, and Kinko's copy centers, I can always have an office away from home! Since I am not yet completely delivered from workaholism, I took the ministry financial records on our vacation. Jackie agreed...so that makes it O.K., doesn't it? I was finally able to put many months of records into the computer. (We haven't had help for a long time.) As soon as I figured out how to use the software, the work went quickly, so I didn't ruin our vacation. I just used some time when everyone else was busy with other things. We now have current reports available! For us this was a breakthrough, and took a load of our shoulders.

Just before we left for California, Gordy, our home church pastor, gave me a word from Elijah's life about **listening to the Lord's still, small voice**. It seemed very timely for us, and caused me to spend some time looking at I Kings 19:9-13. In these verses we find Elijah in a cave on Mt. Horeb, discouraged and troubled after confronting Ahab and being threatened by Jezebel.

The Lord told Elijah to *"go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD". And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."*

God seemed to be giving Elijah an "object lesson" on how to recognize His voice. This great man of God had become weary and disoriented. He needed a tangible reminder of God's character and nature. So God set up a demonstration of wind, earthquake and fire. Though the Lord probably made these things happen, they did not contain His presence. *"...but the Lord was not in the wind...etc."*

After all this tumult came the sound of a *"still, small voice"*. When Elijah heard it, he came out of the cave and heard the Lord speak to him. The wind and the earthquake and the fire had not drawn him out. Perhaps they had made him retreat even farther into the cave -- after all, the wind was strong enough to break rocks! Regardless, what is important was that the Lord was not in these strong and compelling forces. Instead, He came in the still small voice. Other Bible translations say *"the sound of a gentle blowing"* or *"the sound of sheer silence"* or *"a gentle whisper"*. My own translation would be *"a calm, small sound"*.

This "still, small voice" represents God's chosen way of communication. His presence produces an atmosphere of inward tranquillity, and He comes as a "whisper in our soul". His voice is calming, stabilizing, and quiet. The One who created the wind and the fire, and who can shake the heavens and the earth, chooses to speak to His children with a calm, small sound.

Life around us can be compelling and noisy. The good as well as the bad that may happen around us can have a strong pull on our soul. We can be tossed and turned in the turbulence of circumstances, our attention drawn away by the loudest voices around us. We may say to ourselves "Look at the powerful anointing on that person! I should be doing the same thing!" Or, "Look at what Satan is doing over there! I should be doing something about it!"

Are you being pulled by external forces rather than being led by the Lord Himself? Do you let the loudest voices guide your life and determine your existence? Or are you being ruled over by the gentle, almost noiseless voice of the Father? Colossians 3:15 says *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts..."* The definition of peace is inward calm and tranquillity. Do you have a place of calm in the center of your soul, in which you can frequently find refuge from the pressures of life? Is there an inward tranquillity where you find communion with the Lord?

Life cannot be lived by simply responding to outward stimuli. Life in Christ is lived in the secret place, the abiding place within...the place where He dwells, and where we are to cohabit and coexist with Him. It is a life lived in peace, for Jesus said *"in Me you have peace"*. Good -- even godly -- things around us may not be the Lord's voice to us.

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In the last few months Jackie and I have been positively and strongly influenced by the refreshing of the Spirit in many settings, under various ministries. We are awestruck by the anointing of the Spirit on many men and women of God who have come to help lead God's people into revival. But we are finding that we cannot determine God's will for us from observing their anointing and ministry -- as powerful as it might be. Rather, we must retreat into the secret place with His written Word and listen for the calm gentle sound of His personal presence. That is where we see what He is doing, and hear what He is saying...to us.

We have found it hard this year to leave an atmosphere of revival and go to a distant place to minister to a few souls with whatever anointing the Lord may give us. Yet, if the Spirit beckons us to go -- if the inward calm voice of the Father beckons us -- that is all that matters.

When Elijah heard the still small voice, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out to the entrance of the cave. The Lord said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah rehearsed his own discouragement with God. Then the Lord gave Him new marching orders, and assured him that he was not alone. Through a fresh word, Elijah was renewed and prepared for what was to come. And so it is with us.

The Lord is bringing a season of refreshing, renewing, reviving, refiring, and recommissioning his people for the next phase of history. Only He knows what is coming. He wants to give each of us personal marching orders for the days ahead. Let Him finish his inward work in you, and let Him help you to be firmly anchored to His Word and His Presence -- His still small voice. Determine to let the peace of Christ rule in your heart -- and nothing else. No longer be swayed by influences around you, be they good or bad, be they friend or foe.

Perhaps you are like Elijah in that cave. Life's experiences may have left you feeling weary or discouraged. The increasing turmoil of the world may seem overwhelming. Even the present signs of God's power may leave you somewhat disoriented.

Perhaps the Lord is giving you a lesson in guidance. Get alone with Him. Wait a little longer for Him to show Himself to you. (It takes a little extra time.) Don't let the external pressures guide your life -- especially the loud and compelling ones. Listen for the voice of your Shepherd. You are His sheep. You belong to Him, and He is the One who has laid down His life for you. Listen to Him. Jesus said of Himself, "*He calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. ...the sheep follow Him because they know His voice, and a stranger they simply will not follow...*"

...Wait for the sound of the still, small voice.

### *To Russia with love...*

By God's grace we will travel to Russia on **November 28**. First we'll go to Moscow for a visit with Steve Reuter, who heads up Project World. It is under Steve's leadership that we work with churches in Ukraine and now Russia, and it is under his leadership that Jennifer is in Perm. From Moscow we will go to Perm to minister to some of the new churches that are in that region. (And we will see Jen.) The harvest field in Russia is very ripe. Jennifer told us in her last letter that in every meeting she attends, dozens people are being saved!

This will be our first ministry trip into Russia itself. (Other than one overnight there in 1993 on our way home from Ukraine.) We will return mid - December. *\*\*\*Please pray for the approval of our visas, for the finances to go, and that the Lord will accomplish His purpose for this trip.*

### **Aid collection for Ukraine continues...**

We are still receiving gifts to fill the shipping container for Ukraine. We are gathering meat, vegetables, rice, flour, sugar, infant formula and food, and vitamins. Also needed are medical dressings, ace bandages, braces, wheelchairs, etc. Financial gifts are greatly needed so that we can purchase food in bulk quantities. Please agree with us for this urgent need to be met very soon.

### **Thanks for praying and giving...**

Please continue to pray for us, and for our family. We are in as much need as ever of His grace and mercy. We are in need of His wisdom, and we are in need of His provision. It is amazing to us how God has taken care of us through twenty four years of full-time ministry. Only by His awesome grace do we continue -- **and only by the prayers of the saints does His grace become fully effective in our lives!**

We are grateful for you, and again thank those of you who have given to our support. May the Lord return the blessing to you over and over! You are our fellow workers in His service.

**Would you let us know how we can pray for you?** We are concerned about you, and we want to bring to the Father your burdens and your need for a breakthrough.

May you experience more and more of the amazing grace of God -- grace that brings strength in the middle of your weakness, shelter in the time of your storm, and grace that brings you out into His abundant life!

Yours in Christ,

*John and Jackie*