



A Renewed Intimacy

Last in a Series

Knowing Him

I RISE EARLY, BEFORE DAWN HAS BRIGHTENED THE SKY. Corduroyed clouds in the east are just beginning to take on the pink and orange pastels of a new day. Nearing autumn, the apple trees are burdened by their fruit. Beneath them the grass is wet with dew, and dimpled by the hooves of deer that have helped themselves to the lower delicacies.

The songbirds are now more subdued. Their loud and insistent voices of spring and early summer have been stilled by family life. The mates they once so pleadingly sought with their singing have borne them little ones who have, by now, flown into lives of their own. It is now too late for new families, so the avian world is slowed and hushed by preparations for the coming migration south.

As dawn seeps across the sky, its brightening palette spills across the lingering wisps that crown the western hills. I gaze toward the west, over the mist enshrouded valley. The morning is cool and fresh. Alive, yet serene.

"Lord Jesus..."

He is here. I feel Him. I feel the enveloping warmth of His presence. But I do not yet hear His voice—and He has not yet heard mine. My mind is still empty and lethargic from slumber. Coherent words are not yet forming in my brain.

Still, we communicate. Words, though preferred, are not necessary between friends, between brothers, between Master and servant. Silence in His realm has its own eloquence.

I have not stepped outside on a fresh summer morn to meet Him. Jesus was not out here already, waiting for me. No, He came with me. He has been my companion throughout the night, the day before, and the day before that. It is a pleasant thought to imagine that He has stepped outside for much the same reasons as I: to enjoy the stillness of His creation, and to commune with a friend.

I have not come out to be where He is. I have come out so as to hear Him better.

Counsel

Like a shepherd He will tend His flock,
In His arm He will gather the lambs
And carry them in His bosom;
He will gently lead the nursing ewes.

Isaiah 40:11

“Lord Jesus...”

There He is. His voice is not added to the morning hush. I do not hear Him with my ears. I hear Him with my heart. My spirit meets with His, setting loose a holy vibration that I feel in my heart. It is my “sixth sense” that hears Him.

“Lord Jesus...”

“My child.”

“Thank You for the beauty of this morning.”

“My pleasure. I am enjoying it with you.”

“I missed You yesterday.”

“As I missed you. Where were you?”

“Why is it, when I am away, it seems like You are away?”

“Why does it seem like the sun moves across the sky?”

“Hmmm...”

“Go ahead. I’ll wait.”

“Because that’s what it looks like on earth.”

“You can do better than that.”

“Because we humans think we are the center of the universe.”

“Now you’re waking up! So, about yesterday...”



Standing in the morning stillness, gazing across the valley to the tree-clothed hillside, my Savior and I converse. It is not really prayer—at least not by the traditions of the corporate “Shall we pray,” or the more earnest confessions of the sequestered prayer closet. It is not so much prayer, as *communion*. Words pass between my Lord and I, but also feelings, wordless groans, shared emotions, joy, anger, exaltation, sweet release.

Is He always in attendance in my life? Surely He is, but do I know it? Do I feel Him when He is near?

I fear that my relationship with Jesus—that sweet and mysterious communion of creation with Creator—has become dry and brittle. I fear that in my life the too-familiar vernacular—Savior, Lord, Redeemer—has fallen into benumbed disrepair.

Even as I serve Him, I have forgotten Him. Even as I remember His sacrifice, I have forgotten Him. I have forgotten what He is to be in my life—not two thousand years ago, but now. Today.

And in this moment I realize that I have *not* forgotten Jesus. I have not forgotten who He is—who He is to me.

Oh, there are days when I set Him aside, as I did yesterday. There are days when I imagine I am the center of the universe. There are days when I imagine that my own counsel is worth more than His. But it is not long before the insanity passes, and I remember that it is not I, but Jesus who sits at the pivot point of all time and space. And I remember that before His, my counsel is but chaff scattered in the wind.

For a child will be born to us,
a son will be given to us;
And the government
will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called
Wonderful Counselor...

Isaiah 9:6a

And in His grace He inclines His ear to my admission, forgives my vanity, and fills my heart with His words of truth.

With You

“Lord Jesus...”

“My child.”

“Thank You for loving me.”

“I have loved you from the beginning.”

“From my beginning?”

“No, from Mine.”

“Thank You for this morning.”

“It is My pleasure.”

“I have enjoyed this time with You. Will You stay a bit longer?”

“I will never leave you.”



“I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:20b

*When morning gilds the skies,
My heart awaking cries:
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Alike at work or prayer
To Jesus I repair:
May Jesus Christ be praised.*

*Does sadness fill my mind,
A solace here I find:
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Or fades my earthly bliss,
My comfort still is this:
May Jesus Christ be praised.*

*In heaven’s eternal bliss
The loveliest strain is this,
May Jesus Christ be praised;
The powers of darkness fear,
When this sweet chant they hear:
May Jesus Christ be praised.*

*Be this, while life is mine,
My canticle divine,
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Be this th’ eternal song,
Through all the ages long:
May Jesus Christ be praised.*

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