

Comforted by the Voice of God

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

When we consider the creation—the trees like spires, the mountains like great pyramids, the midnight chandelier of God’s handiwork in the heavens, the lakes, the streams, the teardrops that come from heaven in the form of rain, the fresh dew on the grass, the lilies and the roses and all the varieties of flowers, and the fields—our thoughts are endless. In everything that God has made, we see His *nature*.

God’s nature is revealed in His creation. The powerful nature of God created the magnificent mountains and the oceans on an earth that is 8,000 miles in diameter, 198,980,000 square miles, and 264,000,000,000 cubic miles. Yet with the vastness of the Earth itself and all that we know it contains, the planet Saturn is 995 times larger and Jupiter is 1,281 times larger. And the sun, only a medium size star, could contain 1,384,462 planets the size of Earth. Still, with all the delicate balances and the sheer magnitude of

His creation, God maintains perfect control of the universe (while men are still trying to figure it out!).

In everything we see God's nature—the nature that is all powerful. God's nature established the planets in their orbits, the “rising” of the sun, the phases of the moon, and the rainbow after a storm. But even more magnificent is how the voice of God's nature speaks to us through His living Word.

Chapter One

RIGHTLY RELATED BY HEARING GOD'S VOICE

Consider the *voice* of God's nature. In Isaiah 6:8, God said to the prophet Isaiah, "Who will go for us?" And Isaiah said, "Here am I; send me." The voice of God's nature was speaking to a man and was ultimately committed to men through Christ.

Jesus Christ, God Almighty clothed in human flesh, came to seek and to save men and women and to teach them. After His ascension, the Lord sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in those who would receive Him. Everything He has done has been for mankind. He created the resources of oil, coal, electric power, and atomic energy that have provided us with so many conveniences. Everything has been so beautifully designed and created for us; in everything we hear and see, we can visualize the nature of God.

"Oh LORD, how manifold are thy works! In

wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches" (Psalm 104:24). From solar systems to nervous systems—with all of the diversity in God's creation, there is an order to every facet of life in the universe. That order is revealed in terms of relationships. For example, protons, neutrons, and electrons are arranged so that if one particle moves out of place, the integrity of a structure is compromised. Not only does a shift in order change the nature of a substance, but a chain reaction can occur, which is often catastrophic. This was the principle used to develop the atomic bomb.

Clearly, the physical universe is dependent on right relationships. And it is so important yet quite unusual to find people who really understand how to have right relationships. We establish tremendous needs for people when we have never been rightly related to God's nature. Certainly, we need people, and we are to love people, but that must never be our first concern.

Our first concern is our relationship to God. We must have a right relationship with Him so that we can hear the voice of His nature—the voice of His might in creation, the voice of His written Word, the Holy Spirit's voice in the living Word. Oh, to hear the voice of God's nature!

This thought brings me to my knees in brokenness: God said, “Not only did I come to produce salvation through an efficacious and vicarious atonement; not only did I come to die for men, but also I came to *provide for* men, to *live in* men, to use men, to *help* men, to *bless* men—and I came with a plan.” The Word of God says in Acts 26:16-17: “I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness,” *to bear His name before the Gentiles.*

Every breath we take and every thought we think can relate to the voice and words of God’s nature. Over and over again, men try to fight their battles, but God has *never* told us to fight for Him. We are to enter into the privilege of His battle because it is *His* battle! He fights for us (Exodus 14:14). “The battle is the LORD’s” (1 Samuel 17:47).

When I listen to the voice of God’s nature, I begin to realize that behind my experience, whatever I’m going through today, I have a relationship with God that is personal, intimate, and greater than any relationship with any other human being. I am not speaking of strange, subjective experiences, independent from oneness in the Body. The Body of Christ is the fullness of God. We are members in particular, and in

God's plan, He wants us to share our lives together.

Often, a husband and wife will battle in their relationship; yet even the one who is the "better" of the two may not be properly related to God. Because they have never worked out their own salvation with reverence and trembling, they do not work out what God is working within, to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:12-13).

Poured Out as a Drink Offering

Paul was poured out as an offering—as a drink offering—for others. In 2 Timothy 4:6 he said, "For I am now ready to be offered...." The literal translation from the Greek text says, "For I am already being poured out...." In Galatians 1:15-16, the apostle said "it *pleased* God...to reveal his Son in me." And because he was rightly related to God, he was ready to be poured out for men and women for the sake of the Gospel.

In 2 Samuel 23:15-16, three brave men, mighty men, went into enemy territory to get a drink of water for their king, David. They were in the heat of battle when David became thirsty for the water from the wells of Bethlehem, remembering the days when he drank of it freely.

He simply made the statement, “Oh, I would love a drink today!” just like you would say, “Boy, I’d like a steak!” Without hesitation, those three mighty men risked their lives in the face of the Philistines and brought the water back to David.

In spontaneous, unconditional, sacrificial love, with no thought of preserving their own lives, with no consideration of their sacrifice, the mighty men immediately went to get that water. *And David poured it out on the ground*, unto the Lord. He was overwhelmed. Out of a beautiful attitude of thanksgiving, David said, “I cannot drink this water. These men were willing to die to get it for me—just because I said I desired it.”

To be a poured-out drink offering, then, means to pour out your entire life, with no thought of self-preservation, in spontaneous and sacrificial love that simply pours out for love’s sake and for no other reason.

That was Paul’s attitude when he said, “I am ready to be poured out.”

The Voice that Says “Rise Up”

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

In this verse, the Lord Jesus Christ did not say "...the words that I *have spoken* unto you...." Rather, He said "...the words that I [*am speaking*] unto you...." He wants His words in us to be *current*, in the present, and He wants us to reverence and honor the voice of His nature.

In 1 Kings 19:4-5, Elijah, depressed because he had withdrawn in fear of Jezebel, sat under a juniper tree and asked God to take his life. But the Holy Spirit came to him and said, "Rise up and eat"—the voice of God's nature. Isaiah 60:1 says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come." The voice of God's nature spoke to a rebellious but chosen people. Romans 8:14-17 reveals our position as adopted children, chosen by God to be relatives in His royal family. Though we may suffer temporarily as a result of wrong decisions, God speaks to us: "Eat, and go forth in the nourishment of the food I have given you." It is the same way God spoke when He instructed Israel to eat the lamb on the night they were heading out of captivity in Egypt to the Red Sea.

A man should have Jesus Christ so close to him that he would not have problems relating to people, regardless of the circumstances. A woman should have such a relationship with Jesus Christ that if she never was married, she

would be totally fulfilled. Every teenager should get to know Jesus Christ, because *God wants to establish a relationship that comes ahead of all other relationships*. Then, we will have proper relationships with others.

May I Be Excused?

In the parable of the great supper (Luke 14:15-24), a man prepared a feast and sent out his servants to invite people in. But one by one, the invited guests gave their excuses. The first excuse was, "I bought a piece of land and I need to go and see it. Have me excused." The second one said, "I bought five yoke of oxen, and I need to go and prove them. Please have me excused." The third one said, "I've just married a wife. Please excuse me." In each case, the relationship with Jesus Christ (pictured as the master of the house) was secondary.

Verse 21 records that the master of the house became angry. Many people choose not to reckon on the voice of God's anger. "I created men. I created everything *for* them. I sent my Word for man. I sent the Holy Spirit for man, and I sent My light *toward* them. But they will not come and eat!

That is why Matthew 22:14 says, "many are

called, but few are chosen." Very few are chosen because Jesus Christ is not first in most people's lives.

In Genesis 17:1-3, God said, "Abraham, walk before Me. I want your relationship to be with *Me*."

Amos 3:3 says, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" We have been yoked with the world, rationalization, and details of life. But when our unequal yokes with the old sin nature begin to be broken, as described in 2 Corinthians 6:14-17, then we can hear God say, "I will be a Father unto you. We will have a right relationship, and you will be My sons and My daughters" (see Psalm 68:5, Jeremiah 31:9, John 8:41).

Chapter Two

HUMBLED IN GOD'S PRESENCE TO HEAR HIS VOICE

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Let us perfect ourselves in the holiness of God. This is not said to project some kind of hyperspirituality. Yet, Jesus said in John 15:7 “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

As you develop an intimate, personal relationship with Christ, there will be times when He will lead you to be alone with Him. There, you may become so overwhelmed with the presence of God abiding in you, that you will fall down on your face before Him. Prostrate before the Lord, you will experience deep reverence for God's presence, all because you refuse to have a

casual relationship with Him.

Whenever Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob prayed, they were always flat on their faces with their hands out before them, crying out to the God of their fathers.

We need to be able to hear God's voice when He says, "Who will go for us?"—whether it's to go into Jerusalem, or Judea, or Samaria, or to sit at the table with somebody who is in pain or in need. We need to be so open to the nature of God's voice that compelling love and indwelling compassion reveal the wisdom of His nature as He communicates. *This is the nature of His voice!*

When the invited guests excused themselves from the banquet God had prepared, Jesus Christ said, "I am angry!" Then He said, "Go into the highways and the byways. Get the blind, the deaf, the lame, and those who have nothing. Invite them to my supper. These others are not interested. Oh, they go to church, but they use Me like a pawn shop. No, you servants must go to those who are without—gather whosoever will. Bid them to come to my table, because I want my house to be full!"

God wants His house to be full, yet very few Christians have convictions about this. We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves to-

gether, but rather we are to do it much more (Hebrews 10:25). It isn't bondage to a rule. It is a love for God, for His Word, and for His people!

Don't Put Relationships ahead of God's Plan

Jesus said "Compel them to come in." *Compel* them.

No one wants to be compelled to do *anything*, and yet Jesus Christ mandates us to compel people in love, telling them to come in. It is the voice of God's nature.

Just as He died on a tree, shedding His precious blood, and was buried and rose again; and just as He forgives, forgets, redeems, restores, and rehabilitates—God wants to be complete in our lives. He wants to have preeminence in our lives, so we would relate to *Him*, the Supreme One, instead of problems, people, or secret sins.

Some people neglect the house of God because of their hobbies and pleasures—and God does not like being neglected or being treated as second, third, or fourth place in our lives. Even these words are communicated in the force of His Spirit, in the power of His nature, in the words of His revelation, in the *rhema* of His communication.

That is why He said in Luke 14:26, "If any

man come unto me and *hate* not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, *he cannot be my disciple,*" meaning, "he cannot be a learner of Me."

By "hate," He didn't mean to have hostility or vindictiveness, or to hate in the sense that we think of it. Of course not! God wants us to love, and honor our loved ones, and to have respect and great esteem for them. But "hate" in this context means that we are not to make people equal with Him. *He is first!*

The family is a precious institution of God, and to love them properly we need to love God first. He comes ahead of the family, ahead of the pastor, ahead of the congregation. He comes ahead of everybody.

He is the Head of the Church, and on this basis God could see right through people's excuses. "I can't come because I just bought this piece of land, and it's my only day to go see it." Or, "I bought five yoke of oxen—I have to prove them yet. I—I bought them before I proved them. Sorry!"

One would think that Jesus would have understood about the ones who just got married, but He didn't! He was angry at that excuse too.

It wasn't the fact that they got married, but that they wouldn't come to His supper. They put their relationship ahead of His plan.

Being Served by the Savior

Every time we have a service, whenever the Word of God is preached, it is a meal that God has prepared for His people. Each meal served by the Lord is spiritual nourishment, vital for life. God sent manna every morning, six days a week, to feed his people on their journey through the wilderness to the promised land. On the sixth day, they were to gather twice as much so they could have it on the Sabbath while they rested. Likewise, we are to partake of the manna of God's Word every day, in one form or another.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" When we consider what Psalm 8:4-8 says about the One who created the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the lakes, the mountains, and the flowers, and all of these fantastic sights of creation—*what is man?* Everything that God created was prepared for man.

God has given us the privilege of praying so that we can hear and have a right relationship with Him, to go to Him and hear from heaven. Prayer is for us so that we can breathe out to

heaven the breath of our needs and the breath of our praise. It is for us!

No Other Name

Think of this carefully. When God says to “be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10a), then be still. He is saying, “Be persistent with your relationship to My quietness. *Hold on to quietness with tenacity.*”

Jesus Christ does not want any competition in our relationship to Him. Speaking of the faithfulness of the saints in the churches of Macedonia, Paul wrote that they “first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God” (2 Corinthians 8:5). The Lord is saying, “If you come to Me, do not love any relationship the way you love Me! Of course you can love and honor them and be responsible. But don’t let another relationship equal the one you have with Me.”

God’s love always takes away lust. And God’s strength will always take away our human weaknesses (or reveal His strength through them). “But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). The Word of God doesn’t want any competition with our

loyalty to Christ.

The Bible says clearly in 1 Corinthians 4:10-13 that though we are as the filth of the world, the one thing we desire is God's satisfaction with our lives. With a humble and broken heart, the weakest among us can go to God and say, "I want you to be satisfied. I want you to be pleased. I don't like a lot of things about myself, but in every way that I can, I want to please you." Like Paul, we can say that it pleased God to reveal Christ inside of us (Galatians 1:15-16), because we have been comforted by the voice of God's nature.

Chapter Three
THE VOICE OF URGENCY

“Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

“*But before all these*, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

“Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist....*In your patience possess ye your souls*” (Luke 21:10-15, 19).

Before the Tribulation period and prior to the Rapture, the Bible says that the Church of

Jesus Christ will be persecuted. Believers will be hated by all men because of the name of Christ; children will betray their parents and turn them over to be placed in prison. That worldwide persecution will come before God's judgment comes upon the earth (notice the key word "before"). Matthew 24:8 refers to that time as the beginning of sorrows. Then, after the Rapture and prior to the Great Tribulation, the Body of Christ will become the Bride of Christ in the air.*

We are living in a day that is extremely serious. Romans 13:12 says that the "night is far spent, the day is at hand." In John 15:4, the voice of God calls out, "Abide in Me...." But here is the question: What would it take to stop you from abiding? What kind of circumstances? What kind of adversity? What kind of relationships? What kind of turmoil could stop any one of us from abiding?

Repeatedly in John 15, the key to a fruitful Spirit-filled life is *abiding*: resting in faith, resting in the promises, resting in the Promiser. We rest in the Provider and in His provision. We rest in the power of the Spirit and the integrity of divine righteousness—the faithfulness of the Faithful One who has never made a promise that He did not keep.

The Voice that Says “Come”

Peter was told to come and to walk on the water (Matthew 14). And as he was told to come, Peter obeyed because he recognized the Voice, the One who told him to come. Peter recognized Jesus Christ.

“If that be you, bid me to come.” And Jesus simply said, “Come.” Stepping out against the boisterous winds, the tempest, and the storm in the darkness of the morning hour, Peter walked by faith in obedience to God’s invitation. Circumstances did not stop him. He recognized Jesus Christ—and Who Jesus Christ was—beyond recognizing the storm, and the wind, and the waves. When Jesus said to come, *Peter didn’t debate the invitation.*

As we prepare for an hour that is coming toward the Church at large, we must realize that God is faithful who has called us unto the fellowship of His dear Son. In 1 Corinthians 1:9, He has called us into a special fellowship with Him where we are to recognize Jesus Christ in everything. We are to let self-interests go to sleep and spiritual interests come alive. We are to hear His voice and obey. We are to come.

God said to Jeremiah, My words will be in

your mouth as fire, consuming any other thing that would be in your tongue (Jeremiah 1:9; 5:14). This is the message: “Your mouth will have in it the actual substance of what I would say if I, the Lord, were in your place on earth. Your voice, if you will abide, will be My voice. You will have the resident reality of my Words with the resilience and spontaneity of faith through the divine dynamics of spiritual truth. Self-interest will go and spiritual interest will arise within the realm of your heart.”

The Heart that Hears God

Being very serious about God’s business, Jesus Christ said so beautifully in Luke 2:49, “I must be about my Father’s business. *I must*. My life is completely derived from His life. I speak as I hear Him speak. I work as I see Him work (John 5:19, 30). I always do those things that please Him (John 8:29), and *I do not please myself* (Romans 15:3).

This is the heart that hears God. This is the voice that in the Church Age, during the last days, is available to the royal family of God in their royal priesthood. We are living in the age of grace and the dispensation when “whosoever will may come” to make up His living organism

on earth—"the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:23).

And Jesus said, "You shall receive power..." (Acts 1:8, speaking of the beginning of the Church Age in Acts 2:4) "...and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." By the way, every place He mentioned is equally important. But when the will of God, and the work of God, and the power of God are flowing as a river through the hearts of men and women, a proportionate delegation of servants will respond to the call to go into all the world, while others will be called to make up a strong 'Jerusalem', or home base.

The Word tells us that we will receive ability and wisdom through the living Word of God, which is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" as it separates the spirit from the soul (see Hebrews 4:12).

When God speaks, we want to speak. We want to recognize Jesus Christ and not be overcome by any storms in the fourth watch as darkness remains before the dawn of day (Matthew 14:25).

Jesus said, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). He was always intent

on hearing His Father's voice. And several times the Father said, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased." "Well pleased" means "as pleased as one could ever be."

In faith-rest drills, those who refuse to be taken out of the place of abiding have a faith that pleases God, according to Hebrews 11:6. With every breath—inhaling the Word of God and exhaling the life of God from out of their souls, through their bodies, to others—these believers please God who rewards them that diligently seek Him.

**Read, The Pre-Tribulational Rapture by Dr. Daniel E. Lewis, Grace Publications, 1997.*

Chapter Four

“IF ANY MAN WILL HEAR MY VOICE...”

Almost every person I have met knows his own birthday, and most Christians know their spiritual birthday. Most people can tell you the day they had surgery, and some can tell you the day and the hour when they were told they have cancer. Those people can describe to you in detail what they did when they heard the news.

But bring these things over into the realm of spiritual reality—the realm of emotions, and circumstances, and adversity. Even as cancer surgery by God’s grace brings a new opportunity to live, spiritual surgery through the Word of God, which is so quick and so powerful, brings into the human soul and spirit a new opportunity for life. As we come out of the spiritual hospital of failure, wounds, and bruises, or whatever it may be, we receive power. But here is one of the saddest things: In Hosea 11:3, God

said concerning Ephraim, “They knew not that I healed them.” God says to many Christians, “I have healed you, *and you do not know it.*”

When people keep going back on drugs, they only bring guilt, self-destruction, and heartache. The drugs make them incapable of experiencing God’s righteousness through integrity. God has healed them through the Blood and through the Cross, but they keep going back. Away from it for a few weeks, back they go—enticed by Satan and seduced by the spirit world. They go from walking in the light of God’s Word back to being entertained by devils. But drug addiction isn’t all.

People can be addicted to gossip, lust, and power. Some people refuse to be broken through the Cross in their situations. They have predetermined to hold back and not surrender their will to Christ.

Don’t Hold Back

So often, people have never given their body, their soul, and their mind to Jesus Christ. They come with what they are willing to give Him; yet, something is kept back in self-interest and self-preservation in a secret place of the heart through the lust of the subconscious and uncon-

scious needs that have never been purged by the Spirit in the Blood of Christ.

God Almighty calls us by our name. And though it is inaudible, His voice is just as real as the voices we are able to hear communicated daily over the airwaves through the vibrations of electronic frequencies. We have an opportunity to live each day abiding in the still, small voice of God (1 Kings 19:12) and to be still, knowing that He is always God (Psalm 46:10) and that He is faithful who has called us unto the fellowship of His dear Son.

What a privilege it is for Jesus Christ to say, “You don’t have to worry about what to say. I will give you My mouth and My wisdom, and you will speak what I want you to speak in that hour when they take you and persecute you because of their contempt for Me.”

As we realize the reality of a spiritual urgency, we make commitments to come to church—many come, but many don’t. We make commitments to pray—and many do, but many don’t. We make commitments to fasting, because some things will not be delivered by any other way, according to Mark 9:29. But fasting is a privilege, and by it, the Holy Spirit can perform surgery—not only on us but also on peo-

ple we love. Quietly and secretly we can pray and fast for those we love with all of the fervency of faith that pleases God. Again, many do, but many don't.

Jesus said to the disciples, "After this, you shall receive power," and they did. And everyone who is saved has been baptized by the Holy Spirit into union with the Body of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). We have all been made to drink of that same Spirit. We can continually be filled with this precious Holy Spirit by honoring faith, walking in the light, and confessing any known sins. As we are filled, we can walk in the fullness of the Word of God (objectively) and in the filling of the Spirit (so that we are protected subjectively). As a result, God controls both the objective and the subconscious mind.

Follow the Shepherd's Voice

We have the privilege to walk in wisdom (Colossians 4:5) and to walk in love as dear children (Ephesians 5:2). We have the sweet fragrance of incense coming through us. We have the privilege to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). According to 1 John 1:7, we have the privilege to walk in the light as God Himself is in the light.

The entrance of God's words bring in light (Psalm 119:130). Step out when God speaks. Walk with the words of God as a lamp unto your feet and light unto your path. Every individual has the same privilege, because God is no respecter of persons.

There are different kinds of spirits in the world. The two disciples in Luke 9 did not know what kind of a spirit they were of, and Jesus confronted them. John and James wanted to bring fire down upon those who were not walking in the way of the disciples (Luke 9:52-56). But the Lord rebuked the 'sons of thunder', saying, "You don't have any idea what kind of a spirit you are attached to."

There are Christians who are good people, but at times they have the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, the attitude of self-exaltation, the attitude of "doing it their way" and not esteeming others better than themselves (Philippians 2:3). They do not honor the brethren with high esteem, but secretly they execute and exercise their personal dominion through a spirit of self-righteousness.

Jesus Christ is the Spirit of meekness and gentleness (2 Corinthians 10:1). He is the Spirit of being lowly in heart and the Spirit of patience.

Because of this, the Word of God has made it clear that this power He has given us isn't a subjective force to be reckoned with. The objective Word of God is always sent forth to seek and to save that which is lost, revealing the hearts of men as the sound of His voice goes forth.

CONCLUSION

After Elijah responded to the call of God to “arise and eat,” God led him to a mountain (1 Kings 19:8-13). There, the Lord passed by. A strong wind broke the rocks in pieces, but the Lord was not in the wind. Then there was an earthquake and after that, a fire. God was not in the earthquake or the fire; but, “after the fire a still small voice.”

God is very interested in our thoughts. Because the heart of man is the control center for all motivating thoughts and behavior, it is imperative that we hear from the right source. Twice the Lord asked, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” and the man was forced to address the issues of his heart.

The spirit of the scribes revealed their own way of doing things. Their attitudes quickly became critical. But the Spirit of Jesus Christ waited forty years for Moses, thirteen years for Abraham, and He waits gently for us. The Holy

Spirit waited for Peter to turn around after he cursed God. The Spirit of God didn't go around criticizing Abraham, Moses, and Peter. Instead, His Spirit of patience waited so they could carry on with God's call.

Realizing that we are unworthy, we can finally discover that we have a power within. The mouth and wisdom of God can be ours if only we will abide, comforted by the voice of God's nature.