

Knowing the Shepherd's Voice

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God is so good in many different ways when He demonstrates to us who He is. Today we will be going over two of those aspects as Jesus starts this monologue in the gospel of John chapter ten. We've been there before but this is a little different take on it, knowing the Shepherd's voice and the voice of God:

John 10: ¹ “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way . . .

- There are always people trying to find a short cut.

“ . . . the same is a thief and a robber.

- They are **not** honest. The best way of going into a room is through the front door.

² “But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name . . .

- You and me. You are a child of God.

“ . . . and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them;

- He doesn't push them out.

*“ . . . and the sheep follow him, for they **know** his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.*

Interestingly, when I read that, I said, “*Yeah that's really true. I have a relationship with my God where I can hear the voice of God.*” But when He was speaking this to His disciples, there were those who did *not* know His voice, at least in the way He wanted them to. Think about it. In this scene Judas was one of the twelve! So this isn't just a proclamation of who the children of God should be, ones who hear His voice. Rather, He gives the *responsibility* to the hearing and knowing the voice of God to you and me, not just because He is there. It is because we *practice* to know He is there. That is so, when we come to hear the enemy's voice, we have *practiced* to know the difference between his voice and our Lord's.

We've talked about the enemy coming to bring fear. We sang the song this morning, "*Im no longer a slave to fear.*" But this morning the Lord showed me the enemy is afraid of us, you and me! He is afraid of the children of God! "*Really? The enemy is afraid? He has fear?*" The Lord said to me, "*Yes. Think about it. Who is the best one to be able to put fear on you and the children of God? The enemy. So how could he do that unless he knows fear himself! He is afraid, himself. And when you pray, he is afraid of your prayer because the power of the Holy Spirit puts him in his place, **under** the feet of Jesus.*" Yeah, that is good to know. I used to have a vision and an understanding that the enemy is all powerful and he is so prideful that nothing can touch him. That's just *not* true. He *can* be touched and he can be touched by the prayers of the saints! Amen. It is true.

Jesus goes on to say He is the Good Shepherd, not just any shepherd but He is the Good Shepherd:

⁷ *Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.*

- There is just no other way.

⁸ *"All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.*

- It is our responsibility to *turn off* our ears when we don't hear the Lord.

⁹ *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved . . .*

- You are saved.

". . . and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.

- That's what a thief does. The Holy Spirit doesn't do that. God doesn't do that. The people of God don't do that. His army does not do that. **The enemy does.** Jesus says:

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

- A good abundance, not a meager abundance, not one that just gets you by where you can keep up with the Jones's, but an abundance. The enemy does not want you to be abundant in your prayers, especially your prayers. When the enemy comes, how do we battle but through our prayers! And we know that the saints are joining us also. We know the power of baptism that He has resurrected us from the dead.

¹¹ *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

- There is nothing He won't do for you.

¹² *“But a hireling, . . .*

- And we talked about that last Sunday. There is one who is a merchant, trying to make a deal.

*“. . . is he who is not the shepherd, one who does not **own** the sheep, . . .*

- There is an ownership involved in the Lord and our lives. It is not that we are just children of God. He *owns* us! He owns us because we know His voice and we practice knowing His voice. He owns us because we are completely devoted to Him. It is not ownership through money or gold and silver. It is ownership by the very blood of Christ that has saved us from sin that we might be able to fellowship with Father God.

“. . . one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

- Who scatters the sheep? The enemy does. Who is the one who is involved in all the church splits, all the gossip and criticism? The enemy. It is not you, not a leader, not a new charismatic person. It is the enemy who does these things. Jesus says He is the Good Shepherd.

¹³ *“The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, . . .*

- He *knows* you. Do you know how I know that? During the last outpouring of the Spirit, it was so clear to me as people were coming forward for prayer and teams of us would pray. As we were praying for this one girl the Holy Spirit was moving. You can tell when He is moving in a person. We were not praying for the Holy Spirit to come. We were praying for the Holy Spirit to move in us. That is exactly what He was doing during the last renewal. The Spirit would come on so powerfully. Do you remember this?! I would be embarrassed because I would know that person more than she would think. All of her fears, all of the stuff that she would be going through, I would personally, somehow supernaturally, by the Holy Spirit, know and understand and could prophesy to her. A couple of times I had to back away telling myself that I didn't want to know anyone to that degree! I didn't want to get that close to people. But the Lord said, *“Sorry. That's your*

job. It's what I made you to be." He calls every one of us to be a shepherd with Him. The hireling flees because he a hireling and does not care about the sheep. He says, "*I am the **Good Shepherd.***"

"... and am known by My own. ¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, ...

- Can it be any closer than that?

"... even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; ...

- So they hear the voice of God.

"... and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

- When the day comes when people are really listening to the voice of God instead of their own hearts and the voice of the merchants and the hireling, you will see the Body of Christ like you have never seen it before. Because they will know. There is a "knowing" involved. The Spirit will show everyone how foolish they have been in their rituals.

¹⁷ "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, ...

- That's why on the cross He said, "*Into Your hands I commit My Spirit.*" The enemy did not kill Jesus.

"... but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

¹⁹ Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. ²⁰ And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?"

²¹ Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

We begin to see that there is an idea that is presented here that is contrary to some of the other scriptures we might know, that it is the character of Christ in us which is the hope of glory. But there is also a hope and a witness of the works that God wants to do through His people, works of kindness as already mentioned this morning. Those works of kindness can be manifested in many different ways. They can manifest themselves in miracles as we pray for one another to be healed of cancers, to be healed of clots and all kinds of things that the enemy would like to have us suffer.

²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, . . .

- Why didn't they believe that the miracles were from God? Because they were hirelings. They were the merchants. They were the ones who tried to make a deal with God and with God's people.

*" . . . as I said to you. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them **eternal life**, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹*

- And thus was born the doctrine of "Eternal Security." But you know what? I'd rather be on that side of theology than any other.

*"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than **all**; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."*

So's there is an idea here that if you can hear the voice of God, if you can know God in this way, in this manner and be in this fold, snatching you away is next to impossible. You might choose to walk away but being tricked is not a possibility. No disease, no fellowship, no ritual can snatch you away because you will be in a place where you will know and you will hear the voice of God! And we know the voice of God, don't we? When we are baptized in the Spirit we get to know the voice of God in a very real and intimate way.

Many Different Ways

But again, we hear the voice of God in many different ways. When the disciples were watching Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist, suddenly this voice comes down out of heaven! Some describe it as thunder. Can you imagine? I cannot. I don't think Hollywood could do a good job of that one. And too, remember at the Mount of Transfiguration when the disciples saw the Lord transformed, when the Father spoke they fell down afraid. The voice of the Father at that moment was so powerful that men could not stand before it. The voice of God.

Well, when I heard the voice of the Holy Spirit for the first time in my heart, it wasn't like that. There was a kindness about it like the Good Shepherd of the sheep. He calls to us. He doesn't push or shove us around. He doesn't gruffly say, "*Come on, get in place! Get over there!*" He doesn't do that. When you hear a voice like that, you should recognize it *clearly* as the enemy, the one who is pushing you around, the one who is making you fearful. If you are being motivated by fear, it

is NOT God. If you are motivated by fear, it is not God. Even if you do good things, good works, they will be dead works if they are motivated by fear. They will not be good. You are not supposed to be doing that. *You are to be led by the Holy Spirit in your daily walk.* We simply cannot do that unless we hear the voice God.

The Voice of God

Let us skip to *how* we do that. We hear the voice of God when we **pray**. There is a prophetic sense, a prophetic voice that we hear. Let's look at an example. I pray, "*Lord, I have a tough day ahead of me. I have a lot of meetings. I know that some of the people there don't even like me. I don't care for them that much either.*" Then there is a prophetic word that comes from heaven into my heart saying, "*Don't be afraid of them.*" Now would the enemy say that. I don't think so. "*Don't be afraid of them. I created you. I made you. I have equipped you! You haven't made yourself. I have equipped you,*" says the Lord. Prophetically a voice comes into you. The Holy Spirit makes you the man or woman of God whom He has ordained you to be! In sickness or in health, it matters not through the circumstances that you face. You are a child of God. Don't let anybody tell you differently.

We also know Him through **circumstances**. Most of the time, after the circumstances we can say, "*Boy, that was God.*" For instance we may take a left hand turn instead of a right, and end up avoiding an accident or a three hour traffic jam or whatever it might be. How were we being led? By circumstances. That happens. Don't deny that God can use circumstances. He certainly can. He can use them supernaturally as well.

We also know the voice of God through **other people** when they pray for us. Even an unbeliever can speak a word of encouragement to us and the Lord Himself will be in that voice. In the Old Testament it says an angel would appear and speak before Gideon and then a few verses later it says "*the Lord said.*" How can it be both? Because the Lord was speaking through that angel. Those who were writing the scripture understand that the voice of God can be manifested in such a way.

Fourthly we hear the voice of God through **reading the Word of God**, the text, that which was given through the centuries known as the bible. What a wonderful thing that we have in the Word of God. Without the Holy Spirit it doesn't mean much. It doesn't mean anything, but *in the Holy Spirit*, it can bring life. We remember words of encouragement, strength, words that warn us of evil and describe the works of the

enemy and describe the works of God, describe the works of the people of God, all things wonderful to know.

Number five, hearing the **prophetic** voice, “*Thus sayeth the Lord.*” That can come in many different ways as I’ve already said. Let’s go back to our text.

²⁵ *Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; . . .*

- Isn’t that nice. You are not going away. If nothing else you can say that to the enemy. “*You are going away but I’m not.*”

*. . . neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. ³⁰ **I and My Father are one.**”*

- It doesn’t say He is the Son of God, Son of Man, the Anointed Messiah. It says, “*I and the Father are one. I am the Father.*” Well if you were an orthodox Jew at that point you knew what you had to do. For anyone who blasphemes the Father in such a way, must be killed. So they picked up stones. When I first read that I thought no big deal, just throwing stones. Just avoid them. No. Being stoned was an execution!

³¹ *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. ³² Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”*

- So the enemy comes up in the guise of these people’s self-righteousness and they are going to kill Him, not just to hurt but to kill. Jesus doesn’t say, “*Look at my character and see how kind I am.*” No, at this point He points to His *work*. I believe that the works that He is talking about isn’t separate from His kindness. You will know them by their fruit, doesn’t mean that the works are separated from the fruit of love, joy, kindness and peace. They are linked with the good works of healing, the good work of bringing wholeness to the feebleminded, the good works of those who need to be delivered from demons. So He says, “*For which of those works do you want to kill Me?*”

³³ *The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*

- Jesus says a little ways down:

"... believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."

- So these works and the works that you do as the children of God, are never to be separated from the character of Christ, that loving kindness we've talked about this morning. Amen. That's a good one to keep.

Well, what does Jesus do when He is confronted by men who want to kill Him? Well, He escapes first of all. I don't know how He did that. When men get together and want to kill you with stones, they completely surround you.

³⁹ *Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.*

- I think to myself, "*What would I do when I'm in trouble?*" Jesus is in trouble, physically. They are going to kill Him but it is not His time to be killed. So what would you do? I think that what I would have done is to call down fire from heaven! "*Take them out, Father. They aren't written in Your Book of Life.*" There are a lot of people who come against the children of God today in this country and around the world and their lives and names are not written in the "*Book of Life.*" I don't know specifically who they might be but the Holy Spirit does. Jesus certainly knew He could have done that. But instead, He *retreats*. That is because He wasn't yet in the appointed place, Jerusalem. But for now He goes way up away from Jerusalem all the way to Jordan where John was baptizing.

⁴⁰ *And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.*

- That is away from Jerusalem, way up there, away, away from these people who want to kill Him, because there are still things that He needs to do to accomplish the Father's plan. I thought about this.

Retreating to a “Safe Place” beyond the Jordan

⁴¹ Then many came to Him and said, “John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true.” ⁴² And many believed in Him there.

As we apply this to our own lives, we can see there is still work for us to do as well. The enemy isn't coming against us so that we just retreat, fall back and never recuperate. Instead, we retreat while the Spirit of the Lord stays with us. We can retreat to a “safe place.” That's the point I want to make with this scripture; we don't retreat to a place that is more dangerous. We retreat to a “safe place” where the Lord Himself and the Holy Spirit in you can work those miracles and works of kindness that He has put in our heart to do.

We, the elders, our home groups, this church, as we are related together have built here a “safe place” in a state called New York, which is NOT a safe state. It's not, not any more if you believe the laws. Many people believe the laws are accurate or appropriate, the killing of unborn children, killing *born* children. They are for killing the elderly and feeble, not just pain pills but ones that will take you out. What is next?! This doesn't sound like a “safe place” to me. If I had my way I'd move to Iowa or some place like that. I used to think New Zealand was the place to go but I don't know any more about that either.

A “safe place” is one we've built, people of God. Our fellowship is a “safe place.” It isn't one of criticism where we point the finger at one another and say, “*Boy, I know this person so well. I can tell all of her or his faults to a 't. 'Believe me, I know.*” But the Holy Spirit says, “*Oh no. It doesn't matter if you know those faults or not. I am not concerned about those things. I'm more concerned about what I am doing in their heart today to bring them into the character of Christ which I have ordained for them to be, to be like Me.*”

Summation Thus Far

So from these scriptures so far we can come to know this.

1) There is *power* in ***knowing the Shepherd's voice***, the voice of God.

2) There is a contrast that the Lord makes between knowing the voice of a hireling and the voice of the Lord. ***It is our responsibility to know that difference.*** It is not just God's voice that makes it happen. It is our responsibility to train ourselves to know and discern the voice of

God versus all the other voices we are hearing, a cacophony of nonsense we are constantly faced with every day! Through that we have to negotiate and understand the voice of God. There is no scripture that will help you; it is the Holy Spirit within you. Practice, practice, and practice.

3) Jesus is not just the Messiah, just the one who died on the cross so we could have fellowship with the Father. But ***He and the Father are one, one of a triune God, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.*** The idea of the trinity is so powerful in the New Testament. It brings life to our bones. That God could love us enough to die. He Himself died upon the cross and knew pain and suffering like many of us have not known.

The pain wasn't just from physical, bodily abuse but the pain was in the betrayal from His best friends. The pain was betrayal of an entire nation which was ordained to come to Himself, then the betrayal when it didn't happen. It was painful for Him to see. He looked at Israel and said, "*Oh I would love to gather you together as hen gathers her chicks.*" There was something there that He longed for that did not happen on the other side of the cross. It is now happening today and in the future as He brings the people of Israel to Himself.

4) His ***works*** speak of His ***relationship with the Father.*** That's what He kept saying. "*If you don't believe, believe the works that I do.*" The works that you do will testify to the character that is in you, which will testify to the relationship that *you* have with the God. It cannot "not do that," a double negative.

5) There is a time to ***retreat to a "safe place."*** A "safe place" can be a place where mighty things can happen in the Lord, where God starts to rebuild the walls of the temple, where God starts to build something in your heart that is able to stand against the schemes of the enemy, *where you now can make him afraid of you!* Let the fire in your eyes from the Holy Spirit light him up! If he fires up his jets we taunt him, "*Go ahead!*" You have the power to do it. Make him run and flee from you. You could walk into a bar or walk into a situation where there is no peace, where there is no hope and you arrive on the scene with maybe another brother or a sister. And then a prozone reaction is going on around you.

A prozone reaction is when there is a reaction in a laboratory, agglutination precipitated, change of color and all of that, when a prozone reaction is so powerful that it *blows away any other reaction* at all. Nothing and nobody can stand before it! A lot of false negatives in laboratory testing but a prozone reaction is so positive that it is negative.

You cannot see it. (Prozone: the portion of the range of concentration of antibody-antigen mixtures in which one of them, although present in excess, does not produce its characteristic effect.)

You see the enemy has all sorts of plans and then when you arrive on the scene, there is a prozone reaction happening around you. He cannot figure it out! He says, “*I don’t get it. He was supposed to do this and he isn’t.*” Don’t play into his games. His biggest trick is to bate you, “*Come on. Don’t you care about this person?!*” You answer, “*Of course I do but that is not the issue. I care more about God and their relationship with God.*” So how do we pray for the prodigal? “*Well, God, bring him back whatever it takes.*” That is not what the enemy would like you to pray.

The Issue with the Voice of God.

All of us should like to have a clear understanding and be tuned in to the frequency of the voice of God, never having a problem discerning His voice. Wouldn’t that be nice? Amen. Just think, you could walk into the stock market, find out which stocks are going up, which are going down . . . You know what? I don’t think the Holy Spirit even cares about that. I know He doesn’t, not really. Those are the ways of men. He is more concerned about eternal life and things happening in you. He will prepare you for what He has ahead for you, not in this world only but in the world to come.

Here’s the thing: Doing and Obeying His Commandments

*James 1²² But be **doers** of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

The problem we have isn’t in hearing or not hearing the voice of God, either one. *It is **doing*** it when we do hear it! As soon as we fall into that trap we are doomed. We are deceivers ourselves. The enemy no longer needs to deceive us. We’ve already deceived ourselves. This is a hard word because we could think, “*Well this is easy. I’ll just do what God wants me to do.*” No. It is not always easy. Sometimes God doesn’t come with a giant sign saying, “*This is wrong.*” But there is a gut feeling in you put there by the Holy Spirit that says, “*No, this is the wrong way. This is the wrong person.*” And yet, we go ahead and do it anyway!

I was looking at advertising on the Net recently. It is amazing how many little “peek-a-boo” things we see nowadays, in dress, photographs, etc. What are our eyes doing? I said, “*Yeah the guys who put this picture there, know exactly what they are doing. They want to get your attention. It might not even be a real image. But don’t we want to*

know? Don't we want to see?" The enemy has so many ways to deceive us, to lead us, to tempt us, doesn't he?

There are many times in my career when I had job opportunities in different places that I would have thought were "safe places." One offer was a GS 14 office job in Anchorage Alaska. I thought I would be a rich man in no time at all. Another job was in San Francisco, several in Washington D.C. Everybody wants to go to Washington D.C. Once you are there a GS 14 is only the beginning and then you climb the ladder from there.

Every time I had those job opportunities, I never just went ahead and acted on them. At the very first I would bring it to the Lord in prayer. Then I would spend time listening not just in the prayer closet but I would seek men's counsel. Most of the time I would ask my wife what she thought. God can use your spouse to speak to you. I would seek the advice of the elders. I wouldn't go to them saying, "*By the way the Lord showed me this.*" Rather, "*By the way there is a job opportunity and I don't know if it is the Lord or not. Would you pray with me?*" So many times people will come to the elder's meeting and tell the elders the Lord had shown them that it is time for them to move. The elders response would be, "*Thank you for telling us but there is nothing we can do as you aren't really seeking our advice. You don't seem to want help in discerning the will of God.*" It is pretty hard to send somebody out when they've already told you they are going.

To send people out means they are *sent* by a plurality of persons. Then you pray a blessing upon them and God often does bless His people. There is a better way. Being led by the Holy Spirit is an awesome responsibility. Judas didn't quite make it. Do you think he heard the voice of the Holy Spirit in his life? I think he did but I think he chose to hear other voices.

It is our responsibility. The really good part about all of this is when you hear the Good Shepherd, knowing His voice becomes a very precious thing. The voice of God is more precious than gold and silver, more precious! I talked to an old friend who lives way north of Plattsburgh near the Canadian border just recently about my results from a biopsy. I hadn't heard his voice in eleven years and I said, "*Marty, it is so very good to hear your voice.*" You know why, because it really was. He was a kind man, always genuine, never afraid of the truth, bad or good. It didn't matter to him. He was always there to encourage us. It was so good to hear his voice. And, when you hear the voice of the Good Shepherd it is a lot like that only better!

There is a comfort and safety about that voice that brings you into the Sheepfold. What a nice, safe place He has made for us. Please let's not make it anything else.

If You Love Me, Keep My Commandments

John 15:¹⁵ "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

Jesus makes it a contest. "Do you love me?" "Yeah good." But He says, "*If you love Me you will keep My commandments, My words.*"

¹⁶ "*And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—*"

- Up until this point He hadn't arrived in His fullness, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Did He come only for a season? No. Forever.

¹⁷ *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,*

- That's where the world gets messed up. We can think we have it all knowing some truth. But,

¹⁷ *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor **knows** Him; but you **know** Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.*

- Jesus says He is not going to just sit on the Father's throne and leave them on earth to duke it out with the enemy. But He will come to us in the Holy Spirit! What a wonderful thing! This is the power of grace, the power of God's word. And, it's in you.

When we sing the song "*We are no longer a slave to fear,*" maybe we should sing, "*Fear you'd better start running.*" It doesn't matter what circumstances we face. In the Old Testament we see Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego saying to the furnace keeper, "*It doesn't matter if God comes or not we will never bow down to you. We will never become the hireling. We will never become the merchant. We will never fall back into a place of fear.*" Then there was one who came to be with them who looked like the Son of God. Let us not be afraid that we might fall back into fear. We are all weak, but that's when we call on the Holy Spirit, that's when we call upon each other, to encourage us. That's why we go to home groups, why we come to church, why we listen to a teacher.

We need to hear encouraging words over and over again. Amen.

So thank You, Lord Jesus. What a wonderful thing You have given to us in the Holy Spirit. Not just guidance for guidance sake but knowing someone so wonderful, awesome, incredibly beautiful, wondrous. Is there a superlative that I can find to adequately describe what we are talking about here? In knowing You, Lord, it has become such a blessing. It doesn't matter how dark the darkness is that we face. It doesn't matter because the brightness of the Spirit within us which is the light of man, dwells within us. You have given us life like we have never known before.

I pray, Lord, that You would sharpen our wits, that we would begin to discern more correctly the will of the Lord through the voice of God however it presents itself, in our prayers, in our songs, however You want to do it.

I pray, Lord God, that our weaknesses would not define us. Rather they would give us an opportunity to bring forth Your strength in every circumstance that we face. You are bringing these SWAT teams, prayer teams together. Lord, that we would know what it is to have victory in the Lord Jesus! In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

