



*A Ministry of
Prayer and Learning*

Devoted

to the

School of the Spirit

Learning
To be
Loved
By God

Janis Ansell
Residency 8
11/12/08

In the beginning, I was aware only of the
desire to be in deeper relationship with
God.

J
O
H
N
-
N
O

Listening to the still, small voice within made me aware that God desired to be in relationship with me, too. God has been patiently waiting for my attention to turn to Him.

Listening as I experienced the natural world brought an awareness of the harmonious interrelatedness God intends for all His creation.

Listening to the Spirit of the Living Christ flowing through others offered pieces of God's truth needed to fully reveal the Truth rising within me.

Listening with the ear of my heart is a practice I am, gratefully, still learning.

L
-
S
T
E
N
-
N
S

"The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell
you.

Don't go back to sleep.

You must ask for what you really want.

Don't go back to sleep.

People are going back and forth across
the doorsill where the two worlds touch.

The door is round and open.

Don't go back to sleep." Rumi

As fear subsides and trust grows, I
awaken to the realization that God is
and has been present with me, even when
I am or have been unaware. God's world
my world, touch; our worlds are one.

God does love me just as I am. To
awaken to this truth brings the same
feeling of joy I sense when awakening to
the sound of birds singing outside or
when I see the sun rising in a clear
dawn, promising the comfort of a day
filled with light and warmth.

The seed of Christ's love within me cracks
allowing the Living waters to flow in
and out as growth begins.

A
W
A
K
E
N
I
N
S

As I overcome the fear of accepting God's invitation to enter a world of Loving Spirit, I must accept that I am lovable and worthy of being loved by God. To receive this love I risk rejection. I know God loves and accepts me as I am and yet I must overcome doubts.

As I am able to overcome the fear of relationship, the fear of disappointing the loved one, then I am able to open to God's loving plan for me. As I overcome doubt I can more fully receive the love God so freely offers.

O
V
E
R
C
O
M
E
D
O
U
B
T

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight. In
all your ways acknowledge him, and he
shall make straight your paths."

Proverbs 3: 5-6 (RSV)

When recalled during moments of
distraction, the above passage from
Proverbs redirects me to the straight path
God prepares for me. I am grateful to
have received this message through
another's vocal ministry.

Gradually, I learn to trust in the One
who loves me unconditionally, even in
my imperfect state of being.

Trusting gives me the courage to risk
being a beloved child of God.

T
R
U
S
T
I
N
G

"The most important thing is this: to be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become." Charles DuBois

". . . let it be to me according to your word." Luke 1: 38 (RSV)

"And he said to all, 'if any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.' Luke 9:23 (RSV)

"Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Luke 22: 42 (RSV)

Sacrifice, deny, surrender, give up what I think I am and allow myself to live each day as the beloved child of God.

Overcoming self will is an ongoing process to allow the love of God to flow through me. The willingness to be present in divine love must overcome the willful desire of ego for protection. The way to do so is to simply surrender, give up, and accept what comes. Sounds easy enough . . .

S

K

R

R

E

N

D

E

R

I

N

S

"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough." Meister Eckhart

"Pray as you can, not as you can't"
Dom John Chapman

"Prayer is performed only for the glory of God. God who is Wise and Powerful and knows what is best for you." St. Teresa of Avila

"Prayer is the way the life of God is nourished." Oswald Chambers

"A prayer rises
'Abba, I belong to you,'
A heart fills with love."
(Personal journal 8-15-07)

Praying has become, for me, a way of entering into relationship with God, a way of simply being comfortably present with God in a space of time and place beyond words. I do still pray with words, but the deep place of prayer that I seek is the one in which words are not necessary for communication.

P
R
A
Y
I
N
G

"Do not be discouraged when learning to pray. Although you meditate, try your hardest and shed tears, you cannot make this water flow. God alone gives it to whomever He chooses and often when one is least thinking about it." St. Teresa of Avila

Lectio Divina is a spiritual discipline that has allowed the Spirit of the Living God to breathe life into scripture for me.

Daily examen through personal queries has given me the opportunity to listen intentionally to God's movement in my life.

Keeping a spiritual journal allows me to record reflections, questions, insights and return to them for review as new revelations come or a question returns.

A time of retirement each day set aside for silent waiting affords practice in openly receiving the Word, allows me to be attentive to God, honors His presence as gift to me, and gives me time to listen deeply and patiently for His guidance.

P
R
A
C
T
I
C
I
N
G

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me. . . Matthew 11: 29 (RSV)

Through the life of Jesus, God teaches me. Christ is my Inner Teacher, available always. God so loved me as one part of His world that He allows Jesus to be present with me. How grateful I am to have such a gift. I need only willingly accept the yoke and the consequences.

As I listen deeply and allow trust in God's love to blossom, openness to receiving that love increases and willingness to surrender to it becomes the only option. Then I am able to obey God's call.

O
B
E
Y
I
N
G

The path to God has one beginning and one end—love. God is love.

Jesus' instruction to "Love your neighbor as yourself," requires me to learn to love myself if my neighbor is to be well loved by me.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8a offers guidance by describing love: "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. . ." (RSV)

Following Jesus' example I learn to treat myself and others with kindness, to be patient with all, including myself, to allow my words and actions to flow from an inner source of love to my neighbor. As I am able to live from that loving source I am unable to be rude, irritable, resentful or arrogant. And yet it is not I, but the One within me that is the source of the love.

L
O
V
E
I
S

To remove obstacles blocking the free flow of God's love within and through me I must forgive my shortcomings, my mistakes, my failures whether perceived or real. God forgives me when I stumble and allows me to try again. God shows me what to do; I must develop the habit of forgiveness.

Forgiving my own sins is not enough, but it is a starting point. I must also forgive the inadequacies I perceive in others. God knows and accepts us as we are. When I see with doubting or critical eyes rather than the eyes of love, my vision is not clear. To truly see the reflection of the beloved other, I must practice unconditional love or the mirror of my soul remains cloudy.

God loves and forgives me just as He loves and forgives you. I can do no less.

F
O
R
G
I
V
I
N
G

The outcome of being loved by God when I allow that love to flow unrestricted within and through me is integration—transforming myself from a cluster of separate and, in my eyes, worthy and unworthy parts into one beloved being, perfect in the eyes of God.

The very idea of becoming what I already am makes the paradox of this entire paper evident. The words are written on separate sheets of paper as if each concept is separate from the other; actually, there is no separation, no sequence, and no distinction. Becoming and being are each part of an ongoing process, the circle of life, of spiritual life as well as physical.

Imagine a wheel with God at the center and each verb on each page of this paper comprising the spokes, then as I move along each spoke—longing, listening, awakening, overcoming, trusting, surrendering, praying, practicing, obeying, loving, forgiving, becoming—I move nearer to God. No spoke is more or less important than another; each one is necessary for the whole to function.

ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!

B
E
C
O
M
I
N
G