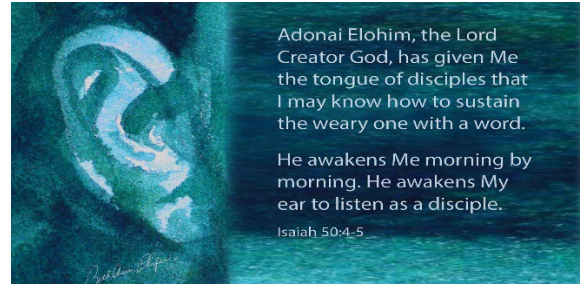




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devotionals by Beth Ann Phifer



Adonai Elohim, the Lord
Creator God, has given Me
the tongue of disciples that
I may know how to sustain
the weary one with a word.

He awakens Me morning by
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ear to listen as a disciple.

Isaiah 50:4-5

Early Ear

Seek Him First

July 28, 2014

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Isaiah 50:4-5

The Instructed Ones

The word *disciple* means *one who is instructed*.

Isaiah 50:4-5 teaches us to listen to the Father as Jesus did, so that we may awaken with sustaining words for others. It also teaches us that He is ever there to sustain *us* with His word.

Jesus said, *I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.*

(John 12:49)

It is easy for us to think of the word *commandment* as a stern rebuke, but it simply means that Jesus was instructed each day about what to say and do. The word *commandment* means *instruction*.

Jesus looked to the Father each day for instruction. When we are born again, we hear God and live as *The Instructed Ones*. We hear Him early at the beginning of each situation. We seek Him beforehand – before the decision, before the work, before the play.

Jesus said, *When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will disclose to you what is to come.*

(John 16:13)

In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice. In the morning I will pray to You and eagerly watch.

(Psalm 5:3)

Jesus' Ear was always to the Father

In the early morning while it was still dark, Jesus got up and went away to a secluded place and was praying there.

(Mark 1:35)

After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray, and when it was evening, He was there alone.

(Matthew 14:23)

Jesus said in John 14:10b, The words that I say to you, I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

Of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

(John 16:13)

Jesus said, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

(John 8:28)

And

No one has taken it away from Me [His life], but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.

(John 10:18)

Following His instruction each day

When I was going through a very difficult time years ago, I cleaned one eighth of one side of one window. Each day, I cleaned it a little more. After the week was over, the window was clean.

Following God's instruction does not mean high production, although sometimes it can. It means listening to Him and doing your best. This might mean you accomplish eight speaking engagements in one week, or eight loads of laundry in one day, or one load of laundry in one week, or no tasks at all for a while.

The Lord is our Constant Companion, speaking to us and guiding us throughout the day. Many times, I hear Him when I wake up. It's nice if I have time to wait and bask in those first thoughts.

O God, You are my God; early will I seek You. My soul thirsts for You! (Psalm 63:1)

Blessings and shalom in Him,
Beth Ann