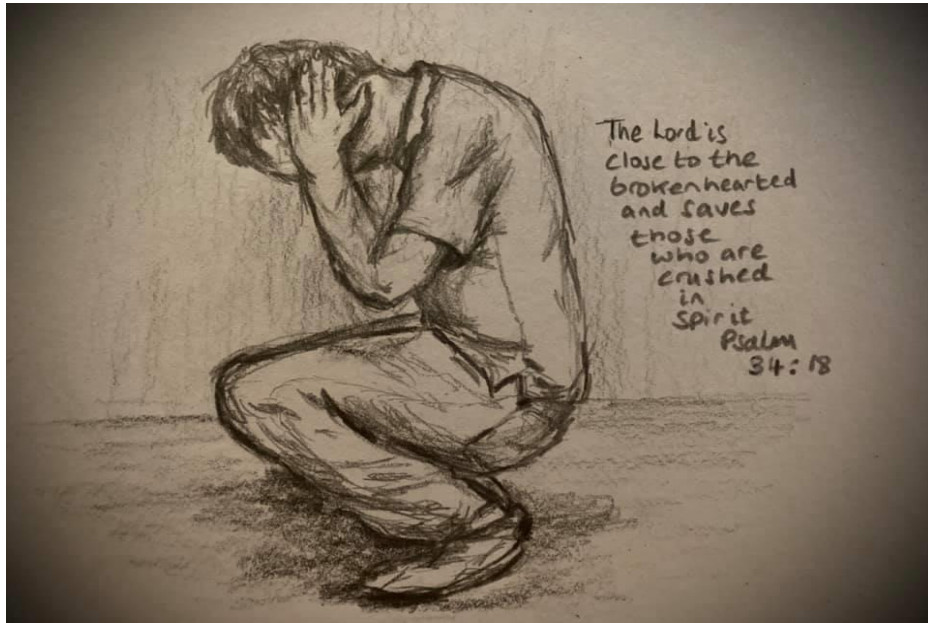


I WILL COME TO YOU



Artist Jane Spencer

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you."

I hadn't seen Mary Hartford for 20 years and couldn't believe the change in her!

When we were kids, Mary was the one we all went to when we were in trouble. She always had time for us, always helped us find our way.

Mary was sitting at a table in Tim Horton's, beautifully dressed and gracious as ever. But when my eyes met hers I could see that her quiet joy had given way to deep sadness.

"I couldn't hack it any more," Mary said, when I asked her how things were going at the church. "For years we'd been going through the motions, but the life was gone. So I decided to take a break from church until I can find God again amid all the 'Christian stuff' they're peddling these days."

I was no encouragement to Mary, since I lost my way long ago. I'm just trying to get by like everyone else.

To me it's a spiritual wasteland out there, for all the Christian media and Christian politics and Christian lawyers and Christian car salesmen.

What happened to integrity?

Where is God in all the noise?

Is Jesus fading into oblivion as the world stumbles on?

In the main-line churches, it's gray heads and dwindling numbers. And, for my money, those mega churches are too cozy and comfortable to be the Kingdom of God.

So who was Jesus talking to when he said ?...

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you.

***Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more,
but you will see me; because I live, you will live also."***

John 14

Was Jesus talking only to those eleven disciples?

Was he talking to Mary Hartford?

Was he talking to me---to you?

"I will come to *you*."

"You will see me."

"And because I live, *you will live also*."

Those words came true for the disciples. But when will they come true for Mary Hartford? For me? For you?

Let's be honest:

Has Jesus come to us?

Have we seen him?

Are we alive with his life?

If this isn't happening, then all we have is quiet desolation and an empty religion.

Mary Hartford is "waiting to find God again." Most of us are waiting for something to happen when we go to church, or when we get away by ourselves to pray.

When Jesus says, "*I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you,*" he's not talking to the world at large. He's talking to people who have drawn near to learn from him---to disciples. ***"He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."***

John 14

If I love Jesus, I'm going to do what he tells me to do.

And he is going to manifest himself to me.

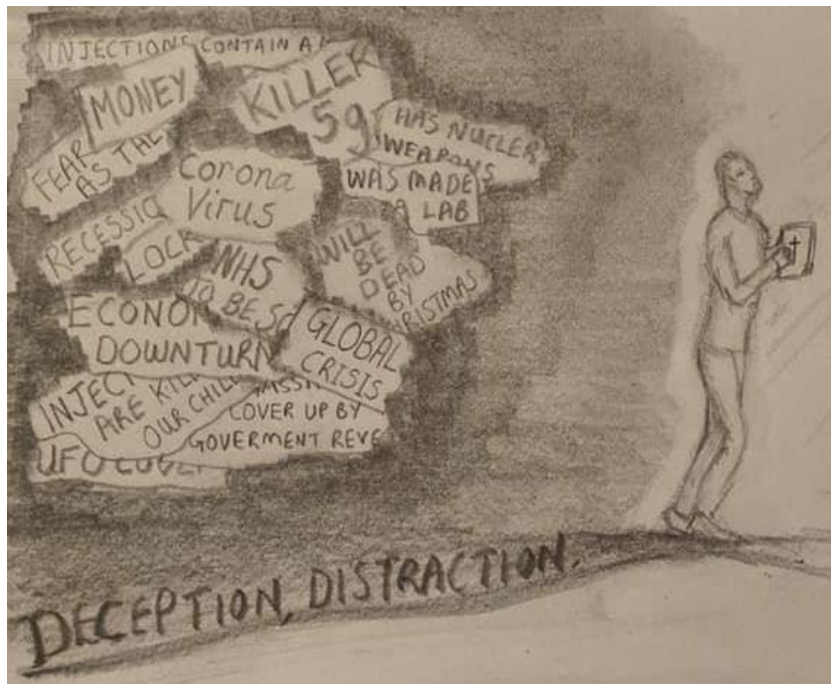
“I will love (you) and manifest myself to (you).”

So why isn't Jesus manifesting himself to us?

Is he holding out on us?

Or are we holding out on him?

The voices we listen to



Artist Jane Spencer

Long before there was Fox News or CNN or Facebook or Twitter, there were voices calling out to us. Since the dawn of history there have been prophets and priests in every land to tell us “how it is.”

We gravitate to the voices that appeal to our proclivities. These voices give us hope. They stoke our anger. They fan our fears. They arouse our curiosity with juicy conspiracy rumors.

But these voices have an agenda. They have an axe to grind. The more we listen to these voices the farther we drift from the truth. As we drink in the “gospel” of our choice, our ears become deaf to the voice of heaven.

We will not hear the voice of heaven until we tune out the noise and begin to soak our spirits in words that are true.

Soaking up the truth

The Bible is like Mount Sinai. It is rough and ragged, yet loaded with gems from heaven. If we're looking for those gems we will be guided to them. And God will help us to dig them out.

But there is one place in the Bible which is pure gold. We don't have to dig. We don't have to refine the ore. The gold is right there for the taking.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John contain the pure gold of the words of Jesus. Jesus' words are vastly different from what we find on Fox News, CNN, Facebook or Twitter. Jesus' words echo with the ring of eternity.

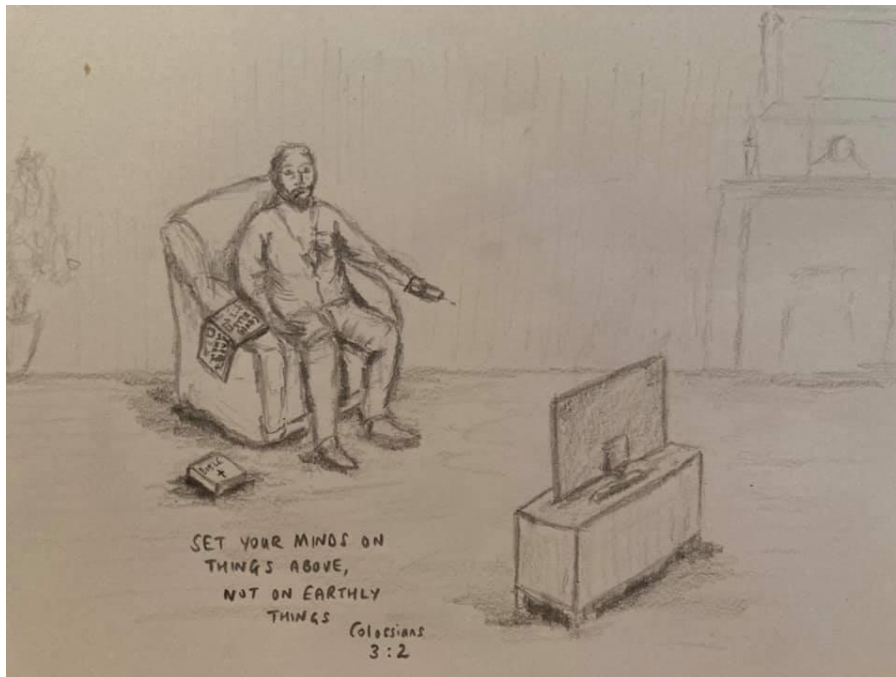
When we allow the words of Jesus to take root in our hearts and act on them, we find ourselves in the presence of the Lord.

“I will not leave you desolate. I will come to you.”

Calling, texting, googling.

It's how we stay on top of things. We cling to our smart phones day and night so we can call for help, see how things are going, find out everything we need to know.

Never before has it been so easy to get the answer we seek with the touch of a finger. Pretty soon we're at it all the time, swamped in a sea of google searches.



Not on Earthly Things

Jane Spencer

But have we escaped our desolation?

Calling on his name

“If you ask anything in my name, I will do it.”

John 14

In other words,

“Talk to me.

Call to me”

We don't need a smartphone to reach him. We just lift up our hearts and start talking to the Master.

It's simple.

Just start communing with Jesus.

Tell him what's on your heart.

Pour out your soul.

Tell him what's going on with you.



Whoever Comes to Me (inset)

Jane Spencer

Even if you have trouble believing that Jesus is there, do it anyway!

You won't be talking to the empty air, you will be talking to the Lord of heaven and earth, whether you realize it or not. And you will get an answer no smartphone could ever give you.

“I will not leave you desolate. I will come to you.”

Guided by my GPS

Where would I be without my GPS? It tells me when to turn right, when to turn left, the next street to look for. It's my amazing guide from somewhere out there in space.

And yet I still don't know where I am or where I'm going. My GPS just can't seem to find the path my soul is seeking.

Walking in the light

To find our way through the desolation out there and especially through the desolation in our own souls, we need more than a GPS. We need light from above. Just enough light for the next step. And if we walk in that light, we get more light.



Artist Jane Spencer

***“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go.
I will guide you with my eye.”***

Psalm 32

That chance meeting at Tim Horton's must have been arranged by heaven. As Mary Hartford and I sat and talked, it was as if the Lord himself joined us and gave us hope.

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you."

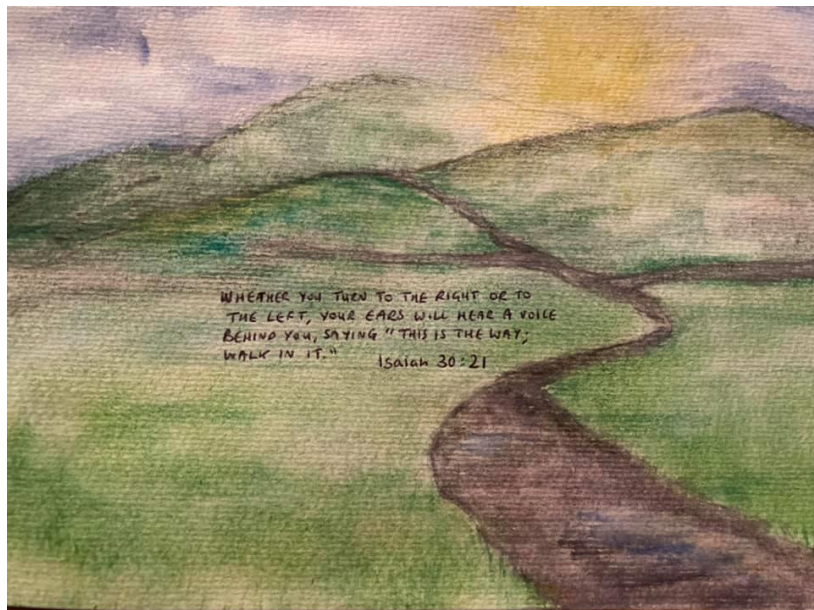
It's a promise to all who are disenchanted with the noise of this nervous world, who seek the gold of heaven, who listen to the words of the one man that consistently spoke truth, who is Truth Incarnate.

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you."

If we'll put down our smart phones for a while, and call on the Master, we won't be disappointed.

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you."

And if we'll give our GPS a rest and start walking in the light that comes as the Master speaks to us, we will begin to know where we are and where we're going.



Jane Spencer

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you.

Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also."



Prayer- Lord, our attempts to escape this world's desolation through technology, social media and other means, just leave us more lost and desolate. Help us to leave the chaos, the distractions and our concerns and fears about the desolation swirling around us behind. Help us to set them down and to look up to you. We don't need them, we have you instead. And we know, we know, you will not leave us desolate... you will come to us. We call on you again dearest Jesus... Come to us, come to us.... instruct us, lead us, guide us into your light away from the desolation, we want to see you, we want to live because you live.

Original: REB... December 2020

Featured Art: All through the kind courtesy of Jane Spencer. Jane does not have a website but posts on <https://www.facebook.com/artjspencer> . Here is her artist statement "The secret place is my place to rest with my Father in Heaven. To read his word to pray what he lays on my heart, these drawings are inspired and created in that quiet place. I pray they will inspire you to deeper relationship with Jesus. In His matchless name. Jane.

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THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

