



## Leaning Into the Whisper

The other day Mom and I were listening to delightful old audiotapes of a Marilyn Meberg conference. Marilyn happened to mention the story of Mary and Martha. I ruminated (again) on my Martha-ness. Am I the only one who identifies with Martha’s frustration about slaving alone in the kitchen making a meal while Mary gets to do nothing but soak in Jesus’ presence, listen to His teachings, absorb His love? I mean it’s not like Martha could just order in pizza or something in those days so that she, too, could sit at Jesus’ feet. Someone did have to cook if they were going to eat. Why didn’t Jesus say, “Oh, of course! Let’s move this party into the kitchen and we’ll work together and get this done so we can all three sit down and eat together and enjoy each other.” I honestly don’t know the answer to that.

I recently started reading a book called *The Whisper* by Mark Batterson, author of *The Circle Maker* and *Draw the Circle*, two of my favorite books on prayer. In *The Whisper*, Mark mentions that prayer is powerful but incomplete without *listening* for what God is saying to us. God often speaks to us in a still, small voice, a whisper. A whisper is very intimate; it causes the listener to lean in closer to hear well.

I sense a theme in God’s pursuit of my heart in this season: Lean in; listen; go deeper. “*Martha, my beloved Martha. Why are you upset and troubled, pulled away by all these many distractions? Are they really that important? Mary has discovered the one thing most important by choosing to sit at my feet. She is undistracted, and I won’t take this privilege from her.*” (Luke 10:41,42, The Passion Translation). Batterson points out that it’s hard to stop the busyness, to tune out the voices of the world, especially the voices in our heads. But the payoff is exponential. “*Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.*” (Psalm 84:10 NIV). “If we want to do more by doing less,” says Batterson, “we need to get into God’s presence. It’s our most efficient use of time, by a factor of a thousand. And quiet is the key. It’s silence that helps us hear God’s voice.... Lean into His whisper.”



So I’ve been leaning in closer, listening more carefully for His whisper, yearning for more of Him. I long to be more receptive to His love and better able to pass it on to others. I have a long ways to go, but I’m relishing the God-winks He sends my way, telling me that He’s enjoying—and indeed is intimately invested in—this journey with me.

## Health and Ministry Update

Robert recently finished his fourth ten-day round of strong oral antibiotics for the massive cellulitis infection that landed him in the hospital in January. He is now pumping himself full of probiotics and nutrients. Please pray for his body to recover quickly from the assault of the infection and prolonged strong antibiotics, with no long-term complications. Also pray for a return of energy and general wellness. He longs to feel well again and be able to throw himself into his work with vim and vigor. Please pray for all that needs to come together, in God's timing, for the training courses he is working on to reach those who need them. We are still looking for partners interested in distributing the courses long-term.

## Surgery Updates

Our grandson Nathan's surgeon recently decided that the chest expansion surgery should be put off for another year. The bars forcing the sunken ribs into a correct position need to be in place for the three final years of greatest growth, and the assumption is that Nathan will continue his growth at least through his 15th year. So the surgeon wants to wait. God's timing is perfect, and we rest in that. And good news: Nathan's daddy, Jason, just got a job after over a year of unemployment which he invested in ministry and whatever independent jobs he could get!

Also, my mom recently had a growth removed from her cheek. It turned out to be cancer. They have to go back in and get the rest of the cancer on March 9th. Pray for the surgery to go well with minimal discomfort, and for good healing.



Christie and Nathan (11)

*"Lord, I have chosen you alone as my inheritance. You are my prize, my pleasure, and my portion. I leave my destiny and its timing in your hands." Psalm 16:5 TPT*

### Praise and Prayer

- Health for our whole family; no long-term complications from strong antibiotics for Robert; Mom's cancer surgery.
- Connections and methods for best distribution of Robert's courses, in God's timing.
- Thank God for this year and all the wonderful plans He has for each of us in it. Pray that it will be a year in which we get to know Him better and love Him more deeply in response to His amazing love for us.
- Pray that our lives would reflect God to the world around us ever more clearly, inviting all to respond to His love.

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