

The NDCCRS 2020 Gathering in the Spirit Committee would like to thank our donor for providing these notes on Jim Murphy's five talks. Our donor, who wishes to be anonymous has requested, "please use your discretion to discern the accuracy of these notes."

Day 2 - August 10, 2020 - Jim Murphy

Prophetic Word

1) The Lord inhabits the praises of His people. As we sang, all the angels and saints are dancing to our music... everyone is celebrating. The Lord is smiling on us and is so pleased when He hears our praises.

Exodus 14:13-14 ¹³ Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

- in the stillness, He is at work
- be still and know God is present, loving us and embracing us.

- I sense there are people here who need healing
 - God is calling us to be still and know that He is everything that we need
 - He is the great I am.
 - If you need healing tonight, lift up that burden to Him tonight as the song "Be Still and Know" is sung

- 2) **Psalm 46** - God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.^[c]

The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

⁸ Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields^[d] with fire.

¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

3) **Psalm 63** - O God, you are my God...for you my body yearns and my soul thirsts. So I look to you in the sanctuary... for your love is better than life. My lips offer you worship.

TOPIC: Heed and Listen to the Lord - Jim Murphy

- we will continue with **Isaiah 55**

"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters;
and you who have no money come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.

³ **Give ear and come to me; listen**, that you may live.

I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love promised to David.

- the passage is God's invitation for everyone come
- the only qualification is if: you're thirsty, hungry, broke, out of luck...
 - I will be for you whatever you need me to be
- the parallel verse of this in the NT is in **Matt 11:28**

- God is making a promise that is most extra-ordinary
 - we are challenged to believe that the Lord is really that great ... that He is truly that great
- midway through verse 2, the tone changes a bit
 - He begins with "all who are thirsty come.... I'm buying"
 - at end of verse 2, the tone changes: heed me and you will eat well
 - come to me heedfully, listen that you may have life
 - YOU: "I thought I only had to show up, now you're saying I have to do something else?"

⁸ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.

⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

- this reflects the power of God - it shall not return to me void, but achieve what I had intended it to do
- we are still invited, but once we enter into that encounter / relationship, God expects something to change
 - the reason is because He loves us and He wants us to enter into His life

Q: What does it mean to hear the Lord and more so, what does it mean to heed the Lord?

- something is expected of us.... we need to do something to cooperate with God's grace
 - hear oh Israel.... Listen to what the Lord has to tell you today...
 - Jesus said, "let those who have ears, hear / listen"
- God is calling us to listen...
 - His word is so powerful that it has an impact
 - He is breathing out His word to the earth / to humanity
 - **because of free will**, we have a choice to either receive or reject the word
- in the OT, in the Jewish mindset, in order to hear the word of the Lord, you had to hear it.

- you and I... we can't tell God how we should do things
- unfortunately, we work in this condition that if God speaks to us in this way, we'll do it, if not, we won't do it
- God is communicating to us much more than we are aware of
 - the problem is not that God is not speaking, but we are not receiving it
 - the sound waves are there, but the radio isn't receiving to pick up what we can't see or hear.
- God is speaking a lot, but most of us are not programmed to hear it
 - most of us aren't disciplined to hear it
- the 1st step, to hear the word of the lord is to **hear it**
- the 2nd step is that you have to **understand the message**
 - humans cannot fully comprehend the Lord
 - His ways are higher than ours
 - however, He will give us enough grace to understand what He is saying
- example: St. Francis of Assisi praying in a church
 - he heard the word "Francis rebuild my church which is in ruins
 - there was a church in Assisi which was broken down
 - he began to rebuild this church with his friends
 - after some time, Francis realized God meant something else
 - Francis heard something and he did something... **he tried to be obedient based on what he understood he heard**
- our understanding may not be perfect, but it is a start
 - God will give us enough grace to understand
 - He then gives us more to understand it more clearly
- St. Paul - **we see something, but in time, what is cloudy will become clear**
 - if you wait for everything to become clear, nothing will happen
- Psalm 119 - your light is a lamp upon my feet and a light upon my path
 - how I wish the light lights everything
 - you only get enough light to take the next step in the darkness
- you need to hear the word, understand it (even imperfectly), then you need to agree with it (okay I get that, I will do it)
- Peter - gave a homily on Pentecost Sunday
 - the people were cut to the heart and said," brothers what are we to do?"

- even if the word was harsh, they agreed to it.... "yes, you're right"
- it was an acceptance of the word of God

- for the word of God...
 - step 1: we listen to it**
 - step 2: we understand it**
 - step 3: we agree with it,**
 - step 4: we act on it.**

- if these 4 steps are not completed, you have not heard the word of the Lord
 - you have not heard God
 - **Matthew 15:7-8** [You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you: These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.](#)
 - they are superficially going with it
 - **Isaiah 29:13** [The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.](#)

- it is one thing to hear something, but heeding means, "OK, I get it. it's changing me"

- **St Francis'** conversion: during Mass one day he heard the Gospel (Matt 16:24)
 - [Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.](#)
 - many heard the same thing, but only he heeded the word
 - why did it impact him in that way?
 - the word of God came down, but had its effect only on Francis

- **St. Benedict** - father of western monasticism
 - he was wealthy man
 - he heard "[give it all up and follow me](#)" and he did exactly that!

- somewhere there is a juncture of a heart that is ready to receive the word of God and the mystery of grace
 - I don't know exactly how that works
 - I have no say about how that works, but I have a say on how my "soil" is to receive his word
 - there is a juncture there between God's grace and my willing to go along with his word

- 4 steps...
 - step 1: we listen to it
 - step 2: we understand it
 - step 3: we agree with it,
 - step 4: we act on it.

- at times, we have a hunger for the Word of God
- but sometimes ... we say, God, tell us more and yet he is asking
 - He is saying... are you acting on what I have already given you?
- **Matthew 5:1-12** - Sermon on the Mount has so much wisdom
 - let's examine how the sermon closes
 - v21-22 **Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father in heaven.**
- **John 14:15** **"If you love me, keep my commands.**
- **Matt 5:22-23** 22"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME,
 - YOU: "What do you mean? I had my own ministry,"
 - JESUS: "Are you being obedient to the will of the father?"
 - everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who builds his house on the rock
 - everyone who listens, but does not act on them is like a fool who built his house on sand, and then when the wind and the waves come, the house collapses and is ruined
- he didn't do anything bad, but he just didn't act on the word of God
 - "I'll get to it as soon as I can, I will do something!"
 - all he didn't do was to act on it
 - there are sins of commission and also the **sins of omission...** the good what we didn't do, but should have done
 - **reasons:** too busy, not convenient, I'll do it next month
- **STORY:** an international business man contracted a builder
 - the business man had a lot on a hilltop
 - he said, "I am going to be overseas for a year, Here are my blue print, I want you to build this house."
 - "You have access to all the resources you need, I trust you, I will be back in a year"
 - the owner was not accessible for a year
 - the builder thinks... "we have such a beautiful view here, why is he using small windows
 - the builder modifies the house to the surroundings
 - the house is beautiful!
 - the owner returns..." This is a work of art", thinks the builder.
 - the builder walks the owner through....when the whole tour is done, the builder is beaming
 - the businessman says, "Congratulations, you have made a most beautiful house... a better house than I envisioned. The only problem is you didn't build my house!"

- "I knew what I wanted and I knew what I needed it for, but this isn't my house."
- we like to modify the word of God
 - we receive a prophetic word and we embellish it a bit
 - God said this and we give Him that
 - this is quite common; we "improve" on the plans of the Lord
- **STORY::** an American missionary family in Africa
 - lived there for a couple of years in a simple house in a compound next to the village
 - they had an 8-9 year old boy
 - one day, the dad walked by the back of the house and the boy was playing by the stream
 - suddenly the Father yelled, "Tom, lay down on your belly like a soldier and crawl to me."
 - the boy refused, "I need you to lay on your belly and crawl like a soldier"
 - when the boy continues to refuse, the dad becomes more stern... **"Do it.!"**
 - crying, the boy obeys his dad and crawled like a soldier
 - halfway past the tree, the father runs to him and scoops him up
 - by his play-site was a viper that could have struck and killed him immediately
- if the father said, "Son, there's a snake a foot from your head." the boy would have panicked, resulting in being struck
- the dad couldn't fill in all the details at the moment
- there are many times in our lives where God doesn't / can't fill all the details...
 - ie:" if you do this, this is what will happen
- at times, God tells us things that don't make sense or is counter intuitive
- there is such a blessing to be obedient / to heed the word of God
 - a chance that you will get it done...**even a flawed obedience**
 - even if we don't totally understand, we try to heed what he is telling us

Thomas Merton: just because you think you are doing God's will doesn't mean you are actually doing God's will

- but **the fact that you are trying to do God's will, that is what God wants...**
- just like St. Francis ; God accepted this limited response... and He called him deeper and deeper in

- we need to take God a little more literally / more basic
 - we don't need to add on to things
 - we need to do as best as we can tell

STORY: - at a charismatic conference at Norte Dame,
- the participants kept saying, "Give us Your word!"
- Sr. Ann Shields finally came up to the microphone and said,
"You ask for another word.." (she then pauses for a while)
"What have you done with the last word I gave you?"

Q: have we all of us acted on everything God has told us?
- why am I yet asking for another word when I haven't acted
on the previous word?

- why is obedience important

- whenever God gives you a command or direction, it is always His intention to bring you deeper into the spiritual life
- we struggle between the world of the flesh and the spirit
- we all have to deal with i
- obeying God takes you deeper into the spirit and not into the flesh or the world
- obedience is constantly surrendering more and more to God
- I need to constantly yield my will to God... that takes me deeper into the spiritual realm

Romans 8:28 ²⁸ And we know that ^[a]God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

- if you are trying to hear the Lord,
 - try to understand what he is saying to you,
 - try to yield your heart and act on it
 - that is good enough even if it is faulty
 - ... take one step in obedience to God

How do we hear?

- 1) ask God - there is something about the humility of admitting I am flawed with a million distractions,
- I need You in Your mercy...
- give me a capacity to hear You...
- have pity on me because I have a hardened heart and am hard of hearing
- give me the grace to hear and the grace to obey

2) we need to slow down and quiet down...

- our mind is usually going 90 mph with things we have to do
- Jesus is present on the altar and I'm thinking I need to have a pound of ham and a loaf of bread?
- the human mind is always working on something.
- our problem is we are so busy and rushing;

- we don't give our brain time to relax
 - usually, the only time we do is when we are in prayer...
- solution... let your brain quiet down

3) be still and know that I am God

- at times it is sitting before the Blessed Sacrament...
 - just be still
- don't use that silence to do more rosaries
- stop ... just stop... stop trying to get one more thing in
- just be quiet...

**PRAYER: Lord, I am making myself available for you today.
I am here whether you want to speak to me or not**

4) meditate on God's word

- we have pre-conceived ideas of how God should speak to us
- God will speak through His word
- you will notice that the same passage you've read many times will set your heart on fire....
- **meditate... not read more chapters**
- if you are spending an hour on one sentence, you are meditating on God's word

5) pray in the spirit

- I don't know how it works, but pray in the spirit for 20-30 minutes each day
- it's amazing how God opens us up to profound spiritual realities.
- you can begin with 2 minutes

6) address the stress

- we often come into prayer so revved up...
- we are so uptight to take whatever God says in
- some take a 20 minute walk letting their mind roll before they pray
- it is one way to blow some of the stress and the cobwebs out; you become more receptive to hear God
- some have paper and pencil... write down the list of what you need to do
- find a practical way to deal with things
- some find it practical to journal... my thoughts for the day
 - getting that out on paper releases what you need to remember

SUMMARY:

- ask for help to hear and obey
- slow down and quiet down
- we need to be still and know He is God
- mediate on his word
- pray in the spirit
- address the stress

PRAYER: **God, give me the grace to know your will and
God, please give me the grace to do Your will.**

- in the offering that God has given us... rich food, rich drink, etc,
I will be whatever you need Me to be....
but listen to me, seek me out, heed me...

IF we could hear the Lord and obey the Lord,
we will truly be the children of God...