

*“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God.”*

**1 John 3:1a**

Many Bible studies and messages have meant so much to me over the seven years of fellowship at First Pres. But none have ever impacted me, nor touched my soul with a balm or anointment, as my participation these last two years in the Spiritual Discipline Class (“Monk School”). Our studies are about us relating to God and God relating to us—The God, The Great I AM, The God of Abraham and Moses of long ago, The Ancient of Days, The Loving Father. One of the disciplines, or lessons, that has meant a whole lot to me is meditation on God’s Word. Richard Foster, author of *Celebration of Discipline*, writes: “The meditation of Scripture centers on internalizing and personalizing the passages. The written Word becomes a living Word addressed to you.”

One of the exercises for this lesson is reading a short passage in the Word, centering on a word or phrase that stands out to us, reflecting on it and responding to God about what goes through our minds. Once I centered in on this idea that God would speak right out of His Word directly to me, personally, I began to pay attention to those words, or phrases that stood out. Oh the thrill and wonderment that came upon me! His love for me is what He has been communicating to me lately—His love, not man’s love, God’s love, that unexplainable, “wants to dine with me” love and to “wash away all my fears, one by one” love, that love that causes one to wonder how or why He would give us, mere man, so great a gift, His Son, so He could commune with us.

Genesis 3:8a states, “And they heard the voice of the Lord walking in the cool of the day.” The cool of the day? What is the cool of the day? For me, it is simply the most peaceful and restful time of day that our imaginations could come up with. He wants to commune with me in the midst of that time. Ah, He is peace and He gives rest. Ah, the cool of the day, to me, is His love present as I’m quiet, receiving Him, listening, and resting in Him.

*Loving Father, Thank You for Your care for me to give me a glimpse of this great love. Have mercy on me and continue giving me these glimpses. Allow me to learn to trust Your love when there are no “feelings,” to dine with You upon Your table set for me and to feast on Your Word. Amen.*

**Terry Shimkus**

(Submitted in 2007)

