

The Gentle Whisper of God

Over the past few months, I've found myself reflecting deeply on the story of the Garden of Eden. It's not just a distant narrative for me; it feels profoundly relevant to our daily lives—how our choices and focus shape not just our actions but our very reality. As I've wrestled with these thoughts and learning more about the gospel at HBC, I've noticed something extraordinary: a series of moments that feel too perfectly aligned to be random, and when this has happened in the past, I am of the belief God is speaking to me.

Throughout my life, I've felt that God speaks to me and through me at times. Not audibly, like Moses in the Bible, but through the mouths of many—real people. Over the span of a week or two, seemingly random individuals might deliver the same root message, using different words but conveying the same meaning—providing confirmation or reassurance to a problem I face.

Last Thursday during bedtime prayer with my eldest son, Christian, I shared this understanding with him. Christian was surprised at first. He took it, as many would, in a very literal sense, imagining God speaking out loud. But I reassured him, saying, *“No, not like that—through the mouths of many. You have to listen carefully sometimes to hear and reflect. But when you step back and put it all together, it cannot be anything other than God. And when you do hear Him, you feel incredibly loved.”*

I also shared with him a deeply personal prayer I came up with when I was young. *“Dear God, Jesus, Holy Mary, Holy Spirit, and Guardian Angel, please come into my mind, my heart, my body, and my soul to help make me a better person, a better human being, but most important of all, a better Christian.”* While I've shared this prayer with Christian and Joshua before, it feels deeply personal in my relationship with God. Typically, we stick to the more traditional prayers—the *Hail Mary*, *Our Father*, and *Glory Be*—but this prayer has always been a way for me to connect more intimately with God.

The very next day, I met with Joshua to continue the *Life Series* Bible study we've been working through. We were in **week 2**, and the primary theme was the historical accuracy of the Bible. During the presentation of the material, something struck me: a statement was made that God uses others—the mouths of many—to be His voice. It perfectly aligned with what I had told Christian the night before. The synchronicity and timing of these events—their likeness and consistency—was too precise to dismiss.

This moment felt like the perfect example of when I sense God speaking to me. It wasn't just the content of the message but the way it unfolded across separate, unconnected events, reinforcing the same truth in a way that felt undeniable. It was as if God was telling me, *I am here*.

On Sunday, I attended Mass, and the message Sam focused on was the Holy Spirit and its descending presence upon us and how it works through us—how it transforms us. The themes of the service tied directly to my reflections on the Garden of Eden and the deeply personal prayer I had shared with Christian and Joshua. It felt like another affirmation that God is not only near but actively speaking through the moments and experiences of my life.

Later that Sunday, as I drove home from church, I was praying and reflecting on the Garden of Eden. Suddenly, a song began playing on the radio—Bruce Springsteen’s “*Secret Garden*.”

*“She’ll lead you down the path / There’ll be tenderness in the air
She’ll let you come just far enough / So you know she’s really there
Then she’ll look at you and smile / And her eyes will say
She’s got a secret garden / Where everything you want, where everything you need
Will always stay a million miles away.”*

The lyric, “*She’ll let you come just far enough / So you know she’s really there,*” resonated deeply with the idea of faith as described in **2 Corinthians 5:7**:
“For we live by faith, not by sight.”

It reflects how God often draws us close enough to sense His presence, while leaving room for us to take that leap of trust. This moment, tied to the song’s lyrics, felt like a gentle nudge from God, reminding me of the importance of living by faith and trusting in His unseen yet undeniable presence.

The lyric, “*Will always stay a million miles away,*” reminded me of a sermon by Greg citing **The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9)**:
God confuses humanity’s language and scatters them to prevent them from becoming self-reliant:

“Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” (Genesis 11:7)

After listening to Greg sermon, I recall mentioning to my neighbour Wayne, as we watched our boys play in the park at HBC after service, how this story of Babel—that passage—felt deeply parallel to *The Garden*.

The Expulsion from Eden (Genesis 3:22-24):

After humanity’s fall, God prevents Adam and Eve from accessing the Tree of Life, ensuring their need for redemption:

“He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

These stories serve as reminders that God, in His love, places limits on human understanding and self-sufficiency—not to punish us, but to guide us back to Him. They

echo the lyric's idea of something precious being just out of reach, ensuring we seek His presence for fulfillment.

This reflection reminded me of the immense price paid by Christ to bridge the gap created by humanity's fall. As Scripture says:

"For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:20)

The lyric, *"If you pay the price,"* calls to mind the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus. He paid the price for our redemption, not so we could remain distant, but so we could draw near to Him. This moment on the drive home felt like a gentle whisper from God, affirming His presence and reminding me of the profound gift of grace.

As a child, I experienced another profound moment of divine intervention. During my time at Sick Kids Hospital, I was hospitalized with a severe illness and placed on the cancer floor. Doctors initially suspected leukemia, and my family reached out to the 700 Club, who prayed for me on national television. Not long after, I began to recover inexplicably. I recall a lot of doctors gathering to see me off when I was discharged. The lead doctor said, *"You may be wondering why we're all gathered to see you off—it's not often we get to give someone good news on this floor."* He later explained to my parents that cases like mine were rare on that floor at Sick Kids Hospital, leaving the medical team puzzled. While they eventually attributed my condition to a very severe case of mono, my family and I believed it was a miracle.

During my time at Sick Kids Hospital, I formed friendships with two other children whose stories deeply impacted me. I shared a room with a boy who had a brain tumour. He would often cry himself to sleep at night, and his father, unable to bear the pain of seeing his son so sick, chose not to visit. Despite these challenges, the boy displayed a quiet resilience that stayed with me. His strength, even in the face of such immense hardship, was deeply moving and left a lasting impression on me.

There was also a young girl of Asian descent, who later passed away. Her story was featured in an article in the *Sunday Sun Newspaper*, which recounted how she had comforted her father before her passing, telling him not to worry because Jesus was with her. She told him she wasn't afraid, as Jesus was there standing beside her father.

These moments left an indelible mark on me. They reminded me of the fragility of life but also of the strength found in faith, even in the most challenging circumstances. Looking back, I see God's hand not just in my recovery, but in the lessons, I learned through the experiences of those around me.

Even my relationship with my now-separated wife carries a sense of divine orchestration—the workings of the Holy Spirit. Before I met her, I told a group of friends whom I was leaving, "I'm going to meet my wife tonight," which, of course, was

interpreted as a joke. Looking back, I can see that this may have been God speaking through me. Hours later, I did meet her, and those same friends confirmed the story to her in person. This experience was one of the many times in my life when I've felt God's presence in such an undeniable way.

However, the eventual breakdown of the marriage was difficult to reconcile with that moment of divine clarity. It made me question why such a relationship, which seemed so clearly orchestrated by God, would ultimately fail. Over time, though, I've come to understand that God's plan wasn't about the marriage itself—it was about Christian and Joshua. They were always meant to be, and their existence is a testament to His greater purpose.

This realization doesn't erase the pain of the separation, but it helps me see it through a lens of faith. God's plans often surpass our understanding. As Scripture reminds us: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.* (Isaiah 55:8)

While the marriage may not have endured, the love I have for my boys and the role they play in my life are undeniable signs of God's hand at work.