“Speak to Me” by Mary Mary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plwdJFupsIQ>

“Always” with Kirk Franklin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-wXnu3kuMY>

“Don’t Worry” with Kirk Franklin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ABsKi5-bZo>

“Yes, I’m a Believer” with Rev. Timothy Wright

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxOOv7dtcXU>

“Leaning on Everlasting Arms” with Rev. Timothy Wright and the London Fellowship Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7A100xYajI>

“I’m in Love with Jesus Christ” with Rev. Timothy Wright and the London Fellowship Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmoHuZh1RNU>

“Maybe God is Trying to Tell You Something” from the Color Purple

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lD5uPZzBr5c>

“Speak to My Heart” with Donnie McClurkin and the New York Restoration Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UdbpkvV0-BA>

“Speak, Lord” with Juanita Bynum

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U48sMX3pVtM>

“It’s Working (Romans 8:28) / He Will Make a Way” with Richard Smallwood and Vision

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxwV67hoPbQ>

“Facts Are But the Truth Is” with Richard Smallwood and Vision

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ec0KMZZXJP8>

“Mender” with Richard Smallwood and Vision

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrNTqOXujdw>

“I’ve Got a Feeling” with Albertina Walker

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxHVoyg13HA>

“Please Be Patient With Me” with Albertina Walker

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rr_i1AjfVLY>

“Be Open” with Richard Smallwood and Vision

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hm9L2-5OaTk>

“The Peace of the Lord” with Babbie Mason

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5a-ur_g8Zs>

**Let Us Hear What the Lord Will Speak**

***Psalm 85; Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 5:6-10***

 Praise the Lord! I pray that we all turn to hear what God is saying to us. Nothing is more wonderful, instructive, or assuring as hearing God speak; and feeling the Love of God’s Presence.

 We focus on that in *Psalm 85.* I use the New Revised Standard Version because it, in my opinion, better translates the original Hebrew.

 The Sons of Korah wrote this Psalm that began to praise God for what God had done. Some of the sons of Korah guarded the tabernacle, and some of the sons of Korah became warriors and choral psalmists with King David. Even though the original Korah revolted against Moses and God, the sons of Korah had seen the salvation of God in many different ways – the way we all come to this Bible Study with many different stories of salvation.

 *1 Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.*

 *2 You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin. Selah.*

 *3 You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger, Psalm 85:1-3.*

Even so, many of us still have anxieties about today. Many of us have questions about whether God will deliver us again today. Will God rightfully be angry with us and punish us for our misdeeds and our shortcomings? Will we still have to pay for what we did in the past? We have these questions, and they are good ones because none of us deserve the Lord’s Goodness.

 We plead, *4 Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us.*

 *5 Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?*

 *6 Will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you?*

 *7 Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation, Psalm 85:4-7.*

We cannot answer these questions on our own and many of us have spent days and years trying to figure out whether God is on our sides. But the Psalmist does something profound that has helped me enormously.

 The Psalmist Son of Korah quiets all of his musing and questions and self-talk to hear what God has to say.

 *8 Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people… Psalm 85:8a.*

 Let me hear what God will speak. For God will speak peace to His people.

 This has worked wonders for my life. After reading this verse, I quieted all of my self-talk about what God was doing or not doing; and about what I was doing or not doing; and about what other people were not doing. I set that self-talk aside, and I listened to hear what God would speak.

 Let us hear what God will speak. For God will speak peace to His people. Just stop and hear what God says to us, and I assure us that God will give us wonderful words of peace.

 Yet we doubt that God wants to speak peace to us when we see the rest of verse 8 that God *will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts, Psalm 85:8b.* Very few of us can claim to have unblemished records of being faithful to God.

 But we need to understand the context of how God speaks to us. God speaks to us with peace. Peace is the assurance of everything that God has done for us and will do for us. Peace is the sum of God’s total work in our lives. Peace is the knowledge that God is working everything out for our good. Peace is God’s own assurance in what He has guaranteed for our lives the way God said to Jeremiah: *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for your harm, to give you a future with hope, Jeremiah 29:11.*

Peace is the eternal God present in our lives. Peace comes from all the righteousness that God has already done in our lives so that we can have grace and mercy. Peace and righteousness have already kissed in our lives; and will kiss again. *6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. 9 Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life, Romans 5:6-11.* Because God has already worked out our salvation, God has peace that we can be saved. God is speaking peace to us in the assurance of what He was already done through who He already is.

 Our faithfulness is the same thing. Faithfulness is not the snapshot of what we did yesterday or today. Faithfulness is the growth and emergence of someone who has poured out their love towards God such that she begins to look like and act like the person she has loved. That is why God *will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts, Psalm 85:8b.*

We are the faithful when we turn our love towards God the same way that we receive peace when God turns His goodness/righteousness towards us.

 We get peace not just when everything is alright. We get peace when God’s goodness and righteousness makes something alright in our lives so that we believe that everything will be alright. The same thing goes for our faithfulness. We pour our love out on God such that God takes the small love we have give to Him to account us faithful. In this way, God reckons all of our small acts of love and obedience as faith and righteousness. Those of us who revere God and turn our love towards Him are well able to hear what the Lord will speak.

Those who turn to God in their hearts are planted like seeds. The seed that they have been planted as does not look like a plant or a flower or a tree. In fact, everything that this seed has been must give itself up to the ground and die. But when we have poured out our hearts and our steadfast love to God, the insides of the seeds that we were will emerge as beautiful plants, flowers and trees. God will speak peace to His people so that they can use that peace to pour out more love to God. With that love, God will cause love and faithfulness to meet in what we are becoming.

Therefore the Psalmist Son of Korah sang, *9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.*

*10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.*

*11 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.*

When God speaks peace to us, God enables us to turn our hearts to the Lord and become faithful. When we hear God speak peace to us, we become more faithful. We believe that the God who spoke to us will abundantly give us all that we need. We believe that God will supply everything that we need according to His riches. We believe that even when we do not know where God is or is leading us, God has already sent His goodness ahead of us.

*12 The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.*

*13 Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps. Psalm 85:12-13.*

 May we hear what God the Lord will speak!

 Tobias Pinckney for Powered to Witness University, 7/12/15

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