

A MESSAGE FROM JESUS

by Jill Morgan

I awoke early one Sunday morning, the sun streaming in gently through the French doors of my apartment. I glanced at the clock—too early to get out of bed. My mind felt awake, but my body didn't want to move. I felt a vague sense of fear and I wasn't in the mood to deal with it. I thought to myself, "I'll just rest here for awhile."

I can't explain what happened next. Suddenly, although my body still lay in bed, I found that I had been transported onto my patio. On my patio in this vision (if that's what it was), was a very large terra cotta planter. I was on my knees next to it, vigorously tending to its contents. However, my efforts were futile, for in it was dry crumbling soil and crispy stalks of dead plant material. Everything was brown. Clearly, there was no life to be salvaged, yet I continued to work feverishly, trimming and tilling and watering.

After several moments, I looked up. Across the patio from me, just a few feet away, stood Jesus. He was behind an identical planter, only this one was filled with lush, green plants and beautiful, fragrant flowers in every shade imaginable. He was extending his arms to me, unmistakably offering me this exquisite container full of life. I felt intensely his heart reaching out to mine in an indescribable and infinite patience, gentleness, and love. He said nothing, but I heard his message loud and clear: *Let God be your foundation, the soil in which you plant your roots. Come to me and find new life, growth, fulfillment, peace, and joy like you've not yet known. This planter offers you salvation.*

I wanted to drop everything I was doing and rush into his arms, but instead I looked at him with shame-filled eyes, dropped my head, and continued working to revive what was beyond hope. I knew I must somehow stop tending the dead (illusions), lose my fear, and turn to the Source that would show me the way, the truth, and the life.

And then it was over. I was back in my body on the bed, and only a minute or two had passed on the clock. I realized I had just been graced with a miracle and an important teaching from Jesus, but more was yet to come.

A few weeks later, I showed up for my Course text study group. I hadn't read the assigned material beforehand, but that was okay because we always read it out loud together during the group. I found that the section heading of our study this particular day was "The Little Garden" [T-18.VIII].

As we read that section aloud, I was instantly reminded of my vision a few weeks before and was awestruck at the parallels. We read, "Look at the desert—dry and unproductive, scorched and joyless—that makes up your little kingdom" [T-18.VIII.8:6]. Jesus then contrasts what happens when we choose love instead of fear. "See how life springs up everywhere! The desert becomes a garden, green and deep and quiet, offering rest to those who lost their way and wander in the dust" [T-18.VIII.9:2-3]. And finally we read the words that Jesus spoke to me silently in my vision. "Yet He Whom you welcomed has come to you, and would welcome you. He has waited long to give you this. Receive

it now of Him, for He would have you know Him. Only a little wall of dust still stands between you and your brother. Blow on it lightly and with happy laughter, and it will fall away. And walk into the garden love has prepared..." [T-18.VIII.13:3-8].

The gardens are a metaphor for mind. The desert is what we get when we choose fear and wrong perception. However, when we turn to the Holy Spirit and let Him guide our perceptions, we see love and the "garden of peace and welcome" [T-18.VIII.11:1].

I believe Jesus is available to all of us and appears in many forms. He chooses the form that will best motivate each of us along our own spiritual path. I will never forget this moment I shared with him. I realize now more than ever that he is always with us—guiding, encouraging, accepting, and loving. While I still often find myself tending to the dead plants in the garden of illusions, I know that it is in my power to choose differently and that Jesus' love for me never wavers. He waits just as patiently now as ever.