

When Jesus encountered people, His presence often made an instantaneous difference. On other occasions, it took time. Take our Lord's family. Despite living with Him in Nazareth, His brothers didn't believe He was the Messiah. Yet after His resurrection, how the Lord used them!

Paul talked about the ministry of "the brothers of the Lord" in 1 Corinthians 9:5. His brother James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17), and later wrote the epistle of James, which sounds very much like the teachings of the Lord Jesus. His brother Jude wrote a book exhorting us to contend for the faith.

So if you are discouraged about close friends or family members, remember the Bible tells us to "always pray and not give up". (Luke 18:1) The Lord can make a difference in the lives of those we love, though it sometimes takes longer than we would like. If His influence could transform His unbelieving brothers into soldiers of the Cross, He can do the same for those we love.

John 7:5 "For even His brothers did not believe in Him."