

REFLECTIONS

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One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.

Luke 6:12

Night of Prayer

A soft cloud enveloped me like tender hands cradling a baby bird. It felt so safe, so secure, so serene. I might have been floating, but it felt more like nestling into the down-comfort Mema kept on her bed.

Trees hovered as protection from the elements, but allowed sufficient light to produce a glow that kept me warm. Nearby a small stream trickled through the rocks of its creek bed offering just enough sound to let me know it was there without consuming the noises of nature chirping, and leaves rustling in the breeze that made me feel alive, but not alone.

For a time I talked to God. I praised him for all his greatness. I thanked him for all He had done. I asked his forgiveness for my many shortcomings before asking his provision for the needs I felt. I requested his help for others through the struggles of their lives, and guidance for the leaders of our world. Some requests were repeated to be sure He heard me, but then I settled into the serenity of the soft cloud that held me. And there I stayed without sleeping until the dawn brought forth the golden rays of a new day.

In reality, the soft cloud was imagined. The serenity was all a fascination in my mind. As I reflected on what a night of prayer might be like, the words of praise, thanksgiving, and the many petitions were real. But there were only so many words of praise and thanksgiving to express without sounding insincere. There were only so many intercessions to make without repeating them. So, I completed my imagined night of prayer by nestling into the warm tender hands of God—just being there in a state of peace. But such a night has never really happened for me.

I wonder, though, how Jesus' night of prayer might have been. Surely his words of thanks were more heartfelt than mine, and his praises saw greatness I can't imagine. The burdens He carried were heavier and his insights into the needs of those around him were greater than mine, so his requests for help went deeper and his intercessions for those around him took longer. But I wonder if part of Jesus' night of prayer was simply cradled in the tender hands of God and bathed in his glory and peace.

It is a place I long to one day be.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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