



REFLECTIONS

May 3, 2020

"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Matthew 8:20

Search for Home

How painful it is to think of the masses in this world who have no place to lay their heads, who see life only as a daily struggle to survive. Unthinkable poverty deprives them of shelter from nature's elements, of safety from evil lurking about them, or understanding of the home they long to find. In contrast, I'm drawn back to my great-grandmother's recall of that little log cabin she and my great-grandfather built on a 40-acre farm in northeast Texas. Certainly short of luxuries we know today, still she wrote of the home they made there, "*No palace was ever more beautiful and our happiness knew no bounds, and we never forgot the most important thing in building a Christian home—the family altar.*"

Home is a place. Yet it is much more than a place. Home is where we look for protection, care, and support. It's where one belongs, a resting place one longs to find, and to go, and to be. Those are the things Great-grandmother Bettie found in their little log home. Not everyone has them. Sometimes I wonder if anyone does.

Most people I know have a place they call home, or once did. Mostly, the reference is to a present-day residence. Often though it is a childhood home, or some other place connected with life's formative years. But no matter the reference, there seems to be a nagging yearn to build a home of our own, one filled with that little empty something that has been missing.

Jesus left behind a place in Nazareth he called home as a child. Through his childhood, Mary and Joseph cared for him with all their affection, but the time came to move on, to leave that comfortable home and live the remainder of his time in this world without one. *Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.* Yet Jesus knew what home is. He came from there. *Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. ... my kingdom is from another place."* (John 18:36)

We make our way through this wayward world in endless search for home, that warm, welcoming place we long to be. Myself, there are memories of the place I grew up—where Mom and Dad and a community cared for me as a child, made me feel wanted, and taught me to love them by loving me. Those lessons had little to do with the places we lived, or the small town filled with dear hearts and gentle people, or those places of my ancestors. Now as I more deeply explore what made it home, I think my Great-grandmother Bettie had it right. The common thread in all those places was Christ's presence in them. And though she didn't write it down, I imagine a large inscription carved above that family altar. It reads:

seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you

(Matthew 6:33)

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Richard +

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