



REFLECTIONS

February 26, 2023

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last.

John 15:16

Darkness

About those bulbs recently potted with their tips of life peeking just above the soil, something is different about them today. By day when all can see them, they seem static in their state; but strangely the next day, when morning comes, they stand just a little taller than the day before. Something about the shadow of night seemed to have changed them—something we couldn't see happen in the light of day.

Perhaps those pods undressed themselves in the privacy of the darkness with their nakedness concealed from sight. Or maybe when darkness fell, they stretched themselves a little more in search of the light. But whatever the cause, darkness seemed to help them grow.

Shadows befall us all. Darkness closes our eyes for a while. It's when we sleep; it's also when we grow. Well, it's not so much that we grow in darkness, but things seem to grow more when they're not seen or at least not watched. Then, when light awakens the new day, we see something is a little bit bigger.

There's lots going on around us that we don't see. *Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.* (Luke 2:52) But likely, Mary and Joseph didn't see what was happening even as they watched their son develop. Darkness keeps us out of sight while we grow. When the Light shines on the changes time has made, we bloom. Blooms turn into fruit. Hidden within them, seeds of new life await their own planting season. Those seeds become our legacy to this world.

Live life well. *Bear fruit—fruit that will last.* The valley of the shadow of death looms ahead. It's the walk we all must make. When we emerge from it, we will have grown more than just a bit. And we become a fragrant bloom in the garden God prepared for us before the creation of the world. It's the garden we always longed to find.

It's called Home.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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