

## Chapter 11

### Becoming a Place Where Others Can Rest

There is a quiet kindness in the shade of a tree...

It asks nothing.

It proves nothing.

It simply stands where it has learned to stand, and because of that, weary people find relief.

The tree never announces its generosity.

It simply offers what it has become.

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I wonder if human lives can become like that:

Not famous.

Not extraordinary.

Simply restful.

The kind of presence that lowers another person's shoulders.

The kind of conversation that reminds someone they don't have to pretend.

The kind of silence that doesn't feel empty.

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The older I become, the less I admire people who have all the answers.

I find myself drawn to those who have become safe.

Safe enough to tell the truth.

Safe enough to admit uncertainty.

Safe enough to listen without needing to rescue.

Safe enough to love without controlling.

Perhaps safety is one of Love's most beautiful languages.

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Hospice has been my greatest classroom.

Not because it taught me about dying.

Because it taught me about living.

I have watched people who had every reason to become bitter... choose gratitude.

I have watched families discover forgiveness with only hours remaining.

I have watched tears become prayers without anyone speaking.

And I have learned something I never expected.

Peace is contagious.

So is fear.

So is hope.

We are always giving something away.

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That realization has changed the questions I ask myself.

Not... *"Was I persuasive?"*

Not... *"Was I impressive?"*

But... *"Did someone breathe a little easier because I was here?"*

That question has become enough.

When Jesus said, *"Come to Me... and I will give you rest,"*

Perhaps He was doing more than making a promise.

Perhaps He was revealing the atmosphere of God:

Not pressure... Rest.

Not anxiety... Rest.

Not performance... Rest.

Those who remained with Jesus slowly began carrying that same atmosphere.

Perhaps that is why people kept coming back.

Not because every question had been answered.

But because their souls had finally found room to exhale.

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There are people whose names history will never remember.

They never stood behind pulpits.

Never wrote books.

Never led movements.

Yet generations have been changed because they quietly became places where love could rest.

A grandmother.

A neighbor.

A teacher.

A nurse.

A friend.

The Kingdom has always grown through people like these.

Perhaps greatness has never been measured by influence.

Perhaps it has always been measured by hospitality.

Not the hospitality of beautiful homes...

The hospitality of beautiful hearts.

The ability to welcome another person without first asking them to become someone else.

This, I think, is the hidden beauty of Acts 4.

The courage of Peter and John was not borrowed confidence.

It was the natural fragrance of lives that had lived near Love.

You can almost imagine people leaving their company thinking,

*"I don't know exactly what happened..."*

*"But I feel less afraid than I did before."*

Maybe that is all any of us are really called to become.

Not experts.

Not celebrities.

Not heroes.

Just ordinary people who have learned to carry an extraordinary welcome.

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## **Sit With This...**

Think about someone who has always felt like home to you.

What made them that way?

Now don't try to imitate them.

Instead,

...simply ask,

**What has Love been patiently growing in me?**

Trees do not all give the same shade.

Every life has its own gift.

Perhaps yours has been quietly growing all along.

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