

Grief and Sorrow

A lesson from Where Lilacs Still Bloom by Jane Kirkpatrick

"When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow....Get up and pray so that you do not fall into temptation."

- Luke 22:45-46

Exhaustion is a part of grieving. We often fail to eat. Our sleep - if we have any- is wrought with twists and turns and a heavy sense of loss when we awake. Tears while helping us to heal also deplete our bodies. The natural elixirs of healing and hope sink deep into our beings and we often lack the energy to bring them forth. Perhaps this is why when Jesus found his friends in the sleep of sorrow he awoke them with direction, that they might pray and with God's strength defeat the temptation to give in to grief, not to let it consume them into despair. Jesus knew what lay ahead for him and for them and he knew they'd need God's strength to withstand the time of sorrow and demand that they would face.

I like to think Jesus said those words with kindness to his friends, understanding how sorrow takes us to places we would never imagine we might go. Yet comforting others in a time of loss can be almost more troubling than grieving our own losses and disappointments.

Helping another grieve can be like walking on lily pads where with one could sink at any moment to the bottom. Grief is the price we have to pay for loving and it is a price we need not pay alone.

Creator God, bring me through the times of grief and sorrow that I may witness to your presence in my life. Keep me from the temptation to despair and instead remind me that Jesus comes to all of us in our sorrows and bids us pray knowing those prayers will be answered in renewed strength and purpose. Thank you, Amen.