AFTER THE Amen

A MINISTER'S EVENING JOURNAL
FOR RELEASING THE DAY TO GOD

You can care deeply without carrying everything home.



ELDER RODLY YOUYOUTE

THE KINGDOM SCRIBES

Permission to Stop for Tonight

From Part One of *After the Amen*

> *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* — Psalm 121:3–4

The amen was said an hour ago.

Somebody prayed it at the end of the service, or you prayed it in a hospital hallway, or you whispered it over the phone to a man who called you at the worst moment of his week. The people said it back. Then they went home.

And you went home too, at least in body. But if you are honest, the day did not end when you locked the church. The pastor who sits in his car in the parking lot with the engine off is not resting. He is replaying. The pastor's wife who prayed with a young mother at the altar and now, three hours later, is standing at her own kitchen sink hearing that baby's cough in her head is not resting either. The chaplain who was asked "How was your day?" and answered "Fine" is still, at eleven at night, standing in the room he answered "Fine" about.

This is the part nobody sees. The amen is public. What comes after it is private, and it is where a great deal of ministry weight actually gets carried.

This book exists for that hour.

SOMEBODY IS ALREADY AWAKE

In the cities of the Bible, a watchman stood on the wall at night. He did not stand there because he was more devoted than everyone else. He stood there so that everyone else could sleep. The whole city lay down because one man stayed up.

Psalm 121 says that in the kingdom of God, that man is God. "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." The Keeper does not doze. He does not take shifts. He was not tired by the end of the day you just had, and He will not be tired by the night you are about to have.

The family you visited today, the young man you have been praying for since spring, the marriage that is barely holding, the saint in the nursing home who did not know your name today — all of it is kept night and day by the LORD, who does not sleep.

This is why every entry in this journal ends with the same sentence:

God is still awake. You don't have to be.

It is not a slogan. It is a doctrine. The psalmist said, “The day is thine, the night also is thine” (Psalm 74:16). When you lie down, the watch does not go unmanned. It passes to the One who never left it in the first place. You were never the only one awake. You only felt like it.

TONIGHT

You have spent the day being what people needed. You have held things you cannot tell anyone. You have been strong in rooms where somebody had to be.

You have permission to stop for tonight.

Not because the work does not matter. Because the work was never held up by your wakefulness. It is held up by His.

God is still awake. You don’t have to be.

When I Simply Need Sleep

From Part Five: The Night Watch Is Over

Lord, I have nothing to say tonight but this: I need to sleep.
No crisis. No breakthrough. Just a tired servant at the end of a long day.

It is vain to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows:
for so You give Your beloved sleep.
I am Your beloved. I am taking the gift.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep.
You make me dwell in safety.

The people are Yours. The church is Yours. Tomorrow is Yours. I am Yours.

Amen. Good night.

God is still awake. You don’t have to be.

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MATTHEW 13:52

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