

Sleepless Nights

My whole family was out of the house for the evening except for my eldest son, Jason, and me. He was entertaining friends in the TV room. I wanted to be considerate and make myself scarce, but I wasn't about to miss the football game. So I resorted to the only other TV in the house: an old black-and-white set belonging to my younger son, David. I waded through his room and laid on his bed to watch.

While lying in bed, I do a lot of my thinking – or perhaps “stewing” would be a more honest word. When something is bothering me, all the unedited thoughts and raw feelings surface in the darkness of my bedroom. The lights go out, and with activities and distractions gone, nothing occupies my mind besides what boils up from the inside.

As I lay on David's bed that night, looking at his personal belongings sitting around and taped on the walls, I sensed something of his inner world. I began to think of the painful private times he has probably faced while lying in that bed. It made me want to be as supportive and sympathetic with him as I could.

But I also wondered how often my impatience and frustration has caused self-recrimination and turmoil to boil in his heart. How often had his sleeplessness been caused by my thoughtlessness?

That made me crave the gentleness and patience of Christ. Through most of our lives, we focus our aspirations on careers, finances, comforts, and such. But hopefully, at some time, the unimportance of these things becomes an emotional reality rather than an empty platitude. We tend to forget that in the long run, simply having a kind spirit is worth so much to our ministries, our relationships, our families, and even to our own happiness and fulfillment.

Being patient and gentle is a challenge for me as hourly pressures pick at my weaknesses. But I am greatly encouraged as I realize Christ's presence within me. I remember the incredible changes He's brought as His faithful Spirit has worked on me from the inside out. He really does enable me, and I know He will continue to do so as I live in Him one moment at a time.

I rejoice in Him and thank Him for the light He sheds on my life. Praise to You, my Lord!

Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love (Ephesians 4:1-2, NASB)

Hymn: [Your Thoughts, Your Words](#)