

## The River of Dreams Billy Joel

In the middle of the night I go walking in my sleep  
From the mountains of faith to the river so deep

I must be looking for something ... something sacred I lost  
But the river is wide and it's too hard to cross

And even though I know the river is wide  
I walk down every evening and I stand on the shore  
I try to cross to the opposite side  
So I can finally find out what I've been looking for

In the middle of the night I go walking in my sleep  
Through the valley of fear to the river so deep

And I've been searching taken out of my soul  
Something I'd never lose ... something somebody stole

I don't know why I go walking at night  
But now I'm tired and I don't want to walk anymore  
I hope it doesn't take the rest of my life  
Until I find what it is I've been looking for

In the middle of the night I go walking in my sleep  
Through the jungle of doubt to the river so deep

I know I'm searching for something, something so undefined  
That it can only be seen by the eyes of the blind  
in the middle of the night

I'm not sure about a life after this  
God knows I've never been a spiritual man  
Baptized by the fire, I waded into the river  
That is running through the promised land

In the middle of the night I go walking in my sleep  
Through the desert of truth to the river so deep

We all end in the ocean  
We all start in the streams  
We're all carried along  
By the river of dreams  
In the middle of the night

Prayer Leader:

**Betsy Nero**

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## The Impeded Stream is the One that Sings

Wendell Berry



Our prayer is characterized by silence ~

**Be still and know that I am God!**

In that silence we listen for a new word.  
God is present in all our lives.  
God cares for us, and  
our life experiences are a source  
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence  
we share from our hearts.

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## To Ponder: *Contemplative Stories and Reflections*

Esther Hizsa

*It may be that when we no longer know what to do  
we have come to our real work,  
and that when we no longer know which way to go  
we have come to our real journey.  
The mind that is not baffled is not employed.  
The impeded stream is the one that sings.* Wendell Berry

The last line of this Wendell Berry quote caught my attention. *The impeded stream is the one that sings.* It's the rock in the river that allows the water to make such a beautiful sound.

Wendell, are you kidding me? Rocks in my river make me swear. I hate it when I'm about to go out and can't find my keys (again). A squealing noise in my car, complicated instructions, discovering I'm missing an ingredient in a recipe after I've just gone shopping—they all bring out the worst in me.

And those are small rocks, never mind the biggies.

I get it that God often chucks rocks in our river to divert the flow or dislodge new life. I get that I can welcome God's work in all things. But I hate bumping into rocks and being thrashed about by the turbulence, and I don't do it gracefully.

Not long after Wendell's words floated downstream to me, a directee told me about the rocks in her river and her frantic attempts to rest in the flow. "I feel like I'm a whirlwind," she said. "And where is Jesus?" I asked. "In the middle of it, in the middle of me."

Minutes before, she told me how she'd experienced Jesus speaking Psalm 139 to her personally. He told her she was knit together wonderfully and that he would be with her no matter where she was.

I pictured Jesus standing in the eye of her stormy being, looking with wonder and delight at the whirling dervish he'd knit together.

That's how he sees me too. He doesn't just tolerate me until I come to my senses. He loves me when I'm a senseless brute. I swear and he hears singing. I say, "I'm such an idiot" and he says, "That's my Esther. Isn't she amazing?"

## Reading: *rest your dreams on a little twig*

Joyce Rupp and Barbara Loomis

Time alone  
on the lake of life,  
just floating along,  
waiting,  
pondering,  
no need to be  
anywhere,  
no need to do  
anything.

Time alone.  
Stop the crazy rush,  
I say to myself,  
and sit awhile  
on the lake of life.



*I was senseless and ignorant;  
I was a brute beast before you.  
Yet I am always with you;  
you hold me by my right hand.*

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...