REFLECTION SHEET

Staying in the Boat

Hope is not something you wait around for. It is built the way a muscle is built — under load.

Early 2008. A borrowed room in a church, company trucks parked in uneven rows outside, and everyone in one place, which told people something was coming before I said a word. Varment Guard had lost half its residential customer base in three months. We had the real conversation in that room — benefits reduced, paychecks possibly late, every expense cut that was not keeping a truck on the road. What happened next was not a plan working. People stopped pulling against each other and started pulling toward one thing.

A Practice to Begin

Name the season you are actually in — out loud or on paper — without softening it and without making it worse than it is. Then name one person who is in it with you.

Reflection Questions

1. What is the hard thing you have not said out loud to the people it affects?
2. What are you carrying that is genuinely yours to carry alone, and what have you decided is yours out of habit?
3. People follow your face before they follow your plan. What has your face been saying lately?
4. Where is your faith currently located — in the numbers, or somewhere else?
5. Who has kept showing up when walking away would have been easier, and have you told them you noticed?
6. What would staying in the boat mean this week, in one concrete decision?

An Invitation for the Week

One hard conversation, held honestly, without a reassurance you cannot back.

None of us had any evidence yet that we'd make it. What we had was each other, and a decision, made out loud, to stay in the boat.

— Staying in the Boat: A Practice for Hard Seasons