

## The Longest Road, Part 2

Last week I talked about the long roads I had been on in a lifetime of long roads, but I did not talk about the longest road. That would be my road to Christ and the sacrifice of Good Friday.

My journey was long with some detours and always a return to the road of reaching acceptance and belief but never quite reaching that goal. I am sure that journey is the same for some. I have talked to some people who grew up in the church and can say they never doubted it. I am not talking about the doubt of faith. I believed in God and in Christ and his sacrifice for the sins of the world, I just never believed it was for me. Faith is personal and you know it in your heart and mind that Christ died on that cross for you and for your salvation. I struggled with this. How could Christ die for such a sinner as myself? This was to be my longest journey, my longest road. I just never felt I deserved such a sacrifice. I had done nothing to deserve it. I went to church starting at 15 years of age and found a home where I was accepted and loved by others but that was what I was given not what I was giving. I taught Sunday School and told the children Jesus loved them that much but didn't say it to myself. I loved my little students and marveled at their belief in being loved. Then one day sitting in church, awaiting communion, the Pastor said, "Christ died on that cross for you!" To myself I said, "I'm not worth it." The Pastor's next words were, "Christ says you are worth it." Tears came to my eyes as I tried to hold them back. It was a pivotal moment for me in my faith. I felt I was beginning to get it! That Christ, saw something in me that I did not see in myself and found me worthy. My journey on this road took me over 30 years and began at the age of 15. I continued on my road with a new outlook and while that feeling of not being worthy often returned there was the same answer in my heart, "Christ says you are worth it." If Christ can love even me that much, he can easily love all of us that much. We fail, sometimes daily but Christ's love does not fail. He waits patiently for us to realize just how much he loves us. That I had done nothing to deserve it makes it that much more a gift. My journey in my faith continues now but I know, and I marvel at his word and at his never-ending love. Do you feel it? I pray you do.

1 John 4:10-12 This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God but if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is made complete in us.

Lord, we thank you for this day, may we use it in service and glory to you. Be with our church, may we be the hands and feet of Jesus this day and in all our days. Be with our Pastor and Laura, be with him in all he does. We thank you for the way he brings us your word and his faith daily. Lord be with his family, lead Elise to healing and wellness. Be with our families and loved ones, grant them safety and wholeness. Be with our staff and leaders, give them guidance and help with their tasks and calm and wellness in their homes. Be with the people suffering through wars in Israel and the Ukraine. May they find peace. Be with our Country Lord as we face so much distrust and disorder. Lead us back to a United country. We thank you Lord that you love each of us, may we live our lives in service and love to you and each other. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

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