

2015

On the Way to the Cross



CCUMC/BCUMC

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On the way to the cross Jesus stopped and took so many personal detours to show us the way, the truth, and life.

On the way to the cross Jesus gathered 12 students to teach and disciple. These were the "rabbi rejects". No one wanted them...but Jesus did. He called each one of them by name- made it personal and said, "Follow me."

On the way to the cross Jesus was going to heal a sick child when a woman, who needed healing of her own, touched his robe. Although He was pressed for time, Jesus stopped and asked, "Who touched me?" And out steps this shy, apologetic woman explaining what she had done and hoped she was not in trouble. She was in a total state of shock when the Son of God made it personal and said, "Woman, because of your faith, you are healed."

On the way to the cross Jesus went out of His way to comfort the mourning family and friends of Lazarus. Seeing their pain – and feeling it -- Jesus wept too. The compassion he felt was astounding. But it didn't stop there...he called for him, "Lazarus come out." And Lazarus did just that-- walked out of the tomb alive and well.

He called Lazarus' name. You can't get any more personal than that. Think of it, if he had just said, "come out," how many dead people could have risen from the grave. He had the power to raise the dead, but he also had the power to make a personal connection.

On the way to the cross Jesus experienced opposition from many religious leaders. One leader tried to stump him by asking, "What is the greatest of all the commandments?"

Jesus had a simple response, but it gave us the most important personal responsibility we have as His followers: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind" – which is everything -- and, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

On the way to the cross, Jesus was cornered in the garden by one of his students. For just 30 silver coins Judas betrayed the Son of God with a kiss on the cheek. And Jesus called him "friend." Jesus made it personal, showing forgiveness instead of judgment. The guards gathered and the long night began...

On the way to the cross, Jesus was arrested, put on trial – if you could call it that. Whipped, beaten, spit upon... He listened as the world threw insults. The mob made it very personal.

On the way to the cross Jesus would speak to the mourners personally, even though He was the one beaten and bruised, making the long trek to Golgotha.

Jesus was nailed to the cross by his hands and feet. And he personally prayed for those who were hurting Him. "Father, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing." The cross felt like a personal victory to those who opposed Jesus. And a personal tragedy to those who loved Him.

Jesus would hang and suffer on the cross for six hours until He died.

Watch The Lamb by Ray Bolz

Walking on the road to Jerusalem
 The time had come to sacrifice again
 My two small sons, they walked beside me on the road
 The reason that they came was to watch the lamb

"Daddy, Daddy, what will we see there?
 There's so much that we don't understand"
 So I told them of Moses and father Abraham
 And I said, "Dear children, watch the lamb"

"There will be so many in Jerusalem today
 We must be sure the lamb doesn't run away?."
 And I told them of Moses and father Abraham
 And I said, "Dear children, watch the lamb"

When we reached the city, I knew something must be wrong
 There were no joyful worshipers, no joyful worship songs
 I stood there with my children in the midst of angry men
 Then I heard the crowd cry out, "Crucify Him!"

We tried to leave the city but we could not get away
 Forced to play in this drama, a part I did not wish to play
 Why upon this day were men condemned to die?
 Why were we standing there where soon they would pass by?

I looked and said, "Even now they come".
The first one cried for mercy, the people gave him none
The second one was violent and he was arrogant and loud
I still can hear his angry voice screaming at the crowd.

Then someone said, "There's Jesus!", I scarce believed my eyes
A man so badly beaten, He barely looked alive
Blood poured down His body, from the thorns upon His brow
Running down the Cross and falling to the ground

I watched Him as He struggled, I watched Him when He fell
The cross came down upon His back, the crowd began to yell.
In that moment I felt such agony, in that moment I felt such loss
Then a Roman soldier grabbed my arm and screamed
"You! Carry His cross!"

At first I tried to resist him, but his hand reached for his sword
And so I knelt and took the Cross from the Lord
I placed it on my shoulder and started down the street
The blood that he'd been shedding was running down my cheek

They led us to Golgotha, they drove nails deep in His feet and hands
Yet upon the Cross I heard Him pray, "Father, forgive them"
Oh never have I seen such love in any other eyes
"Into Thy hands I commit my spirit", He prayed and then He died

I stood for what seemed like years, I'd lost all sense of time
Until I felt two tiny hands holding tight to mine
The children stood there weeping, I heard the oldest say
"Father please forgive us, the lamb ran away"

"Daddy, daddy, what have we seen here?
There's so much that we don't understand."
So I took them in my arms and we turned and faced the Cross
Then I said, "Dear children watch the lamb"

Amen.