

I just returned to Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii from my birthday trip to South Africa. I could make this trip because of our church's very responsible leadership team carrying out the ministry without my physical presence. I cannot name all at this moment due to the limited time. But I want to express my appreciation to you who led. I think you know who you are. Thank you.

Even though I enjoyed my time in South Africa, my heart longed to return home to where I belonged. Home is a place of joy and refreshment. Home is a place of love and security. Home is the place that just feels right to us because we were created to live there, isn't it?

Today's scripture tells us about this journey home. The prophet Isaiah calls this journey "The Lord's highway" (vs. 8). On this Third Sunday of Advent, Joy Sunday, we are reminded that we are on this joyous journey home. We are traveling the Lord's highway.

On this journey, we are not alone (vs. 4). It is not a "find your own way" journey, and then the party starts once you get there. No, indeed. God has come to bring us home. That's the reason for all the celebrations we are having, especially in this Season of Advent. The reason for the season is Jesus Christ, who has come to escort us home. He has come to walk with us every step of the way. Having a GPS on a journey is good. Having a map on a journey is good. However, having someone who knows how to lead us on a journey is the best option, isn't it? This is the journey, the highway, Isaiah speaks of so wonderfully.

This highway Isaiah speaks of is straight and narrow but very secure. He sees that there is no lion there. The wild beasts cannot get on the highway to disturb our journey home. Even those mild-mannered deer might delay our journey home, and we might fear the wild beast on the side of the road occasionally, the journey on the Lord's highway will not be stopped by anything because of Jesus Christ, who has come to journey with us.

Isaiah also sees the people traveling on this road. They are victorious people who are living above the world. They are "overtaken with joy and gladness" (vs. 10). He also notes that sorrow and sadness will flee away from these people. Wouldn't

you love to be one of these people traveling this highway? Today I want to tell you how to get on this Lord's highway.

The highway that Isaiah saw as he looked into the future was the way of those who received and believed in Jesus. Jesus tells us in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." We are told in the book of Hebrews chapter 10, beginning in verse 19, "Therefore brothers [and sisters] since we have the confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain that is His body."

Through the teachings of Christ, we know that the Lord's highway is straight and narrow. But we also know that because of the light of Christ Jesus on the highway, we can easily navigate through the Lord's highway, unlike the broad way of the world, which is covered in the darkness of sin.

Another thing we are taught is that although this highway is uphill, it is possible for all of us, Christ's followers, to climb because Jesus has promised to help us. He said that He would never leave us nor forsake us. He has promised to help us carry our load. So, what we have is a highway that God Himself has prepared for us. He has illuminated it with His glory. He stands, waiting to walk by our side. I don't know about you, but that sounds to me like a proposition that is too good to turn down. How about you?

Are you suffering today? Do you feel the loss and don't know which way to turn to? Do you feel like the world is spinning and you are about to fall off? If so, make the decision today to turn your life over to God and get on the Lord's highway, the highway of "Abundant Life" and the highway of victorious living!

This highway is like an interstate. It is fenced in, and the only way we can get on it is at the interchange. Just as the different types of interchanges, cloverleaf, access lanes, and merge lanes gently move us into the flow of traffic God has prepared an interchange to get us onto the road to a victorious life. That interchange is an old hill called Calvary.

We notice that as Isaiah looked at the Lord's highway, he said that no unclean person could travel the road (vs. 8). Sin is dirty. Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Here is the good news for us. Jesus has come to escort us home on the Lord's highway. The first thing He does for us is to wash away our sins and make us clean (Revelation 1:5b). What we need to do is to

confess our sins, ask for forgiveness, and turn around our lives. What sin do you need to wash away to get on the Lord's joyous highway for this holy season? Let's spend some quiet time with the Lord in prayers for it today. Amen.