

# The Road Back to My Roots

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LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—A trip to the town of my youth triggers memories. Life has been a good ride since I drifted away from this place more than 45 years ago.

Forty-five years. And it's getting close to 50 years since I committed my life to the God of the Bible. That decision has never been a source of regret.

True (as would be true with any human being), I have had some doubts from time to time, questioning whether God was anywhere to be found when I needed Him most. I have questioned whether the universe is any more than a giant cosmic joke, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing," but those doubts never lasted long.

Still, some of the same questions niggle at me now that niggled at me back then. "What does God want me to be when I grow up?"

I do understand the great plan God has for His creation and the role of mankind in that plan. It was and remains the most exciting news that has ever graced my psyche. My question is about my role in the here and now. If I were to dedicate the rest of my life to be completely in God's will, how would He have me use my gifts, talents and abilities?

This question has badgered me ever since the days those decades ago when the Bible started to make sense to me. I can look back over those years and realize that this ride has been directed all along. There have been both a purpose and intervention in my life, although most often I have never seen the intervention until after the fact.

My experiences in Texas, my "accidental" landing in Kansas City, the mentors and tormentors who happened along as I needed them, the falling into an aggravating though rewarding career, the wife, the friends—I could go on and on—that just sort of happened at the perfect time.

And here I am asking the same question I have always asked for the past 50 years: What do I want to do when I grow up?

In John 4, we see Jesus and the disciples on a long journey stopping for a rest in a Samaritan village. The disciples go into town looking for food, and

Jesus remains behind near Jacob's Well, where He has an extraordinary conversation with a woman.

When the disciples return with lunch, Jesus cryptically says, "I have food to eat that you do not know about . . . My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work" (verses 32, 34).

We all have, I hope, a hunger inside, and that hunger should be the work that God wants each of us to accomplish with our lives. I can tell you that. whenever I have been in God's will in my life, that hunger for meaning has been completely satisfied. And most often I didn't know it was God's direction until I looked back on it.

The challenge, I believe, for all of us is to determine what God wants each of us to do. To know would make this trip of life a smoother drive, but, knowing in advance or not, this is our Father's Oldsmobile we're riding in, and He's got the wheel. He might not tell us where He is taking us, but we can at least ask. I'm sure He won't mind telling you.