

## Step Out of the Traffic!

Psalm 46:1-11  
August 19,2018

***"Step out of the traffic!  
Take a long, loving look at me, your High God,  
above politics, above everything!"  
Psalm 46:10 MSG***

For the past two weeks my wife, Loreen, and I have had a chance to "step out of the traffic!"

However, for the first 6 days we stepped into the traffic. Loreen and I volunteered to drive a 26' Penske moving truck from Ormond Beach to Ellensburg, Washington. That's Washington State! This was a step into over 3000 miles of traffic!!!

This trip was in the making since May when we found out our son-in-law accepted a professorship at Central Washington University.

Almost immediately, after talking with each other, Loreen and I approached our daughter Megan and Ryan to volunteer to drive their possessions to their new home. The only problem was, at the time, they didn't have a house yet.

You are probably thinking what our friends and family members thought when they heard what we were wanting to do..."Are you crazy? 3000 miles of togetherness in a moving truck?"

Did I mention we volunteered? Did I mention we did this for them, and with them, 9 years ago when they first moved to Washington State?

Loreen and I enjoy getting out on the road and seeing all there is to see as you drive across the country. We took the southern route 9 years ago. This time we took a more northerly route of 6 days averaging 500 plus miles a day.

We stepped into a variety of "traffic!" There was the big city, white knuckle traffic of Atlanta, St. Louis, Bozeman, Spokane. There was also the long, isolated strips of interstate of big sky country, mountains, big evergreen trees as far as the eye could see.

Finally, we stepped into the best "traffic" of the entire journey... the traffic we experienced when we turned into the driveway of our daughter's family's new home with the horn a blaring and to see our grandkids come running out with greetings of "GRANDPA...GRANDMA!" The hugs made the stepping into the 3000 miles of traffic worth the journey.

We did get to step out of the traffic and enjoy a week of helping our daughter and her family settle into their new house. We enjoyed playing outside and feeding their 15 chickens that came with the house.

We then drove a rental car from Seattle to Los Angeles along the Pacific Coast Highway and stepped out of the crazy LA traffic to spend the weekend with our son, Matt, his wife Kelly and to greet our new grandson, "BO." We said hello to "Bo" but we will not get to hold Bo till after the new year when he is due to make his appearance.

It was good to "step out of the traffic!"

Today we are seeing God's Word telling us that we are to "step out of the traffic in life and take a long and loving look his way in everything we go through in life."

Fortunately, we don't have to jump into a 26' moving truck and drive it 3000 miles cross country.

We can step out of traffic every day in such a simple way.

TRAFFIC! It is a word none of us like to hear.

I agree with my friend who once said he never wanted to live in a town that had helicopters flying overhead giving traffic reports. If you have ever used mapquest, wayz or some other driving app. the last thing you want to see is some red line indicating a traffic jam ahead.

Or how about the signs over the interstate, such as I-4, that flash the dreaded words, "CONGESTION AHEAD!"

For all of us we experience "traffic" in our lives. It can be big city, white-knuckle traffic. It can be congested traffic that tests our patience. No matter the traffic we only have control of the vehicle we are driving. Others in our traffic can cause our blood pressure to rise. They can cause words to come out of our mouths that even startle us, let alone our passengers. They can cause a rage to fester and erupt like a volcano.

We all have traffic...mental, emotional, physical and spiritual. Our traffic can cause redline gridlock. Our traffic can cause congestion ahead in our lives if we don't do something about it. That something is "STEP OUT OF THE TRAFFIC!"

The traffic conditions that can cause negative aspects in our lives are worry, anxiety, loneliness, busyness, control, stress, depression, too much to get done on our "to do" list... relationships, illnesses, job, service.

Traffic is our daily commute in life: meals, cleaning, work, school, volunteering, computer time, cell phone time, recreation time, serving at the church time.

Step out of the traffic! Be still!

If we don't step out we will most likely burn out!

Be still or be ill!

There were two sisters who were in traffic. One stepped out the other put her foot to the pedal and kept going. Jesus stepped into the pedestrian crosswalk. The cross walk lights flashed causing them both to stop. Mary stopped and listened to what Jesus had to say. Her sister, Martha, stopped and whined to Jesus about her sister not helping her. Jesus told her that Mary did what was important, she stepped out of the traffic and listened to Jesus. (Luke 10:38-42)

What Martha was doing was not necessarily wrong. She was fixing a meal for Jesus and the guests. The problem was she didn't know how to be still and be a human-being instead of always busy being a human-doing.

To step out of the traffic of life calls us to:

***"TAKE A LONG AND LOVING LOOK!"***

What are we to focus our attention and love on?

God!

What kind of look?

Long and loving!

Have you ever experienced the repeated question from the back seat, or even the passenger seat, "Are we there yet? Are we there yet?" The nagging and whining impatience.

I learned a great answer to this question that often quieted the questioner for a few miles..."We are! We are right where we are! We are in the middle of somewhere!"

How often do we ask God the nagging impatient questions? Are we there yet? I need this God! Will you get it for me...now!

As long as we are asking we are not willing to listen.

Be still!

Step out of your traffic in life and look and listen to your loving God. As long as we are whining and complaining we are not listening.

We are to look long and loving at God as a reminder that He is God. He is all knowing, powerful, present and loving. He is God! He alone is to be exalted! He ultimately wins over any "traffic" we encounter in life.

What does this long and loving look at God look like?

The prophet Isaiah shared his understanding of our salvation from the traffic in life when he wrote...

***"Your salvation requires you to turn back to me and stop your silly efforts to save yourselves. Your strength will come from settling down in complete dependence on me--- (Isaiah 30:15 MSG)***

The long and loving look towards God takes the focus off of ourselves...our traffic gridlock and congestion. We discover our strength to make the long haul requires fuel stops, nights of rest and renewal.

Loreen and I did not drive straight through from Florida to Washington state. The truck required fuel...we required fuel... coffee...rest...and restrooms! We needed a good night's sleep in order to head out on the highway the next day with a renewed strength.

Isaiah affirmed this need for being still, for waiting on the Lord, for a long and loving look at God with this promise:

***"But those who wait upon God get fresh strength. They spread their wings and soar like eagles, they run and don't get tired, they walk and don't lag behind." (Isaiah 40:31 MSG)***

Step out of the traffic in life and take that long and loving look at God...our source of fresh strength! No matter the congestion in life, He will give you the renewed strength to continue on till you finish your journey with His greeting, "Welcome! Well done my faithful follower!"

This only comes to those who will step out of themselves and look long and loving into the face of our heavenly Father.  
How do we do that?

Step out of your traffic! Stop what you are so busy doing. Be still!

Look to God...His Word, creation, music, silence of prayer!

Meditation...contemplative prayer...beauty of His creation...power of His promises in his Word...worship.

Turn off your world of computers, cell phones, t.v., nonsense music and shows.

It doesn't have to be a long 3000 mile journey.

Take 30!!!

Take 30 minutes and be still to look long and lovingly to God.

If you tell me you don't have 30 minutes I will tell you you will burn out or rage out in your congestion, gridlock life of self!

Step out, be still and remember God is God not you! God is to be in control, not you!

We are intimidated in our "on the go" traffic of our lives. We like the quickness of the "drive-thru" mentality so we can eat on the go. We get irritated with a one minute commercial that interrupts our favorite show or sporting event. As long as we are whining and complaining we cannot be listening to God.

To be still, to be quiet, to reflect, to listen, to take a long and loving look...we have allowed the society we live in to wire us differently.

Step out of the traffic gridlock you find driving you and renew your mind.

What does God want us to do?

The same thing he told the Christians in Rome!

I want to share these "Step out of the traffic" words with you:

***"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life---your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life---and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out.***

***Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."***  
***(Romans 12:1-2 MSG)***

That is the long and loving look our loving Heavenly Father desires from us.

### ***ABOVE EVERYTHING!***

As we drive along in life we will hit the traffic jams, the congestions, the miles of backup that delay our travel time. Above the sunny days or stormy days of traffic...above everything step out of the traffic and look to Jesus!

To be still and calm doesn't mean the storm, the traffic, is no longer a problem around you.

To be still means that the "traffic jams" of life will no longer control you!

Jesus will calm the storms, the traffic congestion of life, when you call on Him. (Mark 4:35-41)

No matter the static of life we can adjust our ears to tune into the love and life of Jesus.

Some of us may be old enough to remember the long antennas on top of our black and white t.v. cabinet. Do you remember what we called those long antennas?

Rabbit ears. I can remember having to turn and adjust the ears until the snowy picture cleared. "Right there! Hold it!" Then you walk away and the static appeared again.

Static happens! We are to adjust our ears to where we hear clearly from God. Adjust your travels to make time to adjust to the promises and will of God. Turn to Him to remove the static.

The sun doesn't revolve around the earth. It stays still. When the earth faces the sun there is daylight. When that part of the earth turns away from the sun there is darkness...night.

God's love never changes. Jesus love for us is the same yesterday, today and forever...no matter what kind of traffic we face in our lives. The question is do we tune into Him? Do we turn our attention towards Jesus, the Light?

Are we willing to step out of the traffic in our lives and make the adjustment to look long and loving to Jesus...Above everything?!?

No matter what journey we have been on or are currently on, its time to step out of the traffic...take the long and loving look at the love of Jesus at this altar of communion. We are to take the time to listen, confess, commune and then rise up and head back out on the highway, our journey in life. Above everything we know we will not have to travel alone!