

# All Roads Lead Home

When Lola and I moved to Cleveland – the first time we had ever lived anywhere but in our hometown of Cookeville, Tennessee – it was in the fall of the year.

Christmas was approaching and, of course, we had always spent that very special holiday with our families (her parents and mine all lived in Cookeville). There was no doubt in our minds that we would head for home after work on Christmas Eve.

Until, that is, a snowstorm struck in mid-afternoon of Dec. 24, making the roads nearly impassable. We started for Middle Tennessee anyway, got about 30 miles with great difficulty, and decided the roads were just too unsafe to make the trip. We returned to Cleveland.

But the desire to be home at Christmas wouldn't abate. After about an hour, we headed out again. After some near accidents, a lot of slipping and sliding, and the help of other motorists – strangers caught in similar circumstances – we made it to Cookeville. We made it home.

The late Marjorie Holmes – Christian author of 134 books – understood that deep desire. “At Christmas, all roads lead home,” she wrote. “The filled planes, the packed trains and overflowing buses all speak eloquently of a single destination: home. Despite the crowding and the crushing, the delays, the confusion, we clutch our bright packages and beam our anticipation. We are like birds driven by an instinct we only faintly understand – the hunger to be home.”

Holmes then recalled a Christmas during the Great Depression when her father was out of work and the rest of her siblings were scattered across the country and unable to return home for Christmas. But then, just days before, each sibling conspired with the others to make it home no matter what to surprise their parents.

When she arrived at the front door, she writes, “I’ll never forget my mother’s eyes or the feel of her arms around me.” The next morning, she was awakened by the sleigh bells hanging on the front door as her siblings each arrived. “Together, we realized, it was the best Christmas gift we could give one another,” Holmes said.



(more)

Each of you, no doubt, experiences the inner call to go home at Christmastime and gather with family – if they are still alive – or to retrace those journeys in your mind.

There must be some deep psychological reason why we turn so instinctively toward home at this special time. Perhaps we are acting out the ancient story of a man and a woman and a coming child, plodding along with their donkey toward their destination. It was necessary for Joseph to go home. The Child who was born on that first Christmas grew up to be a man, Jesus.

He healed many people and taught us many important things through His words and His example. His death on the cross – in our place, paying for our sins – and His resurrection demonstrate His compelling love for us. And the message that has left the most lasting impression and given the most hope and comfort is this:

*We do have a place to go home to – a place where every day will be Christmas, with everybody there.*

God's great family – made up of believers in His Son, Jesus Christ – will be at home. Forever.

– Beecher Hunter

