

*The Christian is not one who has gone all the way with Christ. None of us has. The Christian is the one who has found the right road.” Charles L. Allen*

Have you ever had special events in your life that are God related, and because of that event you see your need, and relationship with God that much clearer ? If you have you know that these kinds of events renew your commitment to God, energizing your faith. Sometimes, when we go through such things, we tell ourselves (I am just as guilty with this one too) that things will be different, we will be better people, we won't do the same not so good things we did before. We have such good intentions, and we sincerely want to follow through on them. Not too soon after though, reality steps in, and we find ourselves doing some of the same things, and maybe even new ones that don't quite fit with our new commitment to God.

The human response at this point is to give up, and possibly become more discouraged because our act of commitment didn't change a thing.

That is why we always need to be come focused (laser-like if you will) on two concepts of the faith. The first is the grace of God. While I realize this may seem like a partisan Lutheran moment, so be it. Luther discovered that trying to live the perfect Christian life on his own was a failure. It was God's action through Christ that made and kept him a child of God. We live our lives then, not setting ourselves up to fail by trying things on our own, but are constantly embraced by the forgiveness and love of God through Jesus Christ. Then our actions flow not from the frustration of perfection, but by being so freely loved by God we freely do. What if we fall? We pick ourselves up again sure of God's forgiveness in Christ and begin again.

Related to this is the concept of “pilgrimage”. I like to see Christianity not as a “graduation” exercise where we think at a certain point we've arrived, but a life long journey, where there will be much learning, understanding, wonderment, as well detours, or taking a wrong direction once in a while.

What matters in pilgrimage is that while all this takes place we still don't lose sight of the ending point when the day comes and we meet God face to face.

God loves you. Jesus Christ shows us what that love for us is about. Keep on Keeping on!