



January 7, 2018

## The Long Way

**READ:** Romans 11:33 (Common English Bible)

*“God’s riches, wisdom, and knowledge are so deep! They are as mysterious as his judgements, and they are as hard to track as his paths!”*

### REFLECT:

*The Long Way* is a midtempo country ballad written and recorded by American country music singer Brett Eldredge. Matthew Rogers co-wrote the song. Eldredge says that the song is “a look into what I want to find in love.”<sup>1</sup> Careful attention to the lyrics reveals how someone can get to know their partner on a deeper level by paying attention to the particulars and nuances of their life; by learning deeply about their history and hometown. Eldredge says that he co-wrote the song with Rogers during a time when he was looking for true love. Matthew Rogers was engaged to be married during the writing and the circumstances of the two writers inspired the romantic lyrics.

Here, in his letter to the Christian Church in Rome, the Apostle Paul shares that he has taken *The Long Way* in his deep desire to know God: “God’s riches, wisdom, and knowledge are so deep! They are as mysterious as his judgements, and they are as hard to track as his paths!” (Romans 11:33). Paul has sought “to track” God’s paths, to explore deeply all he can discover about God. Paul longs to bathe in as much detail of God’s backstory as possible; God’s riches, God’s wisdom, God’s knowledge, and God’s judgements. Paul wants it all. Paul has come to a deeper knowledge of God in the person of Jesus Christ and that knowledge – and personal experience of Jesus on the road to Damascus – has changed him. Paul dearly loves and constantly delights in his “heavenly Father” made real to earth in Jesus.

*The Long Way* is a song that I wish I had written. I have downloaded the song and listen to it during my morning runs. “Take me the long way around your town. Were you the queen with the silver crown? I want the secrets you keep, the shine underneath. Of the diamond I think I just found. Take me the long way around.” As I approach the thirty-first anniversary of marriage to my wife, Grace, I can’t seem to discover enough about her. Grace is a diamond that I was fortunate enough to stumble upon so many years ago and my love for her seems to grow more expansive each day. Gladly, I take *The Long Way* in searching for the riches that makes her the woman she is. I don’t want to miss anything.

Paul doesn’t want to miss anything about his Lord. In a world where we don’t have meaningful conversations anymore with those we love, distracted by this and that, Paul invites us to slow down. Put away the mobile phones and the iPads and social media platforms and listen to God in the Holy Scriptures, The Bible. Permit your mind – and heart – to take *The Long Way* to discover again this great and beautiful God we see in Jesus Christ. Once we have, our hearts will sing along with Brett Eldredge, “Didn’t think tonight when I walked in, I’d be falling for somewhere I’ve never been.”

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<sup>1</sup>Kelly Brickey, “Brett Eldredge Gets Vulnerable About Love in ‘The Long Way.’” (*Sounds Like Nashville*: SpinMedia, August 11, 2017).

**RESPOND:**

1. How has this scripture or meditation spoken to you?

2. What insight can you apply to your life this week?

3. What one specific act do you intend to take, an attitude to change, a person to see, or prayer to pray?

**PRAY:**

*My life is filled with obligations and commitments, but none are greater than knowing you. In my daily moments of quiet, open my heart to know you more fully. In Christ's name, I pray. Amen.*