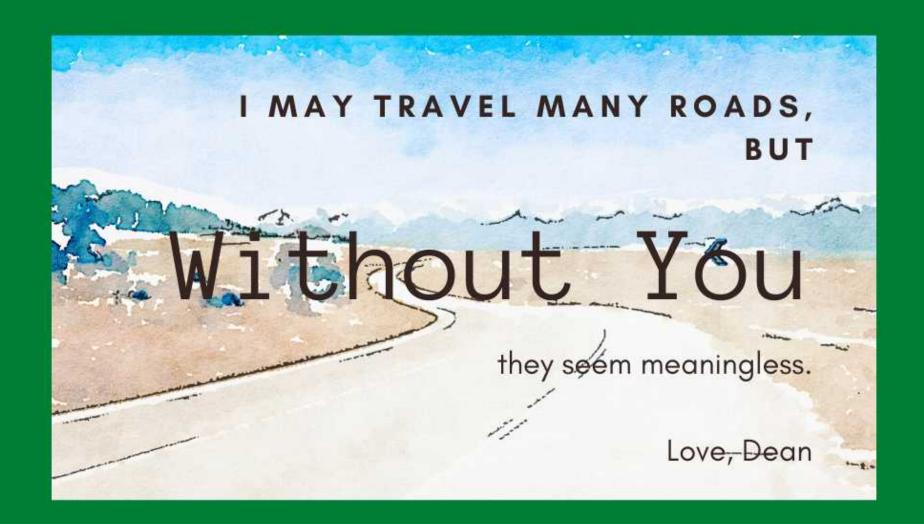


From the desk of your friend in Christ Jesus,



<u>Private Stock</u>



another way to see God

Celebrate God in the flesh.

"Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show GRATITUDE, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire."

(Hebrews 12:28-29 NAS77 emphasis mine)



WHEN LOOKING AT YOU, I see in the physical Christ's LOVE hugging me.

From John we learn how Jesus taught His disciples and then through them to us an incredible lesson, "We cannot love God, if we do not love humans."

All the law and the prophets find their support on these two laws; Love God with all you are and don't stop there, love everyone else the same way. Now that is huge! How can we do this? Receive God's gift of grace, His Son.

GRATITUDE comes after we receive something desired. But where can we draw the line? Unfortunately, anywhere.

Just the other day I heard a lot of commotion around the neighborhood. Fire trucks, ambulances, aid cars, motorcycles. Instantly I was praying. My gut said I was praying for a neighbor child. I became anxious, and with my prayers, fear peeked to a crescendo as I

peered over my back wall to spy on the activity. Unable to see exactly where the injured party lay, I ran upstairs and from my veranda was able to visually import all the activity, but without specifics. Soon a motorcyclist left the fray of emergency workers and headed my way.

Running down the stairs and as I got close to the front door (still praying), God caught my attention and virtually instructed me to take a big breath, rest and believe. I agreed and tried to exit, but He 'chided' me asking me if I could do better than that? Okay, and to my prayer I added praise and thanksgiving which, face it, is GRATITUDE for hearing my prayers before I asked.

Yes, I was grateful for all the kindest people I have ever met. Easy to

see Christ living in the whole family. I was awash with GRATITUDE for all the care workers, for all the hours of training, preparation, effort, and willingness to dive in and possibly become exposed to Covid-19.

With another breath, my anxious soul was quieted and GRATITUDE rocked me into a divine crib of peace where as a child I remember I could receive



all things as from God, love my neighbor, and just stop trying to run the show and be grateful to the One in whom I can trust.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He will make your paths straight."

(Pro 3:6 NKJV)

## GRATITUDE leaps out of a heart ready to receive what God gives.

You are God's gift to me. Each and every one of you. From the friend who draws close in time of need to the foe who publicly declares they would rather that my great-grandmother had never been born. From family member to stranger, I have both the right and imperative to love you just as I love God. In this, God has every intention of being GOD burning out everything other than love. Which takes us back to the first scripture I quoted...

"Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show GRATITUDE, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire."

(Hebrews 12:28-29 NAS77 emphasis mine)

P.S. The young man is doing well.