The Traveler’s Feet
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When God touched down, sheathing Himself in skin through the womb of Mary, purposing his heart toward the redemption of men and women, it was no small task. Not only did He empty Himself by limiting His attributes (Phil 2:6), but He purposed Himself in a single direction. Luke says Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52). There was a growing process that Jesus enjoyed while embodied as a human.

Can you see Mary nursing Jesus, picking him up when he cries, and changing his swaddling clothes? Then the day comes that Jesus rolls over and learns to wiggle his knees and elbows into a crawl. And, if they had cameras, surely the shutters would have been snapping the day the little Messiah took his first steps.

And those steps were his first toward the Cross. As songwriter Rich Mullins put it,

I can see some Traveler’s footprints
There’s a little bit of blood in every step He made
I wonder what kind of burden He’s bearing
That’s cut him so deeply every step
Along the long, long way

The metaphor is a deep reminder that every place the feet of Jesus took him was part of God’s plan to win the world. They were steps of compassion and healing. They took him into his own country where he was received without honor. They led him into the temple where he argued vigorously over the Pharisees but had to lose himself in the crowd to avoid a premature death. They humbly accepted washing with the hair of one who had been forgiven much.

Then those same dust-covered feet lead him to Jerusalem, to the upper room, into the garden, through arrest, and ultimately nailed to hard wood erected at the Place of the Skull.

Rich Mullins continues to give us the imagery of Christ, the Traveler,

In the west I see an evening
The scarlet thread stretched beneath the gathering dark
Red as the blood on the hands of the Savior
Rich as the mercy that flowed from His broken heart

This time of year is a celebration of God’s arrival to earth. Yet it is only the beginning of his journey as he grows, bleeds, empathizes, and redeems. And all for us, who humbly set our feet to walk with him.