



Will Young & Gareth Gates: The Long and Winding Road

Okay, so it's a bit of a 'last season' thang, but I've been thinking a bit about Will and Gareth's reckless destruction of the Beatles classic over the past few days... You know the tune, but have you listened to the words?

The mad thing about 'The Long and Winding Road' is that, no matter how loved-up and schmaltzy it sounds, it's actually a pretty desperate song in its themes. Essentially, I read it as a bit of a cry to a loved one who you're traveling towards, and desperate to be at home with, but you've been left feeling alone, traveling onwards to their door...

There's a real hope and certainty in the song, with the line: 'The long and winding road that leads to your door / will never disappear', put together with a



decent understanding that there's some kind of dependency on the person that you're singing it to:

'Don't leave me waiting here - lead me to your door.'

But simultaneously, our crooning Pop Idols wail 'Many times I've been alone, many times I've cried / Anyway you'll never know the many ways I've tried.'

'The Long and Winding Road' is, above all, a heartfelt cry of love, desire and desperation. Because of this, it really grabs my feelings of helplessness sometimes, and echoes a lot of the frustration that we can feel in our lives.

To Reflect

In case you hadn't noticed, we've now entered into the season of Lent. In the same way that Will and Gareth are looking forward with hope to coming to the door of their loved one, we are looking forward with coming face-to-face with Jesus in the joy of the Easter Resurrection! But Lent is also about struggle and difficulty. When I'm struggling along with giving up swearing or chocolate or whatever it might be, I'm reminded of the difficult fact that I'm dependent on God to show me the way, and to lead me towards Him.

The Church - which means you and me - has always thought of itself as a 'pilgrim', or traveller. What does that mean to you? I know that for me, it means that Lent (and all my life) is a process - a 'Long and Winding Road', where sometimes I feel alone, and sometimes I struggle, but, above all, I can look forward to coming home at the end of it all.

To Do

Don't give up! Will and Gareth sing about the 'wild and windy night'... I forgot about my Lent thingy on the 2nd day... Aargh!... But if you're travelling on the road, stopping's not gonna get you anywhere! Have you read the poem 'Footprints' - that can really help when you feel alone.

Try looking at Matthew 28:20.

Next time you're in Mass, when the priest prays: 'As we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' remember that you're travelling on the journey, and ask God to help you carry on the 'Long and Winding Road'...

To Pray

Father, thank you that you give me this time of Lent to think about hope and difficulty. Teach me more about being a 'pilgrim' over the coming weeks, and help me to look forward to the coming of Your Son, Jesus. Amen