

Published based on [Patching Potholes on a Country Backroad](#)

Patching Potholes on a Country Backroad

I spent part of today driving on the backroads of Winston County, Alabama. If you've ever traveled on the backroads of Alabama, you know that some of those roads have a lot of potholes. As a matter of fact, some of those roads are more potholes than road. I could anticipate where most of the holes would be even though I had not been on those roads in years. They were the same old potholes that had been there before.

As I traveled from one county road to another, I turned the curve in the road to see a road crew. They were patching the holes. Well, I don't know if you could really call what they were doing patching. They were filling the holes with loose tar-covered gravel but most of the filled-holes were not even packed down so that, as most of you country folk know, when you drive over the holes, the loose gravel comes out and leaves some yucky tar residue right on your vehicle. No real progress is made. Just a temporary fix. Yet I knew those guys were out there to help me. They are supposed to be making the road better and safer for me to travel on.

I felt God speaking to me as I traveled those familiar roads. I felt His gentle Spirit nudging. *"What are the potholes in your life? Where are the empty places in your heart?"* And those empty places can be so many things. Fear, rejection, anger, anxiety, and on and on. Often we find the potholes have been there even from our childhood.

I thought of how we try to fix our own lives so many times. We patch up the potholes – the same old ones that always get empty again – with a loose mixture that will be scattered again faster than you can say "calf rope". (I'm sorry if that is confusing, you city folks, I am a country girl. You'll have to get out your "Country Slang Dictionary" for that explanation.)

We wind up empty in the same old places. We can even anticipate where those holes are. They just get bigger and deeper with each rain and every load that travels over them. We call for the road crew again, but it never works for very long. You see, what we really need is for the road to have a new foundation. I've lived in Alabama long enough to know that there is only one way to really get rid of the potholes. You need to dig up the entire roadbed and scrap it down, leveling it out, digging way below the pothole, and lay a new foundation. Then you can lay a new surface and have a good road.

But how many times do we find ourselves patching up our lives in the same old places with something that won't stand the test of time? We prefer the quick fix. Just throw some loose sticky stuff in that hole, pat it down a little, and drive on. It just doesn't work too well, does it?

Sometimes the only way to get rid of the empty places in our lives is to let God lay a new foundation. We need to get the entire roadbed dug up and scraped down, leveled and covered with a new surface and then it can withstand some heavy rains and ice and snow and storms and lots of traveling cars and heavy trucks and well, you get it. And it is much more expensive and time consuming. In the meantime, it is terribly inconvenient. Working around the road crew's schedule. Stopping. Starting. Passing. On and on and on and on. Cursing the road crew for slowing us down when they are employed to make our lives more pleasant in the long run.

When God is trying to get our hearts to pass the legislation, sign off on it, and then allow for the new road's construction, we have the same old choices to make again. Will we spend what it takes – the time and effort and energy and resources – to really allow God to do something better in our lives? Or will we choose the easy route? Just patching up the potholes.

You know, one thing that is important about a backroad is that all the little backroads connect to the big more important road. Isn't that the way it is with our hearts? Sometimes it is all the little connecting points that link the more important points together. So every time we allow that pothole on a backroad of our heart to be merely patched instead of really repaired, the road becomes a little more difficult to travel. Oh, we learn where the potholes are. We dodge them if we are driving slowly enough to do so. But it doesn't make for a very nice journey. It'll make you carsick if you swerve around enough.

At this stage in my life, I feel more ready to spend the time and effort and energy and resources necessary to get a really good foundation on all the roads of my heart – even the backroads. I'm a little tired of hitting the same old potholes. I'm sick of my car getting out of alignment. And I hate it when that black, yucky, sticky tar gets on my car. It doesn't look too good, and it is tough as nails to remove, especially if you leave it there too long.

Patching potholes. Sometimes it seems the only option, but I believe we must be willing to build some really good roads that will withstand the tests and trials of life.

God is ready with the heavy duty construction equipment to tear up our pothole filled-roads and really build something lasting.

Will you sign-off on that?

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