

GETTING YOUR BEARINGS

Our society and culture impresses upon us the need for a moral compass; and this especially true for our young people – for whose generation is inundated with media, messaging and, sometimes, minutia.

With all the information, where is the knowledge and wisdom essential for good decisions and sound choices?

By

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INTRODUCTION

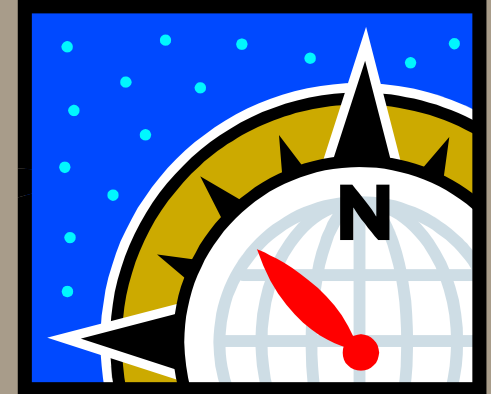
"GETTING YOUR BEARINGS" is not about the actual nautical navigation, but is about the "moral compass" of life; that is, making good choices and, consequently, realizing a route or direction that is beneficial for you...and for those who truly care about you.

Life offers many choices and decisions; and how we choose depends largely on what (and whom) we value or esteem. Making a wrong choice is always possible, even probable at times; but the **good news** is that bad choices are seldom the finale. We have the benefit - and even privilege - to learn from our mistakes and bad choices and, I believe, a forgiving God who offers much in the way of wisdom and discernment...not to mention love and...

WHAT ABOUT THE STARS?

From the earliest days of navigation, shipping has looked to "THE HEAVENLY BODIES" as fixed or absolute points of reference. Understanding the stars or points of reference is paramount to successful navigation...travel.

Today, we have Global Positioning Systems (GPS); but the question remains, who made the stars – and provided the reference points for all to travel?



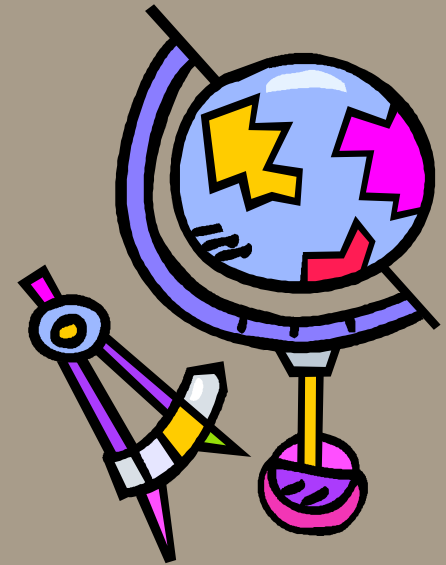
Psalm 147

*He counts the stars
and assigns each a name.*

JUDGING DISTANCE

There is more than one type of compass, of course; and the one illustrated to the right is typical of those used in drawing, geometry, etc.

A compass is used to find locate direction (magnetic compass), but it is also used to transfer measurements and plot distances (e.g. a dimension on a drawing or a map)



Proverbs 16

*We plan the way we want to live,
but only God makes us able to live it.*

ABOUT TERRAIN

Terrain can make a BIG difference in efficiency – or the effectiveness of your travel.

Consider a hike I took with kids in Stone Mountain, GA: up the mountain or rock had its challenges – as did coming down; whereas going around it was much easier overall.

Then there is the virtual world of computer-based war games...



Deuteronomy 8

God is about to bring you into a good land, a land with brooks and rivers...

HEIGHTS AND ELEVATIONS

In keeping with Terrain is heights and elevations. The topography makes for the effectiveness of the travel: going uphill is tougher or slower; but even going downhill can be tough on the body as well. We prefer the level ground, but life – like terrain – sometimes presents the heights and elevations whether hills, mountains or something in between.



Psalm 99

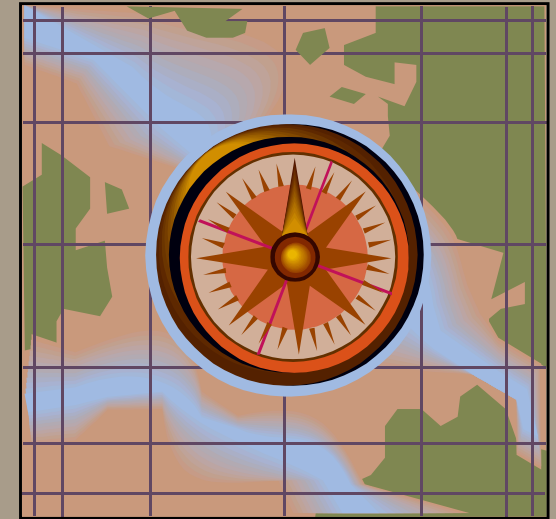
*Lift high God, our God;
worship at his holy
mountain.*

*Holy. Yes, holy is God our
God.*

USING MAPS

Most of us depend on maps – whether the detailed paper kind or the Map-quest or other on-line variety. Understanding maps is not too important for driving; and I think some prefer not to use them...but depend on instinct, trial and error.

Some took the trouble to develop the maps and, at the least, the rest of us should understand how to read and appreciate them.



Exodus 13

God went ahead of them in a Pillar of Cloud during the day to guide them on the way, and at night in a Pillar of Fire to give them light...

GETTING DIRECTION

Direction can be both relative and absolute; the relative direction may be to get to the next check or intermittent point; but collectively, these relative directions (or legs) determine the absolute direction.

Our lives do follow an absolute direction – and a series of dynamic or uncertain relative directions, movements, etc.



Proverbs 20

*The very steps we take come from God;
otherwise how would we know where we're going?*

ACCOUNTABILITY

Travel (as life) includes some level or participation of accountability; that is, being responsible for (or with) other people.

Life offers a family, friends and colleagues for whom we are sometimes accountable (obligated, loyal or responsible). They depend to a degree on us – and the direction/s we take can (or does) affect their own lives and directions...

Romans 3

*What we've learned is this:
God does not respond to what we do; we respond to what God does.*

PLANNING

Where would be without planning? President Eisenhower (when he was a general) described a plan as worthless – but planning as invaluable.

Without planning – whether for travel or life – we are certain to be ill-prepared, not ready, or SOL...

Planning is not perfect but, with more thought and preparation, the possibility of failure is lessened.

Psalms 33

*God's plan for the world
stands up,
all his designs are made to
last.*

SECURITY

Security means more than means of protecting ourselves from harm or danger.

This “security” is more about whom we trust and whom we rely on for this trip of all trips called life. If we put our trust in other people – we are bound to be disappointed, let-down and even rejected; but where can we turn for ready and reliable security?

Psalms 16

*The wise counsel God gives
when I'm awake
is confirmed by my sleeping
heart.*

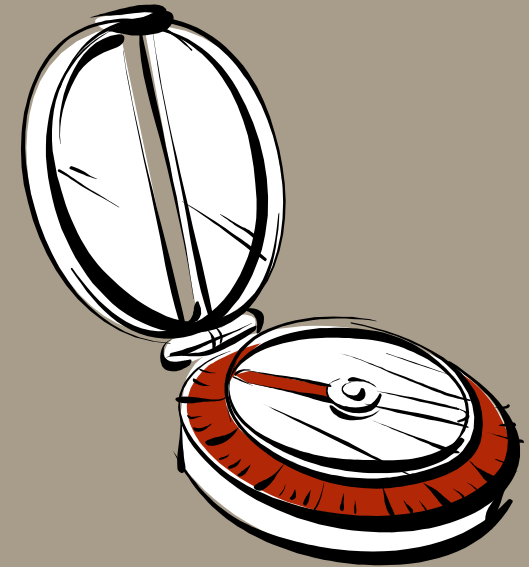
*Day and night I'll stick with
God;*

*I've got a good thing going
and I'm not letting go.*

CHECKPOINTS

Checkpoints are the intermittent or points between *legs* of the journey or trip. These tactical points enable us to determine if we are moving the right overall or absolute direction...or are not.

Checkpoints occur in travel on vacation or business and, most certainly, in the lives of individual, families and even nations of people.



Proverbs 5

Mark well that God doesn't miss a move you make; he's aware of every step you take.