



REFLECTIONS

September 7, 2014

**You have made known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.**

Psalm 16:11

The Compass

The morning clouds darkened the morning sky as we headed for home. Heavy traffic discouraged the usual route to the highway, so I aimed the car in the direction that I believed would intersect it further down the road. But after traveling a while I began to question both my instincts and choice of direction. I wondered if they had taken us squarely to the middle of nowhere. Finally some recognizable landscape appeared but with it came a troubling discovery. We had not been traveling in the intended direction. Somewhere along the way my sense of it had been lost. I needed a compass.

Now, I don't consider myself to be directionally challenged, yet I have come to realize how little it takes to throw me off course. Small curves in the road often go unnoticed, yet it is the subtle ones that most often send me off course. So in my travels I need something to keep my direction true. I need a compass.

But traveling the roads of the countryside is not the only place a compass would be handy. Over the years I have come to realize just how easily I can lose my sense of direction as I live out each day! The Lord has set a path before me, and his word is a lamp to my feet and a light that shines upon it. Still, I often fail to set my sights upon the road before me. Sometimes I take my eyes off of it because I believe I am on track. Sometimes I lose sight of it because I believe I can go my own way. And sometimes I lose sight of it because, like Jonah, I don't want to go where it will lead me. But no matter the reason for losing direction, I need something to keep me on the path God set forth for my life.

Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep.* (John 10:14-15) Now what better guide can I find than one who will lay down his life for me? The Compass I need is Jesus; but I also need a way to keep my eyes on him. Paul offers the solution.

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

If we pay attention, God makes the path of life known to each of us. He fills us with joy when we are in his presence; and eternal pleasures bless our right hands. So why would we ever allow our eyes to look anywhere else? Jesus is the good shepherd.

When we keep our eyes on him, we can't stray from the road.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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