



FINDING YOUR WAY

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Finding Your Way

FINDING YOUR WAY

... to things that really matter



TOMMY TENNEY



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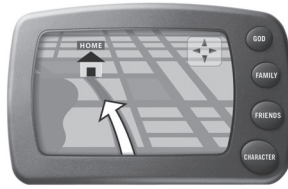
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In the class of life, some teachers you choose, others are thrust upon you; but you learn from all.

Thank you to E. W. and Johnnie Ruth Caughron, Doyle and Faith Spears, T. W. and Lucille Barnes, Charles and Barbara Green, T. F. and Thetus Tenney, and G. E. and Mildred Switzer.

If the names sound old, they are. You can often learn better how to get somewhere from someone who has been there.



CHAPTER 1

Destination and Destiny

GPS vs. “EPS”

Strange cities and strange places seem to bring out the best or the worst in me. Because I travel so much, my family and I often find ourselves in unfamiliar places. Some years, I’ve been in over a hundred cities across the United States and twenty different nations. There is no way possible I could know my way around every one of these places.

In fact, I am grateful that we can now rent cars that have GPS (Global Positioning System) navigation devices installed. The Global Positioning System is a network of twenty-four satellites placed into orbit by the U.S. Department of Defense. GPS satellites circle the earth twice a day in a very precise orbit and transmit signal information to earth. GPS was originally intended for military applications, but in the 1980s, the government made the system available for civilian use. GPS works in any weather conditions, anywhere in the world, twenty-four hours a day. The government charges no subscription fees or setup charges to use GPS.

GPS has saved my frazzled nerves many times. It seems as if I have spent half of my life looking for airports (and the other half looking for motels). I’ll never forget one particular incident, before the advent of GPS navigation systems.

I had a travel assistant who was infatuated with downloading maps from the Internet. After a late-night meeting, he insisted that he knew exactly how to take us back to the airport to catch the plane. The only problem was that he had downloaded the map to the wrong airport.

When we wound up on some country road miles from where we should be, at a locked gate, at a closed airport, my patience wore very thin.

He said, “Well, I *thought* it was the right airport.”

And I said, “And you *thought* you had a job too.” The moment was pretty tense, I must admit. My supply of charity and forbearance was being stretched to the limit. Many phone calls later, we wound up at the correct airport, only much too late.

Again, I am thankful for GPS navigation systems.

On some occasions, however, I just knew, “We need to go *this* direction.” At those times it was refreshing to suddenly come across a familiar landmark or to stumble onto the right road.

If satellites can be the fixed point from which you can determine your geographical location and destination, what compass would point the right direction for a more spiritual journey? In earthly terms you might need a Global Positioning System. In heavenly terms you would need an Eternal Positioning System, a fixed point from which you can guide the direction of your life.

Personal crisis in looking for direction often creates the opportunity for great adventure. Many of those adventures I did not want and I did not enjoy, but I sure have seen a lot of them.

This book is about what is valuable. It is about moving toward what is of value, and away from what is not. What is on sale is not always valuable. Discerning the difference between the valuable and the not valuable is what we all want today. Who wants to be fooled by “fool’s gold”? That is why the phrase “All that glitters is not gold” still resonates. I want to help you separate the glitter from the real gold, the costume jewelry from the real jewels.

This is a book about values. It is *not* about “traditional values.” Sometimes tradition assigns values that are correct, and sometimes they are incorrect.

I remember these words from “Tradition,” a song in the musical and film *Fiddler on the Roof*:

*Who, day and night, must scramble for a living,
Feed a wife and children, say his daily prayers?*

Perhaps you remember the scene from the film or stage musical where the generations clash. The perspective of years has changed my opinion of this song. I hated it in my late teens, resented it in my early twenties, disliked it in my thirties, forgot about it in my forties, appreciate it now in my fifties, and fear it will be my anthem in my sixties. Did the song change? No, I did. I gained an appreciation for things I once questioned.

Have you ever said or thought, “They don’t value things that we once did”? Perhaps that is true; perhaps they value other, more important things than we did.

My father’s generation valued the work ethic, sometimes even at the expense of the family. A new generation is arising that refuses overtime, intentionally simplifies, and has brought to the forefront buzzwords like “quality of life.” This generation attaches a different meaning to those words *working* and *buying* than did their fathers and mothers. Quality of life is not defined as necessarily a bigger house, a prestigious branded automobile, and clothes with designer labels prominently displayed on the outside.

Quality of life for them involves such things as paternal pregnancy leave (the father getting time off!), telecommuting (so they can work from home), and flex time (they work different hours in order to prioritize family time).

Instead of suburban flight there is now urban flight, a move back into city centers, so commutes are not so long, and grocery stores and markets are within walking distance. Convenience with a purpose!

Many of us are feeling a very primal urge to sort out what really matters. To return to what is really valuable: family, friends, a purpose to our life’s work, and a connection to the eternal. For some this is not even a “return” but more a discovery (or a rediscovery!) of what really matters in life.

Let's discover how your destination can affect your destiny. Where are you going? Do you even really know? Perhaps you need a reliable road map.

The biblical book of Ruth can be our "EPS" to guide us as we each find our way to the things that really matter in life.