




PREFACE

YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE!



I have come to realize that knowing God is not the same as knowing about God. Believing the facts about the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is no substitute for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

While I know a great deal about some people -- the intimate secrets and the hidden details of their lives, their psychological and physical profiles, I don't really know them personally because we had not lived, worked, or done anything together. It is only through passing time together in shared experiences, thoughts and dreams, failures and success, challenges and conflicts that I came to know a few people in a personal way. Genuine friendship develops in the process of sharing my life with another person; friendship is not realized just by studying and learning things about that person. My friendships have grown out of shared experiences, and in the journey of two lives coming together. I have never been able to seize friendship simply through study, desire, or even declarations of friendship.

A few years ago my wife, Celeste, and I were on a road trip through the majestic Rocky Mountains. Expecting to reach our destination by way of a scenic mountain pass, I had taken

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a winding road that seemed to be leading in the right direction. I knew we weren't lost, but I was becoming increasingly frustrated. After traveling for several hours we found ourselves driving down a narrow road along a never-ending river. The scenery was spectacular but as the paved road gave way to gravel which in turn gave way to a rugged logging track, we began wondering if we might have taken a wrong turn somewhere.

Like many "self-sufficient" in-charge men I was not about to stop and ask anyone for directions. "Real men don't need directions," I told my wife only half jokingly. "I'll figure it out, besides which, we can't be very far off course." But as the road became less traveled I finally relented and stopped at a small gray weather-beaten roadside station to ask for help. As I explained our situation to the grizzled old tobacco-chewing man behind the counter, he looked at me quizzically shaking his head. "*Ya cain't exactly get thar from here,*" he drawled, "*you're gonna hafta turn back ta whar ya come from and follow them signposts til ya git thar.*"

I often think about the old man's words in relation to my spiritual life, my journey toward God. For as long as I can remember the destination has been clear, the goal of knowing and walking with God. I've studied the map of scripture and I've listened to the experiences of spiritual men and women; I've been trained in the church and I've learned the intricacies of theology and doctrine. But for the most part, except for prayer, Bible study, and church attendance I couldn't say that God and I had spent much time together. I was following a road toward knowing more about God rather than traveling with God and getting to know Him in the course the journey. It took me quite some time along a winding road to realize that I couldn't get there "from where I was," I could not find friendship with God by continuing down the road I was traveling on.

I had to turn around to see the signposts, and as I did I realized that friendship with God is not a destination but that it is a relationship, a deepening friendship on a journey with Jesus who once said "I am the way to the Father...if you really know



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me you will know my Father as well.” Slowly I began to understand what it means to journey with Jesus, and I began seeing signposts in my daily life that were indications and expressions of his presence along the way.

The journey with Jesus is as compelling and exciting a journey as I could ever have imagined to any destination. Yet none of us can get there from where we are until we turn to see the signposts of God’s presence. The reflections on the following pages will hopefully give you a glimpse into that journey and enable you to see the “signposts” of God’s presence in the midst of everyday life – not just mine, but yours as well.

May you journey well.

