

True North

Deuteronomy 8:3 (NKJV)

³ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

- Inside every believer there is a compass
- An internal force placed by God
- “True North” is something that needs adjustment

The way God speaks to us and leads us is through our spirits

- We have to be spirit-conscious to receive His direction

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV)

²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- In the OT God dwelt within a temple
 - An outer court
 - An inner court
 - The holy of holies
- In the NT we are His temple
 - Our body is the outer court
 - Our soul (mind, will and emotions) is the inner court
 - Our spirit is the holy of holies

When God leads us its not by our carnal mind or by our flesh but by our spirit

Ephesians 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

Discerning God's Will

So often we fail to ask God before making decisions about relationships, financial investments, major purchases, etc.

- We then try to convince God to bless the decision we already made without His advice
- We keep going back to God asking for peace

We need to follow peace in our decisions, not make a decision and then pray for peace over it

- When you head in your wrong direction, sooner or later you will see that God has a better way
 - Double back, immediately
- Swallow your pride and thank the people who had the courage to warn you
- I don't want to live like Balaam
- I want God to warn me if I'm about to mess up my life
- God will see things we don't see
- Things we may not see with our natural eyes
- When we ignore His promptings, sooner or later we will regret it
- Listen to that "check" in your spirit

God wants to lead us with peace not force us to follow His will

Psalm 32:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. ⁹ Do not be like the horse *or* like the mule, *which* have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you.

We can choose to be led by God's eye or by bit and bridle

- God expects us to realize that He is God
- The sooner we realize that the better
- If you don't have God's approval for the direction you're heading don't force it
- His ways are not our way, and His thoughts are not our thoughts – **Isaiah 55:8**
- God's greatest pleasure is for us to trust Him and allow Him to reward us – **Hebrews 11:6**

When following God's voice beware of two extremes

Don't Over Rationalize

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight.

- Don't try to make everything logical
- Every door opened, every question answered before you make a move
- Don't wait for God to "*show before you go*"
- You need to "*go and then God will show*"

Don't Be Hyper Spiritual

- God doesn't want us to completely ignore reality
- *"I felt Led"* or *"God told me"*
- To many people use this a line to shield against the advice of others
- People who live this way really don't want the advice of others

Proverbs 15:22 (NKJV)

²² Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.

Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

- You shouldn't be the smartest person you know
- God puts people in our life for our own good and safety

It is so important to have the right, life-long relationships in our life to help us clearly discern the voice of the Lord

- Healthy, balanced relationships are something that all of us need in our lives
- God wants to help us make wise choices about the people we let into our lives
- From friendships to business partnerships to romance
- Finding the right people is an important part of determining God's will for your life

CHARACTER DISCERNMENT

Character discernment is a valuable tool for avoiding toxic entanglements

- What is character discernment?
- The ability to find relationships that are good for you, and avoid the ones that are not

Galatians 5:7 (NKJV)

⁷ You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

Romans 8:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

When people come into your life they don't just bring their bodies

- They bring their spirits
- Two kinds of people
 - “flesh people”
 - “Spirit people”
- Flesh people tear you, and others down and feed your fears
- Spirit people build you up and feed your faith
- Flesh people waste your time and drain your energy
- Spirit people will isolate us from Christian friends and draw us away from the House of God
- This can greatly reduce your effectiveness
- This isn't to say that “flesh people” are bad people
- They just don't belong in your inner circle

Spirit people will draw you closer to Christian friends and the House of God

- They will draw you closer to being the person you were created to be
- They are strong when you are weak

If God wants to bless you, He will send a person

If Satan wants to curse you, he will send a person

- That is what we need discernment in the spirit, to know the right people from the wrong people

THE PEOPLE WHO LIFT US UP

Acts 9:10–18 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.” ¹¹ So the Lord *said* to him, “Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. ¹² And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.” ¹³ Then Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.” ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

¹⁷ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

¹⁸ Immediately there fell from his eyes *something* like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

God will put people in your life that act like a bridge to get you to where you're going

- The early church rejected Paul because he persecuted Christians before his conversion
- The disciples were afraid of him
- God sent a person
- Barnabas used his influence to get Paul's foot in the door of the church

2 Corinthians 7:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

- When Paul was discouraged God sent Titus to encourage him
- All it takes is one person to share some kind words to change your attitude and mood
- None of us can do this alone
- The devil wants to isolate you
- Reach out and develop friendships that can help to encourage you
- God will use you to encourage them as well

RUTH: THE PEOPLE WE MARRY

Genesis 2:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ And the LORD God said, “*It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*”

Marriage is one of the most important decisions you will ever make

- It is a commitment
- It will affect every other area of your life
- You are better off taking your time to be sure you choose the right one

God takes note if you are single, widowed, or divorced

- He cares when you're alone

The Story of Ruth:

- Her husband died
- She had given up hopes of finding a good man
- God didn't send her a loser
- He didn't send her a “smooth talker” or a “player” who would break her heart
- He sent her a man, Boaz, who was capable of caring for her
- He was a bit older and stable
- He had enough money to care for her and make her comfortable
- He wasn't just out of prison or rehab
- He was not lazy or unproductive
- He was respectful of her relatives
- He gave food to her mother-in-law, Naomi
- He paid the bill for their dates

Ladies: You want a perceptive, sensitive, spiritual, financially stable man

When Boaz showed a romantic interest in Ruth, Naomi gave her this advice

Ruth 3:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Then she said, “Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day.”

- In other words, sit still and wait
- Let the man pursue you
- Don’t keep calling and texting him “Whaz up?”
- A respectful man will not like a desperate woman
- Sitting still and waiting is the hardest thing to do
- You will have to trust God in the matter
- Ruth could have rejected Naomi’s advice, but she obeyed and respected it

Boaz arranged a legal wedding

- They had a son named Obed
- Obed had a son named Jesse
- Jesse had a son named David
- David had a descendent named Mary
- Mary had a child named Jesus

Because of Ruth’s character discernment, and patience she ended up being part of the genealogy of Jesus!

JONAH: THE PEOPLE WHO TAKE US DOWN

God sent Jonah on a mission to Nineveh

- He disobeyed God's will and headed in the opposite direction – Joppa
- He boarded a ship for Tarshish
- The ship ran into a storm that threatened the whole crew
- Jonah was asleep in the bottom of the boat
- They were all about to lose their lives

All it takes is one rebellious person to threaten a shipload of people

- There are times when you are not the problem
- The problem may be with the people with whom you are associating

Jonah 1:12 (NKJV)

¹² And he said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest *is* because of me.”

- Rebels will sometimes try to make you feel bad
- Your 45-year-old son doesn't need to be living with you
 - No job, paying no rent, eating your food
- We can wander into storms just by helping people in areas they should be helping themselves
- When they tossed Jonah overboard the storm ceased
 - God still took care of Jonah
 - Everyone is not your responsibility
- The crew starting to worship God – **Jonah 1:16**
 - It's easier to worship with a lightened load

WHO'S YOUR MENTOR?

If you don't have a godly mentor in your life you need to ask Him for one

- When He shows you, don't wait for them to come to you
- Approach them
- Joshua was always in the shadows with Moses
- Elisha's success was found in his relationship with Elijah
- Timothy was like a son to Paul

1 Timothy 1:2 (NKJV)

²To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus spent three and a half years of His life in ministry

- Most of that time wasn't spent with the crowds
- It was with the 12, the 3, the 1
- He would speak parables to the crowds but explain them to His disciples
- Mentors expose you to new ways of thinking, new habits, new levels of expectation
 - Look at top athletes
 - You don't want someone who always makes you feel comfortable
 - *Don't pick someone who doesn't challenge you*

Proverbs 27:6 (NKJV)

⁶Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

If you have spent much of your life surrounding yourself with the wrong people, there's good news

- God will bring the right people
- When He does don't return to the old ones

It doesn't mean their bad people, God just needs to bring you to a new way of thinking

- They are not part of God's plan for your life
- Sometimes this is people in our own family
 - You need people who see and celebrate your future
 - Joseph's brothers didn't celebrate his dream
 - The father of the prodigal didn't bring up his son's past, he celebrated his new life!

“Some people come in our life as blessings. Some come in your life as lessons.” – Mother Teresa

Use all the wisdom and prayer you can when searching for these right people

They will draw you closer to becoming the person you were meant to be

Proverbs 18:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ A man *who has* friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend *who sticks* closer than a brother.