

## DEVOTIONAL SET #5 - COMPASS AND MAP READING

### Devotion #1 - Psalm 24:4

Theme: A Christian's Compass and Map

On a backpacking hike on the Appalachian Trail in Northern Georgia, the importance of knowing your directions and using a map become evident. Four hikers left camp to find water. One of the group was very knowledgeable in finding his way in the woods. Going only a short distance from camp they did not take a compass with them. On this overcast day they soon became confused in the thick woods and unsure of the way. Only by shouting out were they able to be found and directed back to camp.

Our maps indicated water was located a certain number of yards from the trail. A few moments with a compass to determine the azimuth would have avoided those anxious lost moments. If water was not found in the direction indicated they could have easily back tracked their steps to their original location.

As sinners living in a sinful environment we can become confused and lost in the woods of the world. We think we know where we are going, but we overestimate our abilities. Psalm 25:4 says, "Show me your ways; O Lord, teach me your paths."

The Lord's way as correctly drawn out in His Word will never leave us lost or confused. It does not need to be adjusted for the difference between magnetic north and true north. It always points us in the way we should go without deviation. The Bible is like a map showing the contours of evil and sin. It is amazing how precise and up to date the Bible is in knowing us and directing us and leading us.

No good backpacker would leave home without studying very carefully the uncertain path his trail will take him. The map must go along for quick reference when an uncertain point or strange topography appear.

Let God and His Word be your constant guide in life so the way is always certain and according to His map. Don't leave home without Him.

Questions:

- (1) Describe a time in your life or someone else's life when you or they were lost and confused.
- (2) Offer suggestions of help from God's Word to find His way.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord and Savior, as we learn more things to help us enjoy your wonderful world, do not let us become so confident of our abilities that we think we do not need You or Your Word. As compass and maps help in finding our way over uncertain places, so we need Your direction in life to avoid being lost for eternity. You suffered and died for our sins to make us Your dear children by faith. May Your Word be the compass and map of my life. Amen.

### Devotion #2: Isaiah 55:8

THEME: My way versus God's Way

Frank Sinatra popularized a song called "My Way". In it he boldly makes no apologies for mistakes or wishing to have done things differently in life, but simply says, "I did it my way!"

In hiking I have thought I should be at my destination only to find out my feet were not walking as fast as I thought they were. That familiar landmark turned up in a different place on the trail from what I remembered. Without the sun everything looked different. Hiking a trail my way would have gotten me lost. My sense of direction and remembering of details is unreliable in the woods.

Is. 55:8 says that a Christian can expect God's ways to be different from the ways of the world. The world is sinful and evil and the ways of the world reflect those values. Thank God He doesn't deal with us according to what we deserve but shows mercy. Frank Sinatra is wrong. My way is wrong. God's way is right.

**Prayer:** Defeat my sinful will when I think I know better than God. Help me to accept His way no matter what. Amen.

Hymn 355 vs. 1,4 (TLH) 356 vs. 1,4 (CW)

### Devotion #3: John 14:6

THEME: Jesus is the way

(1) When Jesus is the way, everything in our life must bend and conform to Jesus' way. (Maps and compasses lead correctly no matter what we may think).

(2) Explore areas where this is a problem and work together at Christ-like solutions or conformity to Jesus' way. (Discard directions - become lost; discard God's directions - become lost forever).

(3) Hold up positive life experiences that are fun and enjoyable and also God pleasing and according to Jesus' way.

**Prayer:** Jesus, let me live in such a way that I would never be ashamed to have You listen to any words that come out of my mouth, or be ashamed to have You meet any of my friends, or be ashamed to go anyplace I go. Amen.

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#### Additional references for the topic.

Deuteronomy 1:33, Joshua 18:8, Job 23:10, Psalm 25:4, 37:5, 86:11, 103:12, 119:35, 105, 133, Proverbs 3:6, 4:26, 19:2, 20:24, 22:6, Isaiah 48:17, 53:6, 55:8, Jeremiah 10:23, Hosea 14:9, Matthew 2:1,2, 28:18,19, John 3:16, 14:6, Acts 9:2, 27:7, Romans 15:24, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 12:31, 14:1, 2 Thessalonians 3:5, Hebrews 10:20-22