

Focus – The Bible, Our Dependable “Benchmark”

Lt. Colonel Mervyn Morelock

By Lt. Colonel

Mervyn Morelock –

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Ps. 119:105 NIV)

On a recent vacation hike, my wife and I came across a strange marker in the middle of the trail on the top of a huge boulder. The marker was set firmly in the rock with concrete and looked like it had been in place for many years. It was made of brass and had letters and numbers stamped on the surface. On closer examination we discovered that it was a benchmark, placed there by the U.S. Geological survey, and contained important information about that specific location. The elevation and the exact location of the marker in longitude and latitude, down to the degree and minute, was described. If one had a map of the world, you could find out where you were, down to the foot!



Why had someone gone to all that trouble to go out into the wilderness to bother to install such a marker? It is part of the task of accurately mapping the location of everything in the world. That may not seem so important until you wanted to go someplace you had never traveled to, or if you wanted to buy a piece of land. Map makers and surveyors all use those benchmarks to establish a trusted, exact reference point for all they do.

When you're traveling down the road, as we do in our appointment as Territorial Evangelists, it's important to know where you are, so that you don't get lost! My wife serves often as my navigator, as we travel the highways of the Western Territory, and without those dependable auto club maps we would have been lost many times, or added many miles to our journeys.

Benchmarks are critical to the work of a land surveyor. I read of a surveyor who did not use the benchmark to check his calculations, and no one knew of his mistake until the owner of an adjacent piece of land discovered that a new bank building had been built one foot over onto his property! A very costly and embarrassing mistake!

We need to use the Word of God, a dependable “benchmark” that has stood the test of centuries and provided trustworthy guidance for men and women of all ages, as our daily guide.

Life is full of many influences and pressures that can lead some into some disastrous mistakes by relying on philosophies and theories of those who base their values on relativism; “Everybody else is doing it,” or, “If it feels good, do it.”

The persuasive arguments of our secular society easily confuse our sense of what is right and wrong.

I recently was sent an offer for a video tape series on transforming attitudes through evangelism and discipleship. The cover page illustrated some of the comments one hears from people who are not using the Bible, our dependable benchmark, as a rule for living: “I don’t need God.” “He thinks he’s better than me.” “I’m a good person.” “He’s a fanatic” “The Bible isn’t relevant.” “Science has the answers for me.” “I am a survivor.” What is Truth anyway?” The video course is designed to give followers of Jesus a ready answer to these and other statements and questions.

Today we have many tools to help us find out where we are. Airline pilots and ship captains use global positioning instruments for navigation. One new car company has a gadget that will tell you, within a few feet, on its internal computer, where you are using the new global positioning technology. RVers and hikers can purchase a hand-held instrument that will not only tell you where you are, but where the nearest gas station is located, along with some other “vital” pieces of information.

I wouldn’t want to start off on a cross-country journey with a map of my own making any more than starting on life’s daily journey without the “benchmark” of my life, my Bible.

Our first doctrinal statement says it well: *“We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.”*

We can trust God’s Word to be our benchmark!