

REFLECTIONS ON PROVERBS 3

BY TOM ROBERTS, WRCC ELDER

One of the most treasured memories from my childhood is road trips with my dad. Most every year we made a trip from Alabama to Michigan, or perhaps Ohio, and it was always an adventure. My dad was a retired military officer and was pretty much a no-nonsense kind of guy. His philosophy was rules were there for a reason and meant to be followed. Speed limits were observed, you drove with both hands on the wheel, no radio, you checked the oil level and tire pressure when you stopped for gas, and precision with regard to map reading and directions was expected from the navigator (that would be me). Anybody over 60 years old gets the picture.

In the early 1960s, road travel was a little more complicated than now because the Interstate highways were not totally constructed. You would be able to drive for 50 or 60 miles and then have to exit onto a secondary road for a while, then you could get back on the Interstate until you had to exit again. As I said, my dad was a no-nonsense kind of guy, but he did have one quirk on these road trips. He didn't always believe the ROAD CLOSED sign when it became necessary to exit the partly-completed Interstate highway. If the road up ahead of the sign was paved, he would simply remark, "they're just planting grass" and around the barrier he would go, hoping to get to another exit a little farther up the road. Well, the problem with this methodology was that it worked more often than not, which just encouraged this type of behavior on my dad's part. One time we drove around the barriers following the "they're just planting grass" methodology and drove right past another sign that read "BLASTING ZONE AHEAD." We hadn't gone but a couple of miles when we heard this enormous boom and it looked like an entire side of a mountain disappeared in front of us. My dad stopped the car, turned around, drove back to the last exit and we took the secondary road. He never went around the road barriers after that. Some roads just shouldn't be traveled. We need to pay attention to the road signs.

To me life is sometimes like a road trip and you have to ask yourself who is driving and are we obeying the road signs? The Holy Spirit speaks into each of our lives... the issue, of course, is are we listening? Are we allowing the Lord to show us the paths to take or are we depending on our own understanding and driving around road barriers believing our own version of "they're just planting grass." I can only speak for myself, but God speaks to me with that still, small voice that says, "wait." I grew up as a young Army officer making decisions and taking action. Waiting and procrastinating were attributes to avoid. I needed to move out, motivate others to move out, and achieve that next objective. However, over the years I learned I needed to slow down, gather more facts, identify my assumptions, reflect more, gain more certainty, and choose the path that then looked most promising. In retrospect, this was the Lord talking to me... directing my paths. In this time of crisis, take time to simply pray and ask God to direct your ways. Take pause... reflect... and listen. He will answer. Then, move out, and be strong and courageous.



*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.
Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6*