

rabbit trails

NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY. No ominous foreshadowing. I turned the key, flipped on the A/c, and steered the Jeep down the drive toward the gravel road and into town. Halfway to the road something snapped and the engine died. Repeated attempts to restart were to no avail.

The mighty Jeep was dead.

After it was towed in for repair, the first diagnosis was that a rather expensive electronic controller had met its Waterloo and would need to be replaced. With the homely kindness of the small town, the garage gave us free use of a loaner for the duration. Good thing. More than ten days later, they still had not located a replacement part. Finally, about two weeks after they took custody of our sole means of conveyance, they called to say the restored steed was ready to be picked up.

The only thing was, after they installed the expensive, elusive part, they discovered that that was not the problem after all. It turned out, after a bit more investigation, that the offending part was more basic—and had been sitting on a shelf in their parts department all along.

Commit your works to the Lord
And your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16:3

Sometimes, when our vehicle is working and we are headed down the drive, a rabbit that had been serenely safe and secure on the lawn will get nervous at the sound of the engine and dart out into the drive in front of us. He will leap back and forth, staying ahead of us but always on the gravel. He will thus continue down the drive, always six or eight feet ahead of us, nervously darting side to side—when all he need do to be safe is take a hard left or right and disappear into the bushes that border the drive. Frightened deer will behave the same way, traveling straight down the road in front of the Jeep, instead of leaping to the side, safely off the road.

Rabbits and deer are just simple-minded animals.

What is *our* excuse?

I know, O Lord, that a man's way is not in himself,
Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.

Jeremiah 10:23

Man's common perception of his relationship with God could be stated: *The end of man is the beginning of God*—by which is meant that man proceeds on his own until he runs out of answers; then—and only then—does he turn to his Maker for help. In this God is seen as someone just a few brain cells smarter, just a bit more clever and resourceful than man. Man is pretty smart, respectably resourceful, but once in a while he needs a helping hand from someone a little smarter.

This, of course, is so much bosh and nonsense.

God is not a superior man. God is not better than us by degree.

We cannot grasp the true meaning of holiness by thinking of someone or something very pure and then raising the concept to the highest degree we are capable of. God's holiness is not simply the best we know infinitely bettered. We know nothing like the divine holiness. It stands apart, unique, unapproachable, incomprehensible and unattainable. Holy is the way God is. To be holy He does not conform to a standard. He is that standard. He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is. Because He is holy, His attributes are holy; that is, whatever we think of as belonging to God must be thought of as holy.

A.W. Tozer

The correct way for man to perceive his relationship with God could be stated: *In God man begins*—by which is meant that only in God through Christ does man find his answers at all.

Man, on his own, chases down rabbit trails that lead to nowhere. He wastes weeks pursuing a Chimera, when in only a day he could know success. He runs for miles, seeking escape in the line of traffic, when safety is but a few feet away from his start.

God is the one who knows the way—the only *correct* way. Christ is the way—the *only* way.

This we point out to the unbeliever—that Christ is the only way to salvation. But some venerable Christians have forgotten that it remains true, as well, that God knows the way for the believer's daily walk. On our own we go down rabbit trails, getting nowhere, when, all along, God is waiting to lead us down the safe path.

Trust in the Lord with
all your heart
And do not lean
on your own
understanding.
In all your ways
acknowledge Him,
And He will make your
paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

