

# LOVE

## THE JOURNEY



HOMESCHOOLING:  
PRINCIPLES  
TO PRACTICES

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# Some Words of Thanks

Like so many of my other writing projects over the last twenty years or so, this one began at someone else's request. In this case, it was my son, Mike, who wanted me to write a book to young homeschooling mothers who were just starting their homeschool journeys. It was conceived as a companion component to his new program for Kindergarten-aged children entitled *Tapestry Primer*.

Also like so many of my other writing projects, I was surprised where the Lord took it. I was amazed to see how much He had worked in my life over the years through homeschooling, and (consequently) how long the book grew to be!

Another parallel circumstance with previous projects was the humbling nature of writing. One feels quite vulnerable when expressing personal insights or opinions, revelations that have worked for oneself, and teachings that have arrested one's attention. An author becomes so aware that she is going out on a limb when expressing these things, and she has no real assurance that her words will help others. Writing this book has been more of a leap of faith (if anything) than writing curriculum. At the end of the day, my prayer is that you will take to yourself whatever is helpful, and think charitably of me for whatever doesn't seem to ring true.

Finally, this project is like all previous ones in that it never would have gotten done without the help and support of others. Besides Mike and his wife, Jessica, who got me started with pleas and then encouragement, I would like to thank my daughter Christy, who spent weeks reading and minutely smoothing many awkward lines and questioning (or improving) theologically informed constructs. I'm also grateful for my son David for his brilliant cover design. It has been such a blessing over the years to work as a family on our various projects, and this one felt a bit like getting the band back together!

I also need to thank the staff at Lampstand Press for bringing their skills to bear so that this book could come to completion. It would simply not be here without you all; though the readers (and beneficiaries) of this book may not know of your efforts, the Lord knows their worth, and so do I!



# Introduction

*“Oh, this is nice!” said Jill. “Just walking along like this. I wish there could be more of this sort of adventure. It’s a pity there’s always so much happening in Narnia.”*

*JILL, IN THE LAST BATTLE*

People have used many metaphors for the process of educating and discipling children that we have come to call “homeschooling.” My favorite one by far is that homeschooling is a journey. And by “journey,” I mean a long, extended trip full of adventures, sights to see, and unexpected delights—as well as the inevitable frustrating or hairy trials, the delays, and the trudging.

Somewhere out there on the horizon, one believes that there is a destination point where the journey will end. While we hope it will end well, and that we’ll all make it to the end alive, a long journey is not mostly about getting to our destination. Or, if it is, we will sure miss a lot!

This book is written to women who are disciples of Jesus Christ and are new to homeschooling. It is not a “how to teach your kids from soup to nuts” manual. Nor is it a theoretical book: my husband, my six children, and I have actually made this journey, and we have enjoyed fellowship with many others who have as well! My experience has been that the homeschooling journey is worth the effort, and I’d like to do what I can to help you to start yours well!

What this book is, or is trying to be, is a book that helps you to find (and define in your own words) the principles behind wise homeschooling practices. It’s a book about ways to be intentional, purposeful, and Christ-centered as you sit in your house, and as you walk by the way, as you lie down, and as you rise to serve your family, day after day. As you read it, picture yourself sitting across from me in some delicious setting, where I have all the time in the world to share encouragement, wisdom, and exhortation with you as an older woman who has been down this road.

It wasn’t my idea to write this book. My now-adult kids alternately bugged and sweet-talked me into it. As the publication deadline loomed nearer, I have dragged my feet more and more. I know that not everything that I’ve learned on my particular

journey translates to every other woman reading this book. So, I pray that if parts of this book don't help or speak to you, please just let my words fall to the ground. At the end of the day, I am just one beggar telling another beggar where I found bread.

As I got further into this project, I did feel that as an older woman I bore a responsibility to share how, in the context of homeschooling, younger women can better love husbands and children, become more self-controlled and pure, take greater delight in working at home, become more kind, and grow in heartfelt submission to husbands, and generally walk worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that the word of God may not be reviled (1 Timothy 2). These goals define the heart of what I learned during my homeschooling journey, and I offer my insights and experiences for your prayerful consideration.

You might ask, "But what about practical stuff, like, about education and teaching?" Yep. That's here, too. I've learned many good things about managing a houseful of kids while teaching academics, choosing the right curricula for my kids, planning lessons and then implementing those plans, etc. They are all a part of the homeschooling journey, and I'm willing to share! Let me briefly explain the way that I've organized the book, so you can find your way around.

You may be contemplating homeschooling for a host of reasons, and in Section 1, we'll get into some of the most common motives that newcomers have. The chapters in this section are all aimed at helping you to identify and refine your reasons for and vision of your journey. Since God created all families unique, there is no one right way to homeschool, but with the bewildering array of choices that a new homeschooler faces, it can be really helpful to know which direction you're headed. That's what Section 1 is all about: helping you define your direction.

In Section 2 (Mountaintop Views) I am far less technical. This section offers some of the "big picture" principles that I hold most dear. You'll find broad theological, parenting, and educational concepts are shared here that inform one's whole journey from start to finish. As the quotation that opens this section suggests, these are some of the deeper principles (or fruit-producing processes) that can be invisible to those who are just taking to the homeschooling road. I hope that knowing about them serves you as you journey.

The titles of Sections 3, 4, and 5 are all taken from the passage of Scripture that many homeschoolers consider our proof text for the decision to homeschool: Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (ESV).



*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them **when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

These sections contain the bulk of the practical tips of this book; the chapters are loosely grouped, and they really may be read in any order. Indeed, to some degree, this whole book is a bit of a potpourri of my life experiences, things I've been taught along the way, and gleanings from the Word of God. But enough about me: let's get back to you!

Somewhere in the mix, I suspect that you're interested in the homeschooling journey primarily for either the sake of your children's characters or educational well being (or, for some, both). I hope that you also have a sense that God is calling you to homeschooling. Without His accompanying presence, you could find it a long, weary, and lonely road ahead!

But, let's suppose you have come to believe that our loving, Heavenly Father is saying to you, "Come this way, Daughter. I have an adventure for you!" What many younger moms really don't see coming until they're down the road a piece is that God will use the homeschooling journey to shape you fully as much as He'll use it to shape your kids. Homeschooling is a sanctifying experience—and broadening, just like travel!

You may not really like adventures much; they can be scary, exhausting, discouraging, and uncomfortable in places. Like Jill, in C.S. Lewis' *The Last Battle*, you may wish that you could just amble along with your family and friends, enjoying sunny days and some pretty spectacular scenery. There will be moments like that on the homeschooling journey: good days where laughter, learning, and peace are in perfect balance.

But on many other days, there will seem to be too much going on to really enjoy the journey. Then again, though, rest and relaxation are not the purpose for which God has called you to homeschooling. Not primarily, anyway. If you pursue your

own soul's development while discipling your children, you'll find that, by the journey's end, you are more Christlike, more dependent on God, and wiser. I promise!

And that, Best Beloved, is the goal. Keeping that goal in the forefront of our minds is hard, but it is what enables us to embrace sanctifying grace and press on for a prize that will never tarnish or fade. It is what enables us to truly *love* the journey!

Romans 8:28-29 (ESV) is a sure promise that you carry with you as you go:

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.*

Conformity to Jesus, dependence on God, and faith-forged trust are the fruits that you can savor as you follow God's leading to homeschool. We may define what would be "good" for us as an easier relationship with a child or being transformed into a superwoman who has no limitations (and no need to depend on God) but that is not how God defines our good. He defines it as something infinitely more precious than even the most flawless environment, relationships, and personal abilities. Did you catch it? God defines our good as us becoming more and more like His Son, our Savior.

For many of us, if we are brutally honest, that's not an exciting prospect (at first). But think for a moment about Christ: think of all His personal excellences and beauties, His strength and creativity, His sense of humor and kindness and sympathy and ... well... it's a long list! He is simply the most attractive person in the universe, and as you are attracted to Him, it is God's good pleasure you make you to be actually *like Him*. The reality is that God's plans for us are so much grander than our dreams for ourselves.

I'm praying as I write this that what I have included in this book will help you see evidences of God's sustaining grace, lovingkindness, and good work in you, so that you truly can *love* your homeschooling journey!

*SECTION ONE*

*Your Homeschool is  
YOUR Homeschool!*



*Maria, this is your trunk. These are your gowns! You may arrange them in any way you wish. Lady Catherine will never know!*

ELIZABETH BENNET, PRIDE & PREJUDICE  
(1995: SCREENPLAY BY ANDREW DAVIES)

In this opening section, my goal is to help you get better acquainted with yourself. While some parents make the decision to homeschool after careful thought, many start homeschooling for circumstantial or vague reasons. There's nothing inherently wrong with that, of course. Many times, God uses surprising means to get us to where He wants us to be. As with courtship, there's no "one right way" to become a homeschooler. God is the Author of variety and has His ways of getting us where He wants us to go! But, to extend this metaphor, just as there are wise (and less than wise) ways to go through a courtship, there are wise (and also less than wise) ways to go about beginning to homeschool. Being wise can minimize heartache and maximize fruitfulness; gaining biblical wisdom involves self examination for the purposes of establishing personal convictions.

Did you happen to notice the subtitle of this book? It is "Homeschooling: Principles to Practices." All the way through, this is the paradigm from which I am writing: I want to encourage you to start with the *why* of each topic before you move on to the *how* of it. This section is designed to help you identify your own, unique "why."

Here's another way to say the same thing. What gives us moral courage to say "no" to temptations to sin? Is it not our convictions (our beliefs, or principles)? If, for example, we truly believe that lying is wrong, we will not say that we *love* our friend's new dress, even if we know that she'll be disappointed by our lack of enthusiasm. Such a principle about right and wrong gives us the power to choose, and be confident and steadfast in our choices, even in the face of social discomfort; conversely, the lack of bedrock beliefs can get us into trouble.

Everyone who starts in any new field immediately runs into a slew of new terms,

a variety of leaders, and a host of contradictory opinions on “how it should be done.” I’m not going to start this book by telling you how I think you should run your homeschool.

Like Elizabeth in advising Maria, I want you to arrange your homeschool as you wish, and I will never know if you take my advice or not! However, I do really hope that you are eager to solidify core principles that will help and guide you as you start to make choices about practical things, like which Math program to buy, or whether or not to join a local co-op.

In point of fact, the chapters of this section are truly practical, but you might not realize it at first glance. This is because they are only practical if you take the time to work through the suggested exercises with your husband in order to establish the bedrock foundation of your individual homeschool. So, are you ready? Let’s get principled *and* practical!

1.

*Clarity of mind means clarity of passion, too; this is why a great and clear mind loves ardently and sees distinctly what he loves.*

*BLAISE PASCAL*

## *Why Do YOU Homeschool?*

I once conducted a very informal poll on my Facebook page where I asked homeschooling moms to answer three questions:

1. Why did you start homeschooling (what were the circumstances or what was the motivation)?
2. How long have you been homeschooling?
3. Why do you still do it today (in other words, what's your motivation now)?

I got a long list of responses, which interested me. Among them were clear patterns. Let me summarize what they said. As you read, maybe you will find some of your own motives listed among them.

### **First Question: Why Did You Start to Homeschool?**

The first question received the most varied replies. About a third of respondents started homeschooling because they felt called by God to do so. Many added to this the sentiment that they wanted to be (or thought that they should be) the primary influence in their children's lives. Sending their kids to school, they believed, would be a loss, or even wrong.

Another very common motive for beginning to homeschool was that parents didn't feel the public school system in their area would do an adequate job. A variation on this theme was that some parents began to homeschool after pulling children out of school settings where they believed their children were being hurt, abused, or otherwise wronged by the system or the teacher.

Also common among these women's responses was the general idea that their husband was strongly for homeschooling—more so than were they, initially. A few were moved to start because of the example of neighbors, friends, or family who were successfully homeschooling. And the last common scenario was that the family was moving a lot—typically a military or missionary setting—and parents wanted to either stabilize their kids' school settings or avoid sending them to a boarding school.

### **Last Question: What Motivates You Today?**

The respondents had been homeschooling for between seven and twenty years, and what interested me was the uniformity of their answers to the last question: "What motivates you today?"

In virtually every case, these women felt more convinced, confident, and assured that they were doing what was right for their kids and good in God's sight *after* years of experience that they had when they began. Here are just a few quotes from the pool:

*Our core motives for homeschooling haven't changed. We believe even more strongly today that God has told us to homeschool.  
(Some days it's the only thing that keeps me going.)*



*Today, we still feel called to homeschool. We feel that is where God would have us and our children. Not only are they growing academically, but they are growing spiritually and relationally. I think our convictions with regard to our choices have become firmer over time.*

*Why do I do it today? Because I am convinced it is necessary to do in order to be faithful to God's calling.*

*I guess my primary motivation today is that I have seen the fruit that homeschooling has produced in my two older, graduated children and that keeps me motivated! God, by His grace, also keeps me able to homeschool.*

*The motivation now is I love seeing them learn and be able to tailor the curricula to how they learn. They love being home (and have said many times, when we discuss public school, that don't want to go back to school). I love teaching them, and as long as they want to stay at home and learn, I will be there to teach them!*

*I am called, and still have a passion to remain a primary influence as long as we have been entrusted with our children. I love having closer relationship and fun learning together. We have the time to learn from living together the most important things they and I need to learn, character issues.*

*As the years have gone by our motivation [has become] wanting to train them ourselves, according to our values, and wanting to be with them, also we love the friendships they have developed with each other.*

### **An Exercise for You**

I promised that I'd get practical from time to time. Now I'm going to invite you to grab a piece of notebook paper (or a journal) and your favorite writing implement. Quiet your heart (and the clamoring details about what, when, where, and how you'll homeschool) and consider before the Lord this core question: "Why do I want to homeschool?" *Please write down what comes to mind.*

Got your initial answers written down? Good!

Now, ask it again in different ways, emphasizing different words, and gain even more depth of insight. Again, jot down notes of your answers on that piece of paper:

- Why do \*I\* want to homeschool?
- WHY do I want to homeschool?
- Why do I want to HOMESCHOOL?

You don't have to write a dissertation here, but if it spills onto the back of the page, that's fine.

Try to be honest with the paper. You aren't going to show this to anyone except your husband, and you don't need to try to appear more spiritual than you are. If your reasons are pragmatic, say so. If your reasons are lackluster in your own view, that's okay! What you want to capture here are your core *reasons* for homeschooling. A lot of this book is about self-discovery; that's part of sanctification and of the journey as a whole!

Have you written anything yet? If not, please put the book down and do the writing before reading on. Now, if possible.

\* \* \* \* \*

Done writing? Good!

One immediate benefit of doing this little exercise is that it can bring some clarity. Did you notice (in the quotations on previous pages) how sometimes motives changed over years of homeschooling, and how sometimes initial convictions seemed only to deepen? Typically, those who start homeschooling for circumstantial reasons (bad school nearby, moving a lot, husband wishes it, etc.) only find their core beliefs about homeschooling after years have passed.

This book begins with several chapters designed to help you to identify bedrock reasons that constitute your foundations for a decision to homeschool. Homeschooling is a movement made up of many individuals who pluck up their courage to leave the main roads behind and set out for new territory. Though there is an extensive network of homeschoolers now, and the world at large will not think you as absolutely crazy as they did people like me when we first started, there are outspoken leaders, friends, and factions within the movement, whose conflicting opinions you will have

to learn to sift for nuggets that apply to *your* unique homeschool.

Homeschoolers have no central authority or validating entity; there is no lock-step guidance with homeschooling. We are free to choose our own paths, and while that is terrific if you've found a great path to walk, it can be super scary to stand at the beginning of the journey and take those first steps.

Fear can reverberate deep in our hearts as we take our first steps. If I had to put it into words, it usually boils down to, "What if we choose *wrong*? What if my wrong choices *harm my children*? What if I *fail* them?"

I think you would be abnormal if you did not have this anxiety, at least at first. Why? Because the journey is long, and there are real perils along the way. It's the road less traveled, and success (as we tend to define it from our limited and human vantage points) is not guaranteed. But, God has great answers to these fear-filled questions, and some chapters of this book may be part of them!

First and foremost, of course, if you are a Christian, let's remember together that the ultimate responsibility for your children's welfare and sanctification doesn't rest on your shoulders. Not really. Your kids are God's creations. If He is calling you to this journey, His plans and purposes for you are all loving and kind. He is the one in control, ultimately, of all circumstances, choices, and events of the trip.

Remember Romans 8:28-29. God is in the business of working all things together for your good and His glory, which are both summed up in the greatest gift of the gospel: that you and your children who believe will be changed through His choices for your sojourns into the very image of the Beloved Son of God, so that you can one day be with Him and enjoy His glory forever and ever.

I think that the reason why older homeschoolers' convictions become more settled and steady over time is that they've passed down the road a ways. They've met with adversity, discouragement, doubts, difficulties, and yes, even disasters, and they've lived to see God be faithful and kind through it all.

*What if we choose  
wrong? What  
if my wrong  
choices harm my  
children? What  
if I fail them?*

We older homeschooling moms look back to you younger ones and say, “It’s really doable! There is a good land, flowing with milk and honey! God is here; He is present to guide, sustain, and grow you as you look to Him to guide you in the paths you should walk, and to supply the company you should keep along the way. You have joy and fruit ahead of you that is sweeter than you can imagine, though the path to it might look scary and difficult.” Take to yourself the words of the prophet Isaiah 43:1-3 (ESV):

*“But now thus says the LORD, he who created you... “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...”*

Left to our own devices, we would perish, and our children with us. But, really, this is true in all of our parenting, whether we homeschool or not! When beginning the homeschooling journey, we have so much to learn about what to pack, how to prepare, and where to go. We can be pulled in many directions by the abundance of our opportunities and the strong advice of others around us. And, as women, we often are prey to the lies of the Enemy and the fear of what others will think. This is especially common when starting homeschooling, but for many, it continues for far too long.

With so many great ideas for homeschool implementation, and so little time to get them done, the stakes seem high—and they are! But God is with us. And in relationship with Him and our husbands, as unique women with families that are in many ways unlike any others, we would be wise to develop some guiding motives and directions for our schooling journey so that we don’t become ineffective or distracted from our central goals for our family. Identifying these is what Chapter 2 is all about!

## 2.

*And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so.*

*GENESIS 1:14-15 (ESV)*

## *Do You Have a Guiding Star?*

If you are new to homeschooling and have done any Internet surfing or talking with women in your area, you have already found that there are a myriad of choices and voices. As with any new vocation, you must learn a new vocabulary, involving such words as “modalities” and “fine motor skills” and “Unit Study approach.” It’s a steep learning curve about a really important topic—your child’s education! So, it can be both bewildering and stressful!

Many different vendors of curricula, leading authors, and well-meaning friends (or relations) may tell you that one program is “the best” or that one educational

element is “the only” or “the essential” ingredient to successful home teaching and/or parenting. These mentors all sincerely believe what they say, or they wouldn’t be teaching others to do as they do. But the truth is that there are a variety of different, valid methods by which you can achieve the general goal of successful homeschooling.

Because many of us did not grow up homeschooling or seeing it done, we can be like the early explorers or merchants who launched out by sea and land to seek a vaguely conceived treasure with only the most rudimentary navigational aids. For centuries, adventurers steered by the stars. So, to extend the metaphor, have you found your “guiding star” for the homeschool journey?

As I demonstrated in Chapter 1, parents start homeschooling for a wide variety of reasons. God has all kinds of ways (some full of humor) of drawing us to paths that He’s marked out for us. I won’t say it’s bait and switch, but it sure feels like that some days! To review:

- Some start the journey as a reaction to life circumstances (from “my child’s Kindergarten teacher was intolerable” to “we are a military family and move a lot”).
- Some moms start homeschooling because they support someone else’s vision (like “my husband grew up homeschooling and really wants me to, so I am going to give it a try”).
- Some see homeschooling as a “get ahead” measure: they plan to homeschool only until their child is reading well, and then put them into a school. For them, it’s a “head start” tactic.
- And then there are the ideologues: parents who homeschool because of certain principles, most typically related to educational goals, perceived parental responsibilities to their children, religion, and/or building family relationships.

These last types of parents have typically found early on what I’m calling their “guiding star” for the journey. My biggest concern for many young couples who are attracted to homeschooling for the more practical (vs. principled) reasons (whether corralled by circumstances or cajoled by others’ opinions), is that they have not yet crystallized their vision. They can lack a clear sense of why they are homeschooling, nor do they have a definition of what success would even look like. When such par-

ents are confronted with the vast array of early schooling choices, they may have no star to steer by and become lost.

You may be in this position now, or you may know young couples who are at this overwhelming starting point. Given the long-distance nature of the journey and the rigorous efforts that will be needed along the way, the more a newcomer peers out at the horizon, the harder it can get to begin. Without a star to follow, you might wonder if it's even going to be worth it—whatever “it” is!

Parents in their first years of homeschooling need motivation, need frameworks for making decisions, need trustworthy mentors, and need resources by which they can choose the first guiding stars that they can steer by. To borrow from a career book title by David Campbell, *If You Don't Know Where You're Going, You'll Probably End Up Somewhere Else*. The learning curve is straight up, and all choices of direction and voices calling you to them can seem equally valid.

I would like to argue that in this, as in most areas of life, couples need to take time to ponder their direction, not just the means that they will adopt to get to their destination. My husband and I have spent hours and hours and hours over the years (mostly on long car trips) talking around and through what we want to achieve in our parenting.

We have found we do best when we start with the destination first—answering questions like these:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- Where do we want to end up?
- What would wild success look like?

When we can answer questions like these about our destination in any way whatsoever, we can then begin to figure out our routes. These answers (determined by our values and goals) then serve as our guiding stars, no matter where the roads of the journey take us. Through rough and smooth, it is convictions (as opposed to preferences) that keep us going the right way.

For instance, we are Christians. This gives us vital information! It means that our

*My biggest concern for young couples is that many haven't yet crystallized their vision.*

homeschool will be Christ-centered, and that our Bible will have ultimate authority in all the situations that we encounter. As with all of our lives here on earth, the Bible doesn't tell us *everything* we should legitimately value (though it definitely tells us Whom to value most).

Since God is creative in the way He makes people, there are a number of individual values which are good but not universal—one of them might exist in one family but not in another. For instance, a love for books and ideas is a good value. So is a love for the athletic excellence, involving gracious winning, cheerful losing, and fair play found in the best participants of any given sport. Both are good values, but one typically needs to be prioritized because we only have so much time.

As an example, for my husband Scott and me, books are more important than sports, and teaching our children the principles or ideas of things are more important than rote memorization of trivia. Fair enough: these are some of our guiding stars. They might not be the same for your family!

Whatever they are, determining what your unique guiding stars—your values and convictions—are is essential. So, for homeschooling, let me ask you to discuss the following questions as a couple, ideally with paper and pencil in hand:

- What kinds of values do we see as major influences on our schooling choices?
- Are there any circumstances that God has placed in our lives that will affect our homeschooling decisions?
- Can we define what education is? Or, said differently, what would we say is the end game of education?
- How long do we think it will take to get there?
- What would “wild success” in homeschooling look like?

Before those questions overwhelm you, take a deep breath. Remember, you don't need to know the whole journey from day one. As you progress, the stars that you choose to guide you will change with the seasons, as do the constellations of our night sky, because changing seasons will bring different answers to the questions you've asked above. The stars that you follow during your grammar-school years may not serve you as well in the teen years.

As God grows you and your capacity to love and serve, you may find that your guiding stars are quite different at the start, in three years, and in ten years. But the great benefit of picking a star to follow early on is that such a choice helps you to



make a host of other, smaller choices with some confidence. You can thus gain some early headway, instead of being paralyzed by anxieties or feeling sure that you're wandering around in circles!

You don't have to know each bend and turn in the road ahead. God's guidance is usually more like headlights on a car, illuminating only the path immediately ahead of us, than like a MapQuest printout that lays out the whole journey at a glance. That's where faith and trust in God get built, by relying on Him day by day for each leg of the journey.

But we do need to start our trip. And, to start, we need to pick a direction that we think is a good way to head. Only then can we begin to say "yes" to some choices and "no" to others! To see how that might look, read about practical approaches to answering some of these questions and finding an initial direction in Chapter 3.