

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV*

*Dave Bosewell tells a story about Earl Weaver, former manager of the Baltimore Orioles. Weaver had a rule that no one could steal a base unless given the steal sign. This upset one of his star players, Reggie Jackson, because he felt he knew the pitchers and catchers well enough to judge who he could and could not steal off of. So one game he decided to steal without a sign. He got a good jump off the pitcher and easily beat the throw to second base. As he shook the dirt off his uniform, Jackson smiled with delight, feeling he had vindicated his judgment to his manager. Later Weaver took Jackson aside and explained why he hadn't given the steal sign. First, the next batter was Lee May, his best power hitter other than Jackson. When Jackson stole second, first base was left open, so the other team walked May intentionally, taking the bat out of his hands. Second, the following batter hadn't been strong against that pitcher, so Weaver felt he had to send up a pinch hitter to try to drive in the men on base. That left Weaver without bench strength later in the game. The problem was, Jackson saw only his relationship to the pitcher and catcher. Weaver was watching the whole game. We, too, see only so far, but God sees the bigger picture. When he sends us a signal, it's wise to obey, no matter what we may think WE know. (Marty Masten.)*

A good baseball story seems to be a good way to illustrate the wisdom of the writer of Proverbs. Perhaps one of the most hazardous places we can find ourselves is when we think we know what's going on, but we really don't. In fact we may be convinced we know what's going on, so much so that when we move ahead we can be genuinely shocked or surprised that it didn't turn out the way we thought.

I have learned this only too well in situations that have come before me. In a certain situation in a church I served I felt I needed to send an email to someone who given the governing body of the church a hard time. I wrote the e-mail carefully, giving my may take on the situation as well as what needed to be done. I thought this is what God was leading me to do to get resolution in that particular situation.

After I spent much time over it, I finally sent it out. The funny thing though, was that I could not send that e-mail. I must have tried at least three times, and once in the process somehow the whole e-mail got deleted. I was not happy, and wondered why I was having so much trouble. I finally gave up on it feeling that I had wasted a serious piece of time on it.

What I didn't consider at the time is that maybe that wasn't the way God saw it. The situation was resolved a whole different way, and now looking back I am very glad that e-mail didn't get sent.

God really does know the situations before us. May we rise to the challenge of the writer of Proverbs, and really "trust in the Lord with all your heart" especially when can't control the outcome.

Pr. John Van Haneghan