

## KNOWING THE TERRAIN

In the book *No Matter What, No Matter Where*, author Larry Libby shares an insightful story about his father-in-law, a man named Bob who hunts deer every fall in the mountains of California.

A number of farmers and ranchers in the area are willing to let individuals or small groups hunt on their property if the hunters ask permission and show respect for the land. On one occasion, Bob asked if he might drive through a certain gate and do some hunting in the evening. The rancher gave Bob a thoughtful look and said, “Yeah, you can come on the land. But you’d better let me ride with you for a while. I want to show you some things.”

Bob could have argued, but he didn’t. The pair drove through the gate and onto the ranch. They had been skimming across a wide, seemingly featureless field when the rancher suddenly said, “You’d better slow down.”

Bob pulled his foot off the accelerator. There was no deer. As far as he could see, there were no creeks, gullies or fences. Just a wide pasture stretching out to the dusky foothills.

“Park right here,” the rancher said. “Want to show you something.”

They got out of the truck in the cool, mountain air and began walking. Then the rancher put his hand on Bob’s shoulder and said, “Look up ahead.”

Bob stopped dead in his tracks. Cleaving at right angles across their path – and across the pasture as far as he could see in both directions – was a yawning, black tear in the surface of the earth. The crack was probably 30 feet wide.

Peering over the edge, the hair on Bob’s neck bristled. The sheer, rock-ribbed sides of the great volcanic fissure plunged to unknown depths. Cold, still air seemed to exhale from the blackness below.



Walking back to the truck, Bob marveled at how difficult it was to see the fissure from just yards away. He smiled. Having a guide wasn’t such a bad thing. He had a new appreciation for a man who knew the terrain – and where to park the truck.

(more)

So what does this story mean for you today?

Each of us have had guides – mentors, if you will – who have helped us reach the places in our personal and professional lives where we are today. They have shown us the way, helping us avoid inevitable pitfalls along the journey. We are grateful they have helped us across the terrain.

Now it's our turn. In the leadership position you hold, you have become the guide. You know the lay of the land. You can help others succeed.

And in the spiritual realm, we all have the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who directs our paths.

*For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (Romans 8:14 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter