



Gary Wadding

GOD'S HIGHWAY

Planning Ahead

A photo of my room today would show piles of clothes, snack foods, first aid supplies and more. Everything is scattered around but coming together as I pack these items into my bags. I leave tomorrow (Thanksgiving Day) on my way back to Vietnam for several weeks. You veterans will understand the many thoughts that are going through my head as I return to mountains and jungles halfway around the world, a place where my life was once up for grabs. I'll write more about the trip after I get back.

The point I'm making for this article is the plans that I must make as the team leader, in order to make this trip a success. There is the coordination of team members so we all arrive in LA at the right time for the flight. Passports must be up to date, visas must be issued, immunizations have to be in order, "contraband" items have to be placed in the check-in bags so as to keep the security people off my back, etc. Then there are the arrangements on the other end for lodging, our guide, motorcycles to carry us up the Ho Chi Minh Trail, driver's licenses, food along the way, etc. A spontaneous trip is my idea of fun, most of the time; but not when you have a whole team of people depending on you, and not when your little adventure takes place 12 time zones away (makes it easy to know what time it is back home), and not when a Communist government is involved. Planning is crucial.

Last week I took a little one day trip of 500 miles. That should be a piece of cake, right? It was all in the same time zone. I stopped by the shop in Daytona and asked Jason to check the tire pressures since that is a recurring theme in motorcycle maintenance lectures, especially on my kind of ride. Sure enough, they had slipped down to about 30 pounds. A quick squirt of air and I was off with peace of mind. That trip didn't take much planning, but I'm glad I did that little bit and headed off potential tire troubles.

As we head into 2009 you might just feel like "winging it". Who needs a plan? You survived last year didn't you? At this very appropriate point in time, stop and look at your life. Some lives are going somewhere, and accomplishing something. Others are just bumping along and wondering why things keep happening to them. One major difference is planning. If you plan to go to Sturgis 2009, you better skip the deserts and save money for gas. You need to plan ahead for time off from the job, or maybe you'll get a permanent vacation. The bike needs a good overall checkup for the long trip. These plans sound like common sense



if you want to enjoy the ride, and make it to your destination.

Statistics tell us that roughly 2.5 million Americans will not survive this next year. Lots of reasons for those deaths, but in the end they don't matter. It's over. You and I can plan for Sturgis 2009 all we want, but whether we make it there or not is still uncertain. Human life has a 100% mortality rate. We all die. Sounds like something to plan for.

I don't plan to die in 2009, but I've made plans. I signed up with a plan that not only covers death; it also makes life better too. The plan is to give it all to Jesus. He went through death for us and paid a terrible price to make arrangements for us too. Ignoring God's Word and His way for me to live would be as dumb as ignoring my guide in Vietnam. The team trip would not be too good, although we would probably make it back home, eventually, maybe. If we ignore Jesus Christ and His plan for our lives, our death, our salvation and our purpose, we can plan on a rather poor life, and a horrible, eternal end.

I'm not morbid when I check my tire pressure and make it right. I'm just smart as I plan for a situation that might happen. I don't just "believe in" adding air, I do something about it. I'm not morbid when I talk about the possibility of dying in 2009, I'm just smart as I plan ahead. Either we are in charge of our life this upcoming year, or Jesus Christ is in charge. Ask your friends if they see Jesus as the center of your life, or if they just see another person like themselves. Stop just "believing in" Jesus and do something about it. No better day than New Year's Day. Have a great 2009. Plan on it.

