



How is Your Spiritual GPS?



It has been great fun not knowing how to use anything technical that my children have, but I seriously love the GPS (Global Positioning System) on their phone. The Google map application is just amazing to me especially because it's no longer my fault when we get lost.

Twenty years ago I was always in charge of reading the map during the family vacations, so there was a lot of screaming and yelling when you cannot get to Disney on time. Now days, it seems, there is nothing in the world that we cannot know about. Everything is available. Many people love the GPS. So, why do some people still feel so lost? Does anyone take the road map to Christ seriously? I feel it is the simplest things we are forgetting.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ” Matthew 22:36

God sends me signals every day where I can try to position myself to follow His will, but the earthly things seem to consume my brainpower more. God is aware of my location at every moment, but I am struggling on a life-time journey to understand the simple truth. I am trying to keep my spiritual GPS towards my Lord and Savior, but it's a spiritual warfare. Leaving my house every day and not being sure if I will come



back alive transformed my thinking to practice not just loving my neighbor but truly thinking about loving my enemy. I feel a spiritual GPS means truly putting my life in God's hands.

Some of us are surely setting our spiritual GPS with our final destination being God's Heavenly Kingdom and the gift of eternal life. My personal passion has been to inspire people to walk the footsteps of Christ and be enriched by the spiritual beauty in the Holy Land although the earthly location is always in a bloody conflict. As the Great Holy Lenten Journey arrives every year, most of us try to make an effort to spiritually tune to something not of this world. The Navigational system to a spiritual life is always in conflict with the luxuries of this world. So I always feel the cross getting heavier.

Palestinian Christians have really tried to set their spiritual GPS appropriately this year, especially with a major decision not yet approved by the Vatican but taken by the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land so that within two years, all Eastern Catholics and the Latin Patriarchate in the Holy Land will officially adopt the Greek Orthodox Julian calendar date for celebrating Easter. Thus we are attempting to arrive to some unity.

I always repeat myself, but since I have been living in the Holy Land in the last eighteen years, all of the towns in Palestine and some in Israel have made a social understanding in the Christian community to celebrate Christmas on the New Calendar and Easter on the Old Calendar according to the Orthodox Holy Pascha date. However, Jerusalem and Bethlehem continued to celebrate these most holy days twice because of the great number of pilgrims and tours. This new official decree should be in effect by 2015 if the Vatican agrees, and it would mean celebrating Easter the same day in all locations in the Holy Land. Not everyone is happy with this change.

As Christian people, we should try to set our spiritual GPS towards what we believe God will see as good, holy, loving and right. So if we cannot always be happy, there is no reason not to try and be holy. But, as a mother, I feel I have tried to place the spiritual GPS for my family to position God first in their life, but I am wondering where I have failed when they don't show up at church.

I usually have to practice the creative ways that I recommend to others to get their teenagers to church, like: It's Valentine's Day, the greatest gift I can have is for you to give glory to God. It is Mother's Day... It is my birthday... it's my name day... it's your name day... I am inviting you to pray with me. Can you visit God's house? Would you like to go to church for Vespers or Liturgy? You almost want to give up, especially if you hear "you need to write another book, Christina Does Not Go to Church." But you are strengthened by the grace of God to be a living example of Christian witness.

The spiritual GPS should constantly empower us to be guided by the True Light of Christ. Finally, my children actually show up for the Great and Holy Pascha Liturgy! Thus, I keep the faith and continue to pray for them. I have to keep teaching by example, not just when they are three, but also when they are thirty-three. Keeping the spiritual GPS focused on Christ helps me experience the work of the Holy Spirit.

"Of all holy works, the education of children is the most holy." St. Theophan the Recluse.

Source: [The Sounding Orthodox Blog](#)

Dr. Khoury lives in Palestine, on the West Bank of the Jordan River, in the Biblical land of Judea and



Samaria. The Khourys returned to the family village of Taybeh following the Oslo Peace Agreement (1993) to boost the economy and raise their children with centuries-old Palestinian Christian values and traditions.

She is the author of several Orthodox Christian children's books. Currently she is a volunteer in her husband's home village of Taybeh at St. George Greek Orthodox Church to help fundraise for a vital housing project aimed at helping families obtain their first home on land donated by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.