



*Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.*

(Psalm 80:3)

### **The Magnetic Compass**

The magnetic compass is a device that has been used widely by sea-going vessels and land navigators for the past several hundred years. It is indispensable to the soldier. It was the most crucially important article on sailing vessels though it was also the smallest.

It is comprised of a magnetized needle with a positive (north) and a negative pole (south), and is usually encased beneath a radial dial with cardinal, and intermediate, headings engraved.

The magnetic compass to the navigator is very much like the conscience to the Christian. The magnet compass is small and simply informs, but does not dictate. The human conscience is also small and never demands any action be taken - it simply informs of the right and wrong way. It is up to its owner to decide to follow or to disregard that small, still voice of the conscience.

On rough stormy seas, the magnetic compass will fluctuate briefly from its correct readings. So will the conscience of man fluctuate during times of great hardship and the storms of life; but when the storms subside, the compass needle, and the conscience, will become more reliable.

When a ship passes another ship bearing, perhaps, a heavy cargo of metal, the compass will be attracted to the material of that ship and temporarily vary from its true reading. When material wealth and even other persons of an undesirable nature come near to the Christian he, too, may suffer a temporary lapse of conscience; but when that temptation has been subdued and passed, his conscience will respond in truth and righteousness.

The magnetic needle of the compass is fixed on a far greater magnet than itself - the magnetic poles of the earth. The conscience is far more reliable when informed of the Holy Spirit and fixed on a far greater power than itself - His Lord.

The Holy Bible is our compass rose at which we fine tune our consciences by reading, study, prayer, and application. Depending on God's True North to see us through the shoals and billows of life will bring, always, to safe harbor and rest.