

CHOOSE THE

by
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My wife and I took a vacation in New Zealand in 1987. We rented a camper van on the South Island and began our adventure on the seaside routes. We were struck by two particular highway signs that kept turning up. One was 'Metal Surface'. It warned that we were about to run off a paved highway onto a gravel road. OK, we learned that 'metal surface' just meant 'pavement ends'. We paid dearly for our encounter with 'metal surfaces' with the loss of our 'windscreen', but that's another story.

The other sign we got familiar with was 'Give Way'. This turned out to be the equivalent of our American 'Yield right of way' sign. You are expected to stop at an intersection, and if opposing traffic is coming, you let them pass first. So we learned about the importance of 'Give Way'.

The signs also reminded us of a statement I once heard made by a church minister that there are two ways of life: the 'give way' and the 'get way'. I have learned that he was definitely right about this principle and life choice. It pays to live the 'give way'. I have spent 50 years proving this truth.

For example, at one stage on our New Zealand trip, we were following a winding river road in our camper. Suddenly we came upon a hard

right turn onto a bridge across the magnificent river.

The unusual and shocking thing about this bridge was that the roadway immediately coincided with a railway! Our only choice was to straddle the rails and head on across the bridge. What do we do if we encounter an oncoming train that claims priority over the bridge way?

It was a very long bridge. We could not even see the other end. But about half way across, we realised there was a turnout. It could be used by someone who suddenly realised that they were about to encounter an oncoming train committed to using the only roadway available across the bridge. We quickly got the point about what 'Give Way' meant. You had best pull your little vehicle over and let the locomotive pull its carriages on across.

So that is life, isn't it? Haven't we all encountered people who were intent on ploughing their own way through life in spite of obstacles in their path? Have we been unwilling to yield to the 'Give Way' signs in life and try to surge on to the goals we have in mind? Are we so intent on 'getting' what we want that we won't surrender and yield ourselves to other's needs and priorities?

Choices. Lifestyle. In retirement (or should I say 'retirement'), I have learned an important principle. If I stick to a 'give way' lifestyle, I'll be willing to surrender the road to someone else for a while. If I insist on 'getting' my own way, I am probably headed for a train wreck!