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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Donald Rule

In modern times, in an instant, ships can find their location while far out at sea with the push of a computer key, using GPS, or the Global Positioning System. But in the early 1700s, navigation—the science of knowing your exact location on the open seas and then knowing the direction you need to travel to reach your destination—was much more difficult. Because of shortcomings in the ability to navigate accurately, many ships, lives and cargos were lost at sea.

A GIANT LEAP in the Progress of NAVIGATION

Navigators in those days could find the latitude of their positions. Latitude measures how far north or south you are on the globe and can be figured out by comparing the angle of the sun with the horizon. But navigators were at a loss on how to determine their longitude, or how far east or west they were. This difficulty was due to the spinning of the earth on its axis. Every hour the earth spins 15 degrees, or

¹/₂₄ of a complete revolution. Because of the spinning of the earth, navigators needed to know the exact time of day before they could calculate the longitude of their position.

If mariners had a timepiece that could keep accurate time at sea, their problems with longitude would be solved, but no such timepiece existed. The large pendulum clocks of the era were accurate on land but useless at sea, where the rolling of the ships and high humidity (moisture content of the air) made them inaccurate.

The British government realized that solving this problem would increase trade and commerce, so they offered a reward of 20,000 pounds to the person who could develop an accurate timepiece for sea. This was an immense sum of money in those days.

A few notable scientists, such as Isaac Newton, thought such a timepiece could not be built. However, notwithstanding his opinion, many people got to work in an effort to win the prize money. Among

> them was John Harrison, a young carpenter who had a fascination for clocks, and by the age of 20 had already built a number of wooden clocks. He set to work analyzing the problems timepieces faced at sea. And one

by one, over the course of a lifetime, he figured out a way to overcome each difficulty. Finally, through perseverance and ingenuity, he developed a watch which would work at sea. In a trial, the watch only lost 38 seconds of time on an 81-day, transatlantic voyage. At the age of 80 years, John Harrison won the prize the government offered and was rewarded for his labors.

The development of this timepiece made it possible for mariners to figure out their exact locations, with both longitude and latitude. This was a giant leap forward in the progress of navigation. In fact, the famous explorer James Cook was one of the first mariners to use one of John Harrison's timepieces. On a South Pacific voyage of exploration, he used the watch to find the exact locations of many new lands and islands he discovered.

Since the timepiece vastly improved navigation, it doubtless saved an untold number of lives and ships that otherwise might have been lost at sea.

Do you know that life, in many ways, is like a long voyage across an expanse of ocean? It is important in this voyage to know your exact location and also how to reach your desired destination. It is important, because it is very possible to end up shipwrecked when it comes to your immortal soul. You see, at the end of our lives, each one of us will find ourselves in one of two places. We will either find ourselves in a real heaven, where all is bright and joyful, or end up lost in a hell full of darkness and suffering.

If you want to reach heaven (and who doesn't?), you need to know where you stand with God right now. The Bible tells us that we are all sinners in the sight of God: **"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:23). It also says that we have all strayed off course and done things that are displeasing to God: **"All we like sheep have gone astray"** (Isaiah 53:6).

Knowing that you are in the place of a sinner, lost and having gone astray, is important. Until you come to this realization, you will never see the great need you have of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your present condition might resemble a ship that is fit and trim and ready for an ocean voyage, or you could be like a ship that has been battered about by winds and waves until it seems barely afloat. However, if you are not sailing in the right direction to reach your destination, how will you ever get there? It is only by coming to Christ by faith that any of us will ever reach heaven.

About two thousand years ago, the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem. On the night of His birth, the angel of the Lord appeared in the night sky to shepherds in nearby hills. He told the shepherds, **"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).**

The infant whose birth was announced that night grew up into manhood, and then at about the age of 30, He began walking over the countryside of

A Giant Leap in Navigation

Israel, preaching the kingdom of God. Wonderful miracles accompanied His preaching wherever He went. The lame walked, the blind were given their sight, and He even restored dead people to life. The miracles were confirmation from heaven that all that this Man said was true.

After three and a half years of preaching the gospel, He was betrayed by one of His followers, given a false trial and sentenced to death. At any time He might have called out to God the Father to send angels to deliver Him, but He let Himself be nailed to the cross. He did this because He knew He had to die and shed His blood so that any sinner might have a way to be saved. After He died, He was buried in a tomb. But death couldn't keep the Lord Jesus in that tomb, and He rose from the grave. He lives forever now in the power of an endless life.

Although they had wandered far from Him and the terrible stain of sin darkened their hearts, God loved all men, and by the sacrifice of His Son, He won for them the opportunity of reaching heaven. The glad tidings of great joy to all people had come true. The truth of the death and resurrection of the Lord

Jesus means that sinners deserving death might find everlasting life through Him.

Now all can know Christ as the Saviour of sinners. Through faith in Christ, souls who were once headed to a lost eternity can now reach heaven.

Once a navigator figured out his position, the next step was to determine the direction he needed to travel to reach his destination. If you have realized that you are a sinner and then placed your faith in the Lord Jesus as Saviour, the next step is to start living like someone who is on their way to heaven.

In your journey through life, you should throw overboard things like bitterness, hatred, theft, deceit, and meanness and let them sink to the depths of the sea. Instead, fill your life full of mercy, compassion, kindness, faith, love, honesty and good works. God gives the power to do this.

Wherever God may lead you in this wide world, you should always be living out the "life of Christ" that is inside every believer in Christ. The journey through life may be hard sailing at times, but God in His grace will be there to help you in every part of the journey.

"They that go down to the sea in ships... see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep" (Psalm 107:23-24).

Knowing where you are and where you're going are critically important. Find out more in the next story, *Where Am I Going*?

Like many of us today, the two young men in this story had gadgets with technology to help them get where they wanted to go without much fuss or worry or need to look at a map. In fact, to plan a flight across the country didn't take much more effort for Mike than sitting at the computer for a few minutes and looking at the different options available.

WHERE

GOING

He discovered that airline tickets to a place so far away were rather expensive. Then he found a very good deal if he took a flight out of a bigger city which was 150 miles away from where he lived. Calculating the time to drive that distance and the cost of fuel, he felt it was still well worth it to take a plane from there.

He asked his brother Steve to drive him to the airport so he wouldn't have to leave his car there the whole time he was gone. They left quite early in the morning as the traffic in the bigger cities is often heavy and slow-moving during prime hours. Mike gave Steve his GPS to use. He had just bought it from someone online a few weeks before and was glad to

see that it worked well. They got to the airport easily and in plenty of time.

Steve said good-bye to his brother and then got ready to make the three-hour trip back. The GPS has a feature that lets you choose "home" for a destination. That was just where Steve wanted to be as he had things to do and needed to get back. So he set the GPS for home and checked the time of arrival which was exactly the time he figured it would be. That was good as he wanted to have a couple of hours at home before an appointment in the evening.

Everything was going as planned, but there was one problem. The GPS had belonged to another person and the address for their home was not the same place Steve lived. It was not even close. Steve was going the wrong way and getting farther from home!

All of us are on a journey right now. You may not be on a plane or in a car or train but you are on the journey of life. There are only two roads: the road to Heaven and the road to Hell.

We all are born into a world of sin. **"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:23). But the Lord Jesus died on the cross to save you from a lost eternity if you will put your trust in Him and believe He died for you. Then you will be on the road to Heaven.

Steve drove for many miles not realizing he was getting farther and farther away from where he thought he was going. You may think you are go-

ing the right way and not even be aware you are lost in your sins and on your way to Hell.

It was nearly three hours later, when Steve should have been home, that he began to realize nothing looked familiar. After stopping to check his location, he was shocked to find he was now 300 miles from home! What a sinking feeling he had, besides being very tired from a short night of sleep. He thought he was doing everything right but he hadn't stopped to consider just where he was going. He reset the GPS to go to the right place and turned around to start the long trip back.

You too can turn around if you are going the wrong way. The Bible tells us in Matthew 7:13, **"Wide** is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." The next verse says, **"Strait is the gate, and** narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It's always easier to drift along with the crowd, but where are they taking you?

GPS isn't the only source of wrong instructions. Friends can be just as unreliable, as you'll see if you continue on to read *Bad Directions*.

Where Am I Going?



One year my friends and I went to a weekend get-together with many other Christian young people who loved the Lord Jesus. It was a time of good food, fun games and other scheduled activities. One of the activities we had to do was deliver a home-cooked meal to a certain home.

Since we didn't know the area at all, we were given directions to help us reach the home. Unfortunately, the directions were not very accurate. They eventually led us to the location we were supposed to find, but our hosts had

given us wrong street names. This led to our getting lost a few times along our activity route.

Bad Directions

13

This is similar to our pathway through life. Sometimes we get "help" from wellmeaning friends who don't have their facts straight. Many people think they know the way to heaven, but in reality all they have to share with us is their own personal opinion. But God's Word is an infallible guide. It never makes a mistake. Read God's Word and ask God to show you His way to His home in heaven. God says about His own book, "The holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). Read it today! The Lord Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6).

Salvation's Day

Straying far on sin's dark mountain Like a sheep that's gone astray, Every moment takes you farther From the straight and narrow way.

Salvation's Day

As a silly sheep, not knowing Where the path you tread will lead, Straying further into darkness – None but Christ can meet your need.

Listen to the wondrous story: Jesus came the lost to save: Gave His life, His blood on Calvary, Rose victorious from the grave.

Lives in glory to receive you: None are ever turned away, While the door of mercy's open, While it's called Salvation's Day.

Now to me He calls in mercy, Calls to you, to all oppressed: Yes, to you the word is written: "Come, and I will give you rest."

ECHOES OF GRACE 59 Industrial Road P.O. Box

59 Industrial Road, P.O. Box 649 Addison, Illinois 60101, U.S.A. "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him" (Psalm 34:8).

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