

## Chart a New Course

Planning trips can be most enjoyable, because of the anticipation of seeing (and learning) new things or maybe even enjoying again, places we've been before.

When I travel, it's not a fearful thing for me to look at the map to study where I've been, where I am, and to plan where to go next, and how to get there. In fact it's fun thing. Occasionally, it can be painful because I made a wrong turn, or failed to make the right turn. It may even cause frustration to my passengers, or to those who may be waiting for me at my destination. But, it's always good to get back on the right road and continue on toward my destination.

So, why then are we so fearful (when we travel the road of life) to study the map of where we've been, where we are, and where we want to go? Why do we naturally shrink from the idea of charting a new course for a better life?

*"Have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, 'My child,[b] don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.' As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father?" (Hebrews 12:5-7)*

It **is** painful to remember where I made wrong turns in my life, and how I caused pain for other people. But I must remember that God promises to forgive when I confess (1 John 1:9). It's like getting back on the right road again, and that's a good thing :-)

Why should I continue to drive in circles around the polluted slums of the inner-city, when I can follow the road map to the beautiful forests with fresh air? Likewise, why should I continue to live in the guilt and shame of the past when God has provided a road map to a better, more fulfilling life?

Why should I be fearful of taking inventory of my life -- no matter how dysfunctional it has been -- no matter how low I've sunk in depravity? God has a thousand ways to untangle our sinful lives and to make us new creatures in Christ.

Let's chart a new course today that will bring us a more fulfilling life. *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)*. So let's plan our trip to Heaven...

*"... I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end... Call upon me, ... and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall... find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And... I will turn away your captivity..." (Jeremiah 29:11-14)*

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