

Final Destination

Personal Reflection

by Keilah Toy, Major –

DALLAS, Texas—As I look at the departure listings on the monitor for my connecting flight to Nashville, all I could see was, “Cancelled, Cancelled, Cancelled, Cancelled, Cancelled.” The lady at the desk said, “Haven’t you been watching the news? They’ve grounded all the MD-80 planes for inspection.” “So what am I supposed to do,” I ask her. She said, “Well, you could see if a flight will go out tomorrow. But my advice? Get on a plane and go home.”

Apparently I missed the news that the FAA grounded 300 American Airlines planes, effectively canceling 3,000 flights, affecting over 300,000 people. And I was among the chosen ones. I had no extra toiletries, clothes, necessities, power adapters for my phone or computer, no hotel and no car. I was stranded in Dallas with nothing but the clothes on my back.

Harried and frazzled, a few hours later after locating a hotel one hour away in downtown Dallas and securing one of the last rental cars, I am still frenzied, wondering if I should aim to leave at 6:00 a.m. (4:00 a.m. PDT) the next morning for a flight that may not take off. If flights were cancelled again, I would have to start all over looking for a hotel room and a car again. I decide to chance it, and after four more delays, I finally arrive in Nashville at my reserved hotel with my reserved car, finally secure with a place to stay.

My question is why would anyone not plan one’s destination and how they’re going to get there? The news said this airline fiasco was the worst since the apocalyptic-like 9/11 travel when there were no flights available, nor cars to be rented.

As a newlywed married for only six months, Ron and I decided it would be very adventurous to set out for a week on the road and stop wherever we wanted, whenever we wanted, like free-spirited hippies. We planned a direction, north, up the Pacific Hwy 1 coastline, envisioning a romantic drive, stopping at cozy little inns along the way. Our experience was anything but. Each day we set out on the winding, car-sick inducing, coastal highway, not enjoying the scenery, but instead studying our AAA book all along the way (pre-cell phone days), unsure of where and when we should stop and hoping



there would be a vacancy. Once we unloaded our luggage, we would set out again, hungry, searching for a place to eat. We would be exhausted from the drive even though it was only three to five hours per day, only because we were anxious where we would settle next. The next morning, the exact scene would replay and by the end of the week when we were finally headed toward home, we swore we would never do this again. So much for our hippie adventure.

If we want to reach a destination, we have to plan the trip to make sure we get there. It's more stressful living life without a plan. Yet this is precisely how many people live their lives spiritually. There is no goal, no direction, no destination. Just day-to-day survival, hoping things will turn out all right. Many people don't even know where they're headed or which direction to aim for, and they wonder why life is stressful.

Essential to this spiritual journey is a daily check-in with our divine compass, God's Word. Daily communion with God through his Word enables us to avoid major pitfalls and danger in life as well as warns us when we need to make minor little mid-course corrections in our attitude, character, and choices. If not adjusted regularly, the straying will add up and veer us not only off-course and sidetracked, but possibly even lost.

My 36-hour adventure in Dallas was no picnic, however it does not compare to the critical consequences of being spiritually unprepared. Make sure you check in with God today to receive your daily direction, guidance, and encouragement. You will have the assurance that you will be one step closer to your ultimate destination.