

## The Great Traveler's Manual

### John 14:1-6

A life is a journey. A life, from the birth and the death, is greatest traveling. Life is running river that doesn't stay at a place any moment. We have heard so many times these words. But we haven't taken these words seriously until we become too old. Life is one time given opportunity. We need to choose wisely in every decision making for the meaningful life.

Through the scripture reading John 14:1-6, we can overhear the conversation between the Lord and Thomas, one of His disciples. The Lord said to him, "Do not be troubled by my departure, since it is a way to prepare for my disciples." And He said, "I shall return. You, my flock, must keep following my way." Then, Thomas asked, "Lord, where are you going? Give me direction so that I can follow you." The Lord answered, "I'm going to the Father and I am the way, to the Father."

We are asking these questions even now. Where are we going? Which way must we go? Where are we facing as we are seeking for significant life? Today's problem is not one of lost sheep but of lost direction within the church. I claim that there are three things which we must consider very seriously in order for our life regain its lost way.

First of all, every journey needs a map. Maps give us the right directions when we have lost our way. What kind of map do we need for our life journey? I think you have same map that I have. We had better use the map now. The creed of Korean Methodist Church claims, "We believe the Word of God contained in the Old Testament and New Testament as the sufficient rule both of faith and practice. The Bible, the written Word of God, is the only map we need. The Bible is the manual for our lives. We are the people to follow the way, Jesus Christ, on the map, the Bible.

Do you know how do use map? Of course you may know how to use a map. But the Life Map is quite different from other kinds of map to use.

One winter in 1980, I was driving from California to Denver, Colorado with my family. We had recently arrived in the United States and my daughters were at that time four and six years old. Everything was new for us. We were driving in February in yellow 1072 Plymouth sedan. When we left California, it was raining. But the rain changed suddenly to heavy snow when we reached Flagstaff, Arizona. All I could see through my windshield was snow. I was about five o'clock California time, outside the car, it was dark and snowy. I saw no street light, no building light, not even a passing car. We were alone on the freeway, and I was afraid. I thought we would all freeze and die in the car that day. I held a map in my hand, but it was useless, since I didn't know where on the map I was. Fortunately, I found a telephone box on the shoulder of the freeway, and was able to dial for an operator. I asked the operator to find a motel for us, and she asked, "Where are you?" I replied that I didn't know where we were, but that I did know the number of this public telephone. Could she find out where we were from that? Finally, the operator gave us direction to a motel, and my family prayed and thanked God that night.

When we lost, a map is useless unless we know where on the map we are. Do we really read the Bible to find ourselves in it? Some one says that Bible, the Word of God, is a mail sent us from God. If a mail should be delivered correctly, the mail address should be correct. What is your mail address? Your mail address, for the delivery of God word to you, is "here and now." Bible is the map for your great travel.

The second things, requires for a journey is a car. People for travels need transportation. It helps to get them where they want to go. Transportation is also used for delivery goods from place to place. We are depending on cars. Most families use some kind of transportation. Without a carrier for both people and their luggage, our traveling is impossible.

From cover to cover, from Genesis to Revelation, God is recognized as “the Great Deliverer.” God delivered Noah from the fury of the flood, and the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, and Daniel from the lion’s den. But without question, the greatest delivery was what God did for us “on an old rugged cross,” through the gift of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, our Deliverer! God is great Deliverer. Psalm 107 is a good example: “They cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.”

We all Christians are delivery related people. We are delivery people. I think of a church as being a moving car. The early church Christians thought of it as the boat. The boat is a means of transportation through sea but also the only way to save the people who are struggling in the deep water. Church, the tabernacle, the agent of God’s delivering work. God delivered its people from old Egypt to the new promised land. The church carries transitional luggage from the old to the new. In order to fulfill its mission, church as a car needs to be constantly moving back and forth, back and forth. Thus, a minister is like a deliveryman. One must get up early for such a job.

One morning I woke up at 5 o’clock to go to church for prayer. I thought I was the earliest man who got up for his job. But I found that someone had done his job before me. He had already delivered a news paper Denver Post. I am also a news deliverer: The Good news deliverer. I should have been before any other news delivery person.

I claim that a church must be moving. The Faith United Methodist Church has to move forward. Don’t stop its mission of delivery. We need to put our whole effort into the church. Do we really love the church? The church is a passenger car. Old Christians thought church is the passenger boat. Without a boat a traveling is impossible on sea. Without church we can have the great travel. The church is only means of traveling to God. Therefore, we should support church and its mission of delivery.

Lastly, I claim that the third necessary element of successful journey is guide. Without guide the traveling is not effective and enjoyable. In New Testament time, The Pharisees and the scribes thought themselves that they were the leader and the guide of the lost sheep of Israel. They thought they had more wisdom than anybody. But, Jesus, watching the Pharisees who objected to whatever he said, told his disciples: “let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.”

Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees: “hypocrites! Blind guide! For judgment I am come into world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be blind.” They were blind of faith and blind of Spirit.

Who is our guide? And can he be our guide for the great traveling. The Lord said, “I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”

Comforter, Parakletos in Greek, means counselor, helper, and One called alongside. The Holy Spirit is our guide who walks alongside us. How often do we call the Holy Spirit?

Paul advised a Philippians church member: “If you have encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having same love, being one in spirit and purpose.”(Philippians 2:1-2)

How can we get the Holy Spirit or His guidance? In Ephesians Chapter 6:18, Paul advises us, “Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” Without prayer we can not receive help from the Holy

Spirit. In any church meeting, some lasting over four hours, only a few minutes are devoted to prayer. We need the Holy Spirit as a guide in every occasion.

When the day of Pentecost had come the people gathered together. And when they appeared to Peter, and heard Gospel of Christ, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter, "What shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The phenomena of Holy Spirit experience is the conversion, Metanoia in Greek.

There was no water for the congregation of Moses, so they gathered together against Moses. "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt, to bring us to this wretched place? Give us water. Let us drink water. We are thirsty." Moses lift up his hand and struck the rock with this struck. Then, water came out abundantly. This happen can be possibly by Holy Spirit. Our hearts are as harden as the rock, the rock of unbelief, the rock of pride, and the rock of egoism. If we can hit our heart with struck of repent, the water of hope and joy come out from our broken heart. And our hearts are not thirsty.

I have an experience of a vision to share with you. I received this vision about fifteen years ago. It was winter time. I was so frustrated with my ministry. The membership was not increasing, and the finances were insufficient. So I went to the unheated church alone for some prayer time. I prayed for two hours, and returned home at ten-thirty p.m. I was tired that night, and fell asleep easily. In the middle of the night, I awoke from a strange dream. In dream, the light of the Holy Spirit came into my church. I followed the light closely until it disappeared. This led me to the pulpit, then to an alter, to the pews, and then around the church. The Light finally led me to the play ground. On the play ground there was a seesaw. There was no one on the seesaw, but it was moving. One side went up and then came down as the other came up. As it continued to move, the light of the Holy Spirit shone on the seesaw for a while and then disappeared. When I woke up I looked around and realized that I had been a dream.

I could not sleep anymore until I discovered the dream's meaning. I looked in the Bible and found the meaning 1 Peter Chapter 5 verse 6. The Scripture said: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time." Whenever we are not humble, God cannot be exalted by us. And also whenever God s exalted, he will give us our turn.

Few months later after this dream, I was called by Bishop Swenson to preach during the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference. It was honor to me to be a preacher of annual conference. I preached my first English sermon in my life in front of more than one thousand people in the title; "And He will lift you up" June 4, 1995 at 11:00a.m., for the celebration of Pentecost at the twenty seventh session of the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Again I claim you that you must have the Bible as your map. I claim that you have get on the church as your transportation for your journey. I claim that you should have prayer life to have guidance of the Holy Spirit and I also claim that as we exalt God, as we, on the bottom, cry to Him for our sins, He will lift you up some day.