

“GODS. PLAN. SENDS”

Series: Cliff Notes Week 5

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I really like to think that I'm pretty good with directions. Most of the time I use GPS ... I am really just trying to figure out my ETA to the same 5 places I go. Either way, a GPS... sends you or directs you to a destination. My Apple maps likes to give me assistance by gently reminding me of its presence as soon as I'm seated in the car. Especially with places I travel to at a general time of the day. Of course work pops up so my Apple maps knows I work at Woodside and even what my regular hours are. On Tuesday mornings without fail it tells me I will arrive at 9:01 for sermon team meeting... anyone have a guess when sermon team starts... it's 9 am... thanks for the humble reminder GPS.

It knows lots of other locations too, my house, where I dog sit frequently, the school I coach at, Nathaniel's house and of course the Cava that opened a little bit ago. I didn't even think I liked Mediterranean food, but maps has been so kind as to show me just how frequent of a customer I have really been.

We use GPS because we trust it to send us somewhere.

I'll never forget my graduation from college my Dad calls me, he says Markie... congratulations I'm proud of you... we got you an awesome present. Take some money out of the bank and go to this address to pick it up.... Shows picture of address I was sent ... you may be wondering... was she given the wrong address? And I was thinking the same thing, Vorhees NJ? I have NEVER driven there, I had no idea where I was going... as the anticipation grows for this mystery gift, I drove setting off on a journey I had never been on before. My destination is set, I had quite a drive ahead of me. A place I had never been... turns I didn't know were coming. All I had was the address and the map to guide me. I set off on my journey....

Paul describes our faith like this in Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

“Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal... but I press on.”

I pressed on, knowing my destination by address but needing the GPS to guide my turns.

Paul is saying here “I am not done.”

He took some wrong turns in the beginning, he took a look at the directions God set before him. He recalculated and kept pressing on.

The GPS or in our case is taking us on a lifetime drive with God- trying to reach our destination eternity with Him. You see, His plans, His directions—they send you. That's why the voice you select to speak to you is so important in getting where you want to go... that voice guides you through a lot of turns in this journey to our destination. The directions can guide us but as drivers, we can make a mistake. We can enter the wrong address, set the wrong voice to guide us and never listen to the pesky recalculating. show picture of Mario Kart turn around cloud guy.

I was really bad at Mario Kart so I saw this guy A LOT.

You see the Christian life is hearing that voice change, at one time my directions...we're all guided by my voice... the longer I spent with God the more the directions sound like Him.

At first, I was the voice. I decided what was right. I decided what mattered.

But the more I walked with God... the more His voice became the one I trusted.

The more the directions sound like Him, the less recalculation I end up doing. The more I spend time with him, I loosen my grip on the wheel.

Angle:

The goal doesn't disappear just because you messed up.

God doesn't delete the destination—He recalculates the route.

Maybe it adds a few minutes to your ETA, but with our destination in Heaven in mind, we listen to the navigation. The navigation takes you exactly where you want to go. When I plug in an address into my GPS, I can pick alternate routes. The ways we get there, the roads we take, the roads we travel may look a little different than the other cars on the road, but I can assure you every turn your GPS instructs you to take brings you closer to your arrival.

“Faith is less about staying on the perfect route and more about trusting the One who keeps recalculating with you.”

Confirmation is not about proving you're spiritually strong or certain or mature. It's about saying yes to a journey that keeps going. It's not graduation—it's orientation. When you turn 15 you start to practice driving, your parents sit in the passengers seat and they guide you. Until you decide and PA state decide you are ready to drive. Confirmation works a lot like this. You are stepping out, making faith your own, driving for the first time.

Following Jesus isn't about never taking a wrong turn. It's about trusting God enough to keep going when life recalculates.

Paul describes faith not as something you arrive at, but something you press toward. He uses running language: reaching forward, straining ahead, moving with intention. Faith grows through time, questions, setbacks, courage, and grace.

And then Hebrews gives us this image:

“Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.”

Notice: the race that is set before us.

Not a sprint. Not a competition. Not someone else’s path.

Your race. Your route. with a plugged in destination. I don’t want to claim I was the only one embarking this mystery journey, but I have a pretty good feeling this drive was just mine that day.

Some of you will run fast for a while. Or maybe even be driving on the highway going fast. Some of you will walk. Or be driving through a school zone, slow and steady. Some of you will stop, doubt, or feel lost. Some of you may be following the directions and get mixed up at some road signs just looking for something, anything familiar. And still—God is with you.

The Christian life isn’t about never stumbling; it’s about continuing to move, trusting that grace meets us along the way. Your drive is going to include all these things, and yet we press on. Knowing there is another direction or step ahead We believe deeply that God acts first.

God began the work. God sustains the work. God will carry it forward. Confirmation doesn’t mean you now carry faith on your own—it means you trust that God will keep holding you. So today, don’t hear, “You’ve arrived.” Hear instead: “You are invited.” Invited to keep asking questions. Invited to grow into justice and compassion. Invited to run your race, get in and drive—surrounded by a community, strengthened by grace.

This is not the finish line. It’s the moment you step forward and say: I will keep pressing on. And God says: I will run with you. I will get in the car. I should have asked questions that day.

This weird address took me to some back lot. I called my Dad confused. And as I pressed dial...

I thought to myself... if this is one of those Dad life lessons that comes full circle. I was going to be less than Happy.

He picked up. I had asked where this mystery destination was supposed to bring me... because nothing was around me... turns out I was supposed to head to a different place not much more exciting than an empty lot... put a picture of the store up, another of the vacuum ... the vacuum store to get my very own pet hair destroyer! Happy graduation!!

I have no pets, I lived in a small apartment with no storage but thank you dad for getting me a vacuum I will inevitably use for the rest of my life because I traveled across state lines to get it. But the truth is... I still got where I was supposed to go.

Even when I was confused. Even when I didn’t know the road. Because I had someone guiding me. The place you are headed, confirmation group is so much greater than this, take your time—set your cruise control, listen intently to the directions.

Wrong turns may need recalculating but the destination remains the same. And who knows, maybe God has a nice vacuum waiting in heaven. Pray with me God, we thank You that You are

not a God who leaves us when we get lost. Thank You that You guide us, You stay with us, and You keep calling us forward. Lord, for every student being confirmed today, remind them that this is not the finish line— this is the beginning of a lifetime journey with You.

When we take wrong turns, when we doubt, when we mess up, when we feel far away— help us to hear Your voice again. Help us trust that You don't delete the destination... You recalculate the route. Give us courage to press on. Give us faith to keep going. And remind us that we are never driving alone.

Thank You for Your grace, Your patience, and Your love that sends us forward. We give You our lives, our hearts, and our future. In Jesus' name we pray,