

Combat Christian: Day One

Mission Training: Unit One

Navigation 101

Know Where You Are!

Many years ago there was a Navy flight crew that had launched on a very important mission. Right after takeoff the inertial navigation system experienced a seemingly catastrophic failure. It looked like all was lost until the gnarly old Master Chief Flight Engineer went back to the Navigator's station to investigate. After a couple of minutes he made the following comment to the Navigator: "You know these inertial navigation systems are really smart. But you have to tell them where they are before you tell them where to go!" You see the Navigator had aligned the system using the destination coordinates instead of the coordinates for their point of origin. We too as believers must know where we are before we can know how and where to go.

Key Verse:

"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture." (John 10:9 NIV)

Anytime I see the word "I am" associated with the words of God the Father or God the Son it thrills my heart. For it reminds me of how the blessed Creator identified himself to Moses from the midst of the burning bush.

"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exo 3:14 NIV)

It was subsequent to this experience that the name Jehovah, which means "I AM" came into use. And in the Old Testament we see it often joined with other words in order to describe God as he reveals himself to his people. An example would be, Jehovah-Shalom, which means I am your peace.

In our key verse we have the words of the Lord Jesus Christ declaring that He is the gate to salvation. Interestingly enough His very name declares this. The name Jesus is a contraction of the name Joshua. Joshua is short for Jehovah-heshua. Thus the name Jesus declares "I AM your salvation." Moreover we can see from Scripture that Jesus make reference to this relationship with the "I AM" when He says:

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58 NIV)

Everyone enters into this wonderful salvation by the same way. Jesus is the gate. We all must enter in to His salvation by this gate which is himself. There is no other way. In fact we discover, by reading the beginning of John Chapter 10, that to enter in by any other way would make us thieves and robbers.

So What!

When I was a young man I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to be a Sea Explorer. I was a member of Sea Explorer Ship 225, San Pedro, California. The organization was led by a Navy Warrant Officer named T.N. "Whitey" Chalman, Jr. and his wife. It was their custom,

before we closed any meeting, to gently admonish us to remember who we were and to whom we belonged.

Before we can enter into the battles of the day we must first recognize who we are and to whom we belong! Our salvation is in Jesus Christ. Get it? Our salvation is a person and He is the Lord Jesus Christ. Our salvation is not an it. It is not some mere thing that we can misplace or loose. We entered into this salvation through the gate provided by this selfsame Jesus. On this we can depend. On this we must depend because Jesus is the "gate." There is no other way.

Said another way: How can we journey forth into a new day with a new destination until we first know where we are? How can we know where we are until we know where we have been and how we got there? We came via a life of sin to the gate of salvation which is the Lord Jesus Christ.