

# Avoiding Shipwreck

I've always enjoyed being around and on water. For more than 20 years, Lola and I owned a ski boat and we spent a lot of time on beautiful Lake Ocoee in Polk County, Tenn. Earlier this year, we had the privilege of spending several days on a boat visiting islands in the Puget Sound. We've been on several cruises in the Caribbean, and loved them.

When it comes to sailing on the high seas, you must know three important facts: your location, your destination, and your course. By referring to a map and using a compass, experienced sailors end up where they want to go.



The hard part comes in determining where one is at any given moment. Foul weather creates conditions that can sometimes confuse sailors. I read about someone who set out across Lake Michigan from Milwaukee to Grand Haven. After sailing for two hours, trusting his own sense of direction, he spotted a large city on the horizon. It was Milwaukee! Somehow, thinking he was heading east, he had gone in a huge circle.

How does a follower of Christ stay on course and avoid spiritual shipwreck?

It is an important question to ponder as we prepare to enter the year 2012. The answer has three parts:

1. Carefully read and follow the directions in God's Word, the Bible. It becomes our compass.
2. Depend on the leading of the Holy Spirit.
3. Listening to the wise counsel of Christian friends.

Following those steps will keep us from going in circles, and make wise use of the time allotted to us in the New Year.

– Beecher Hunter