

Surrounded by Sharks

Reader's Digest reported the story of Walter Wyatt Jr., who took off in his Beechcraft airplane on Dec. 5, 1986, for a flight from Nassau to Miami – a trip that normally took only 65 minutes.

He did so despite the fact that thieves had looted the navigational equipment in the plane. With only a compass and a hand-held radio, Wyatt flew into skies blackened by storm clouds. When his compass began to gyrate, Wyatt concluded he was headed in the wrong direction. He flew his plane below the clouds, hoping to spot something, but soon he knew he was lost.

He put out a Mayday call, which brought a Coast Guard Falcon search plane to lead him to an emergency landing strip only six miles away. Suddenly, Wyatt's right engine coughed its last and died. The fuel tank had run dry.

Wyatt could do little more than glide the plane into the water. Wyatt survived the crash, but his plane disappeared quickly, leaving him bobbing in the water in a leaky life vest. With blood on his forehead, Wyatt floated on his back. Suddenly, he felt a hard bump against his body. A shark had found him.



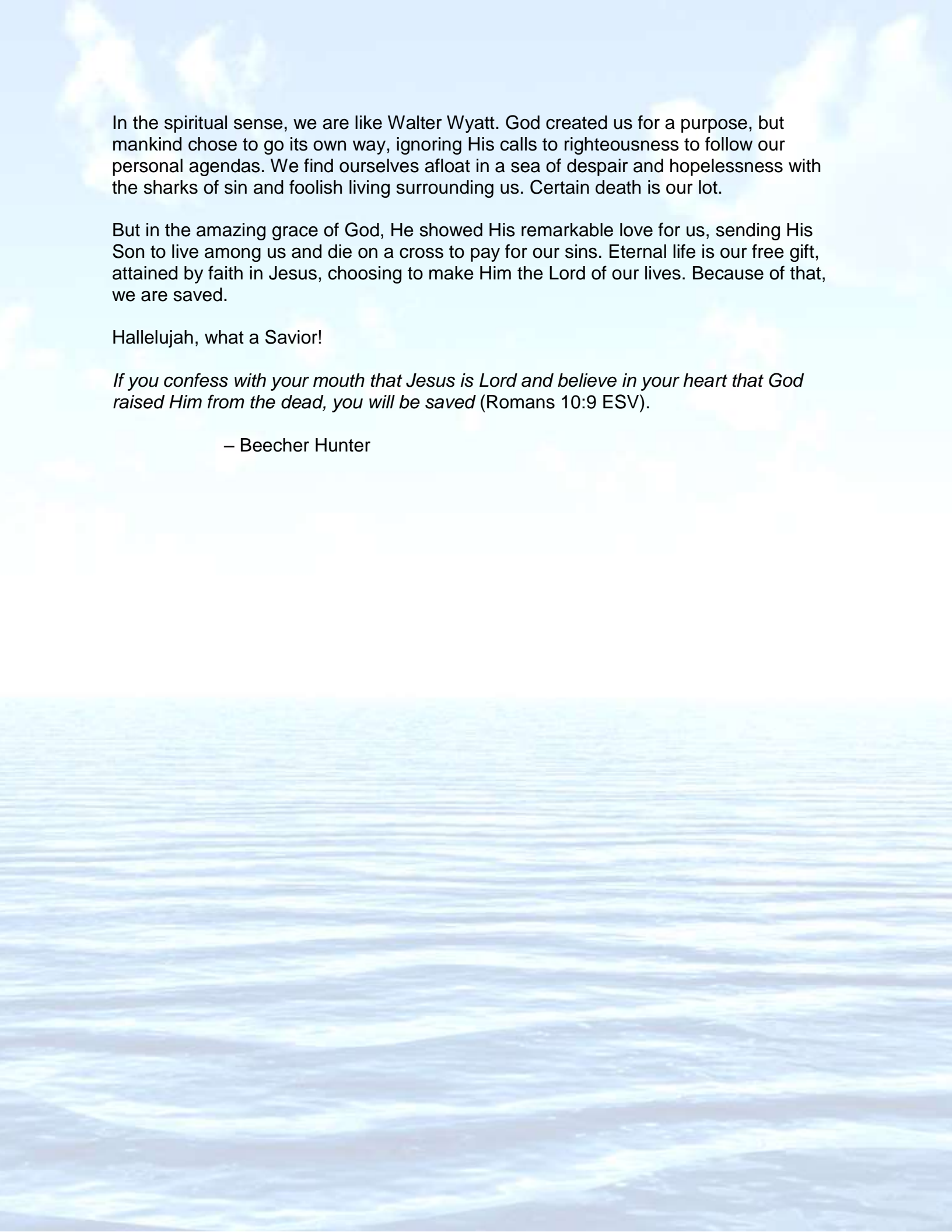
Wyatt kicked the intruder and wondered if he would survive the night. He managed to stay afloat for the next 10 hours. In the morning, Wyatt saw no airplanes, but in the water a dorsal fin was headed for him. Twisting, he felt the hide of a shark brush against him. In a moment, two more bull sharks sliced through the water toward him. Again, he kicked the sharks, and they veered away, but he was nearing exhaustion.

Then he heard the sound of a distant aircraft. When it was within a half-mile, he waved his orange vest. The pilot radioed the *Cape York*, which was 12 minutes away: "Get moving, cutter! There's a shark targeting this guy!"

As the *Cape York* pulled alongside Wyatt, a Jacob's ladder was dropped over its side. Wyatt climbed wearily out of the water and onto the ship, where he fell to his knees and kissed the deck. He'd been saved.

He didn't need encouragement or better techniques. Nothing less than outside intervention could have rescued him from sure death.

(more)



In the spiritual sense, we are like Walter Wyatt. God created us for a purpose, but mankind chose to go its own way, ignoring His calls to righteousness to follow our personal agendas. We find ourselves afloat in a sea of despair and hopelessness with the sharks of sin and foolish living surrounding us. Certain death is our lot.

But in the amazing grace of God, He showed His remarkable love for us, sending His Son to live among us and die on a cross to pay for our sins. Eternal life is our free gift, attained by faith in Jesus, choosing to make Him the Lord of our lives. Because of that, we are saved.

Hallelujah, what a Savior!

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter