



# Reference Point

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### ASSOCIATION of CHRISTIAN LIBRARIANS®

### **How Did I End Up Here?**

My first niece was born in January of this year, and, as a doting new aunt, I took a vacation day to make the three-hour trek to meet the newest member of our growing family. I woke up early, packed my bags, and hopped on the road, jittery with excitement and an excessive amount of caffeine. I had written down the directions, checked a map (I'm a bit old-school, even for a 26-year-old), and set my course to some road trip music. After thirty minutes of belting out JJ Heller and Caedmon's Call lyrics and taking in a beautiful sunrise, I noticed I wasn't seeing any more signs to my destination. I had missed my exit to get on the next highway! "How did I end up here?!" I thought to myself. I succumbed to the 21st century by whipping out my smartphone and opening the GPS app. Fortunately, after a short detour, I was back on track.

As I examine this experience, a few details stand out. First, I was not lost. I knew where I was; I just hadn't meant to go there. Second, I didn't get off course on purpose. Rather, I *neglected to pay attention* to the signs and was distracted by other things.

I'm reminded of the admonition given in the book of Hebrews that exhorts against *spiritual* negligence: "For this reason, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Hebrews 2:1-3a)

As I drove to see my niece, I found myself in a place I didn't want to be; I didn't *pay attention* to the direction I was going. I also carelessly and thoughtlessly missed my exit. I *drifted* off course and away from my goal. I *neglected* to focus on my path and direction. Although I greatly desired to get to my destination and meet my new niece, I didn't *behave* in a way that demonstrated that desire.

I believe my experience, coupled with this convicting passage in Hebrews, is an accurate representation of what happens when believers are not proactive and purposeful in their relationship with the Lord. I am firmly convinced that we do not earn our salvation, nor can it be taken from us, but I know that distractions can prevent me from being effective for the Lord and can cause me to drift into apathy and sin, to the point where I ask myself, "How did I end up here?" May you and I heed the exhortation in Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful." May we intentionally guard against spiritual drifting and neglect by holding fast to the glorious gospel as our anchor and reference point!

-Beth Young

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