

Where Am I?



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I used to be so pro at getting lost.

I could barely make it to South Bend without taking a three hour tour of Northern Indiana. Then I got a very helpful device ... a son with a keen sense of direction. Picture a four year old with a map, in a car seat, directing us down the Ohio Turnpike en-route to Dayton, Ohio (pre-GPS days).

Sorta reminds me of the Israelites.

They started in Egypt, and turned a 9 day trip into a 40 year trek. FINALLY they made it to the Promised Land. The thing is, they had their own GPS. You could say it was in the Cloud—the pillar of Cloud. God.

Sorta reminds me of my life.

I started in “Egypt,” got delivered, and spent the next 20 years wandering around in the messed up wilderness of ME until

God sent a deliverer to lead me out. Actually, I think we can all relate. We are in one of four stages: in Egypt, En route, Wandering, or in the Promised Land.

How can you tell? Read the descriptions below and note the hashtags.

You could be:

- **In Egypt: #slavery.** *So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field.* Exodus 1: 13-14. Both the saved and unsaved can live in “Egypt.” Life here is marked by slavery to sin, fear or pleasing others. If you’re living in Egypt you have no ministry, no fruit, no peace, no joy. You may not even know you are in Egypt, you just know something is very wrong with your life. Thankfully, you don’t need to stay there. God always sends a deliverer!
- **En Route: #progress.** *And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.* Exodus 13:1
If you are en route you are definitely saved. You could be a brand new Christian, or saved for years, but you are finally following Jesus.
[A life en route is marked by change. God is moving you and moving in you.](#)



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You discover new talents and interests. Your relationships shift. You might find yourself considering a new job. People notice you are changing and not everyone is happy with you. This stage is usually marked by warfare, but God has given you the victory. It is a exciting/scary/growing/risky time of life, but it is good!

- **Wandering: #self.** *The Israelites had moved about in the wilderness forty years until all the men who were of military age when they left Egypt had died, since they had not obeyed the LORD.* Joshua 5:6
I hate this place. It's almost worse than being in Egypt. You know better, but you try it anyway. Wandering is marked by living for self, and following "your heart" (which is deceitful above all things). The world applauds while God laments and waits. You Rationalize. You disobey. Wandering drains your resources, wastes your gifts, and leaves you empty. Consequences dog your steps. The waking up is painful as you realize what a fool you've been. BUT, you are two words away from getting back on track with God: Repentance. Obedience.
- **Promised Land: #God.** *And He said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it."* Genesis 15:7.

Promised Land living is flowing with purpose. It's all about God. His will. His way. His plans. If you are living in the *Promised Land*, He is all over

everything you do. You pray different. You want different. You live different. God has you involved in one or two specific ministries where you are using your gifts. You also take advantage of everyday opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus to others. Nobody makes it to the Promised Land on their own. You need Jesus, the church and a few good friends who speak truth. Life in the Promised Land is full and good and hard and challenging and whole and fruitful.

If you don't like the stage you're in, you're only a decision away from making a change.

Pending on where your "living" right now you may need to: Say no. Say yes. Move on. Move out. Start something. Stop something. Give it up. Give it back. Pick it up. Put it down. Plant some seeds. Pull some weeds. Leave. Stay. Accept. Reject. Speak up. Speak out. Forgive others. Forgive yourself. Try hard. Try harder. Work. Rest. Lead. Follow. Open His word and your heart. Ask God to show you what to do and obey what He says.

Wherever you are, follow God with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

I'd love to pray for you about where you are in life with God. Please leave me a comment in the comment section below!

Mary Kane

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Short & Sweet: U-turn



“You just passed the road,”

Morgan said as I breezed by our turn. We were driving home from a middle school retreat at Bair Lake on a beautiful September afternoon. The long shadows of late summer played upon the fields and forests. Winding through the peaceful Midwest cornfields, on back country roads, dotted with weathered barns and farmhouses, we chatted about this and that. Until I passed our turn.

I had to make a quick decision. If I kept going, we would go well out of our way, turning our leisurely drive into a frantic haul to make it back to school before the bus load of kids. I decided to make a u-turn.

U-turn: a quick redirect in the opposite direction.

One minute you're heading east and the next minute you're

heading west. A bad choice rectified with one good decision. A bold move is all it takes to change your course. I've blown past the right turn in my lifetime too. Enjoying life in the fast lane, I've ended up lost. Endless detours. Enormous potholes. Living a wrecked life. The highway to hell—an old super-highway. Yep, I have been on that road.

Thankfully, God allows U-turns.

U-turn yourself around.

U-get back on the straight and narrow.

U-follow-God kind of U-turns.

Funny thing is, every U-turn begins at a Cross-road. U-meet Jesus at the Cross-road and U-turn from living your own way and U-follow Him. U-gotta love Him. One minute you're on a dead-end road, spinning your tires, and the next you're heading to the Promised Land.

Where are you headed?

Are you going the right way? Remember, the road you're traveling will end somewhere. Make sure you're headed in the right direction. There's only one way—His way.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me.

U-Turn Steps:

1. **U-stop.** Take some time to stop and take stock of your life. Is the direction you're heading in now going to take you where you want to end up?
2. **U-look.** Look at your habits. How you are spending your time, money and resources.
3. **U-listen.** Get alone with God and listen to what He has

to say about the direction you're headed.

4. **U-turn.** You make decisions based on the truth of God's word and u-turn from what doesn't line up with his truth. No matter how inconvenient, no matter how painful, no matter how messy, u-turn right now. **Note:** God will never call you to do anything against His word. Pray and turn.

What is God calling U to turn from? Leave me a comment in the Comment Section below!

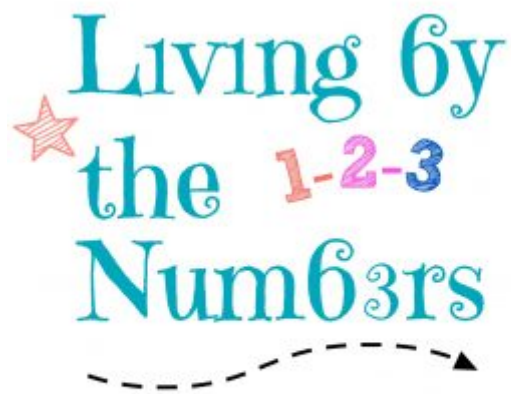
Life is sweet when u-turn and follow Jesus.

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Short & Sweet: Living by the Numbers



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Facebook. Twitter. Snapchat. It's all about the numbers. How do you rank?

1 Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel. 2 So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it."... 7 And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel. 8 So David said to God, "I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

1 Chronicles 21: 1-2, 7-8

David was stressing about the numbers.

Were they big enough, strong enough, tough enough to stand against their enemies? David was listening to the enemy. Ironic isn't it? The Enemy tempts us to worry about our enemies. Eyes off God. Eyes on our enemies. Fixating on the numbers causes big trouble.

In David's case—death.

In our case, death of our peace, health and at times even our witness.

I have been there with David.

Placing my worth, my value, my success, my strength on the numbers—the likes on my memes, the hits on my posts or the views on Youtube. Like us on Facebook, follow us on twitter, snap, tweet, post, hangout, Skype, join our tribe, brand it. YOLO baby. It's all about the numbers!

Why doesn't God want us to focus on numbers? Because with God numbers don't matter. You, plus God is a majority no matter the opposition. It's David against the Philistines. Gideon vs. the Midianites. Elijah in a throw-down with the Prophets of Baal.

Life by the numbers.

If we focus on the numbers, we are like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the winds of popularity. When our numbers are high, we are riding a wave of happiness. When they are low, we are in the deep.

[With Jesus success is not based on numbers—it's based on obedience.](#)



[Tweet This](#)

The need to constantly count numbers indicates a lack of faith. It is walking by sight and not by faith. We make decisions based on manpower and God is left out of the equation. No miracles. No glory.

Numbering keeps us wandering.

Satan wants us to focus on and measure our success by the numbers. If we are obsessed by who's following us, we will no longer be concerned about Who we're following. Our eyes are off God and on the people, what's trending, and the hottest viral video. The ring of a notification eclipses the Still Small Voice. But, it's not about *followers* it's about following.

With God, only one number matters: ONE

The One and only Living God.

The One True God.

The Holy One.

We can all count to ONE.

Action Points:

1. **Unplug.** Turn off the media. For one day let Facebook and Snapchat go on without you.
2. **Obey.** Pray and ask God what HE wants you to do about a situation you're facing. Don't check what's trending, what's popular or going viral. Do what God says.
3. **Be.** Be yourself. Be free. Be who God created you to be (Note: this will never go against His word).

Life is sweet.

Mary Kane

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Short & Sweet: Cross-eyed by Mary Kane



Nourishment and
refreshment for your
soul.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:1-2

While we are walking out our life on this earth, a great cloud

of witnesses have their **eyes** on us. In order to walk correctly, we need lay aside any distraction and every sin, that clouds our vision and keep our eyes on Jesus. Their eyes are on us. Our eyes are on Jesus. Eyes on the cross. **Cross-eyed.**

Scientific research proves where the eyes go, the body follows ([Research Article](#)). Therefore, if we keep our eyes on the **cross**, we will follow Jesus.

Verse 2 uses the term *looking unto Jesus*, which transliterates into one Greek word, *aphorao*. *Aphorao* means “to turn the eyes away from other things and fix them on something, to turn ones mind.” *Aphorao* descends from another verb *horao*, which means “to see with the eyes and mind, to become acquainted with by experience, to perceive, to know. ”

Mind ... body ... eyes. All connected. All leading somewhere. Eyes on Jesus. Eyes on His word. Eyes on the cross.

Cross-eyed.

Action Points:

1. Are you **cross-eyed**?
2. What is getting in the way of seeing Jesus? Do you need to lay something aside?
3. What do you think about and meditate on? What do you fill your mind with?
4. Do you know Jesus? How can you get to know Him better?

Life is sweet!

Mary Kane

Short & Sweet: Paths and Ways

by Mary Kane



Nourishment and
refreshment for your
soul.

Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see,

*And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in
it;*

Then you will find rest for your souls.

But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

Jeremiah 6:16

As Christians, we should not be threatened by other religions or world views. God calls us to stand in the ways and see. The word see, in the original Hebrew means, "to observe, to consider, to give attention to, to learn about. This does not mean we should try every "-ism and -ology" before accepting the truth of Christianity. We are to "take a stand" in face of all the other ways and **ask** for the **old paths**, where the **way** is good and **walk** in it. Be assured, God's **way** will bear testing and scrutiny and be found to be absolute truth. For greater comprehension, please study the following words from our verse in the original language.

Hebrew Words:

ask: in Hebrew *sha'al*, which means "to enquire carefully, to

ask of God." Our salvation comes from the Lord.

old: in Hebrew *owlam*, which is defined as "everlasting, evermore, perpetual eternity." The old is always relevant.

walk: in Hebrew *yalak*, which translates "a manner of life, a way of living, to die." Christianity is a spiritual birth to death commitment.

Remember, there are *ways*, and then there is the *good way*. Jesus is the **Way**; the good **path**. Let's choose the **Way** that will last for eternity, with no unpleasant surprises in the end. When we choose His **path**, we'll find rest for our souls.

Action Points:

1. Ask for the good **way** concerning your current challenge.
2. How can you walk more closely to Jesus?
3. If anyone followed the current **path** of your life, where would it lead?

To start your journey with Jesus, please click on the link below:

Following Jesus

Life is sweet!

Mary Kane