



**Volume XXXIV**  
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*“...a net...cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.”* **Matthew 13:47**

**Number 5**

**IT ALL WENT SOUTH**—Have you ever heard this expression? Let me give you an example. Over a year ago I was diagnosed with a troubled gall bladder. The prognosis was to remove it immediately. The surgeon came to my bedside, looked at my tummy area, and said, “By utilizing laparoscopy, you’ll be on your way home in no time.” The next day in the operating room I was put to sleep with a good Bible verse on my mind, and then it happened—it all went South! A previous surgery I had had when I was a baby had left an abundance of scar tissue in my abdomen that prevented the “simple” way for surgery. So a tiny “hole” turned out to be a 12-inch cut across the muscles of my tummy. Looking inside to simply remove the gall bladder also “went South”. Because of the scar tissue it was hard to find, and then it was all decayed and even part of it stuck to my liver.

What about you? I’ve even seen this in my work in the past (commercial fishing). When harvesting an abundance of seafood, things quickly went South through equipment trouble, weather changing for the worse, or news that the price of the catch had dropped. The expression comes from points on a compass or on a map with “North” pointing up and “South” pointing down. You understand that the expression “went South” means “turned bad”.

The expression can also be seen in a spiritual way (concerning our relationship to God). I’ve heard stories of people who experienced similar situations. A clergyman declared that if one would only believe in God, one’s health would return....well, it went South. The promise that financial security would follow a believer in God...it went South also. Need I go on? Is there some problem with God? No, not at all. The problem comes through trusting the words of men. Our only help with good promises comes from God’s Word. Nowhere in the Bible does it say if you believe in God He will fix up all the bad areas of your life. I trust you understand.

Many a person has walked through death’s door trusting in “things”, even themselves, and found out “it all went South”. One such case is found in Luke 16:22,23, *“...the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...”*. What a tragedy! His trust was in his riches and it took him due South. Years ago I chose to trust the trustworthy One, Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:13 says, *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation...”*. This trust will bring me to the city of the great king, which happens to be on the sides of the NORTH, not South (Psalm 48:2). I hope your trust is in the same person.

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**GLORY BOATS**—I read a story recently about Joel Schmidt, whose father (74) had taken a fall while on a

construction site and had broken most of his ribs. He was rushed to the hospital, and Joel understood this could be the end for his dad. He had no idea if his dad had made any funeral arrangements, but his dad assured him he had insurance for such. Joel said to his dad, “If you hadn’t told me about your policy, I might have just buried you in your old fishing boat.” The idea seemed good and took root and resulted in the founding of “Glory Boats Inc.”. The company builds and supplies funeral caskets that look like a scaled down version of an aluminum Jon boat. You can see pictures of such at [www.gloryboats.com](http://www.gloryboats.com).

To this writer they look fitting for the avid angler and reasonably priced compared to the normal casket. Even though I think it is important to care for our loved ones at death and provide a proper burial for them, the most important issue is where they will spend eternity. You cannot bury a “soul”, only a body. For the believer in 2 Corinthians 5:8, the writer says, *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”* What an end! Our body viewed by our loved ones (maybe in a Glory Boat), but better our soul saved and in the presence of God in true “Glory”. 1 Corinthians 15:43, *“It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in **glory**; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power”*. Colossians 3:4, *“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in **glory**.”* Are you prepared?

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**MOTTO TO LIVE BY**—Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive box and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and screaming, “WOO HOO, what a ride God has given!”

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**THE GREAT OUTDOORS**—America is sick today because she has gone indoors. The woods and rivers were God’s first temples. I am not much impressed with the fever of modern progress. We have exchanged the glory of the outdoors for stuffy offices and city apartments, and have reaped a generation of provincial anemics. Indoors is the breeding ground of intolerance, disease and crime. Most of our ever-increasing criminals, suicides and lunatics might have been saved by a good course of woodcraft.

I know that our present economic and industrial world is so arranged that we cannot all dwell under our own vine and fig tree, and I have no scheme by which to give every family a farm and a country home. But I do know that as you take men away from the outdoors and make our cities the mecca of our youth, you are pursuing a policy that has always had unpleasant consequences. I am still enough of a boy that I get the itch to go fishing, to see the robins come

in Spring, the azaleas bloom, and to listen to the whippoorwill sing his vespers at the shrine of the setting sun. Of course I do not worship such (only the Creator), but rejoice that I still behold its majesty.

--Vance Havner

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**WRONG WAY**—Two men and a youth, Arnold Dobson, Harold Most, and his son, Harold Jr., perished in the blazing summer heat of the Death Valley area. Sheriff deputies found their bodies seven, fourteen, and seventeen miles from an abandoned car. In leaving their stranded car to seek help, the three had tragically headed in the wrong direction, going toward a ranch house they had passed thirty miles back. Just a mile in the other direction was a grove of willows and a spring!

The shores of time are strewn with those who went in the wrong direction, taking the way of spiritual darkness and death. *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death”* (Proverbs 14:12).

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**THE BEND IN THE RIVER**—Some people have the idea that when their life has run its course and they take their last breath, they will no longer exist. But more—much more—lies ahead!

Frank W. Boreham (1871-1959) illustrates this in his book Wisps of Wildfire. “A few weeks ago, in a small boat, I was making my way up one of the most picturesque of our Australian rivers. The forestry on both banks was magnificent beyond description. A canoe glided ahead of us. Presently the waters seemed to come to an end. We watched the canoe, and to our astonishment, it simply vanished! When we came to the point at which the canoe had so mysteriously disappeared, we beheld a sudden twist in the river artfully concealed by the tangle of bush. The blind alley was no blind alley after all!”

Then, making reference to believers who had died, Boreham observed, “They have gone on, like the canoe. It had turned a bend in the river; they have turned a bend in the road.” Life may seem to end at death. At that “bend in the river,” however, the Christian is introduced into a new world where life at its best is enjoyed throughout the eternal ages. But all who have rejected Christ will face God’s judgment. John 3:18, *“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”* What awaits you beyond the bend in the river?

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**SEA LION AND SEA GULL**—The sea lion is probably the clumsiest animal in the world. He likes to bask in the sun all day, and when he moves he is exceedingly sluggish and awkward. It has often been wondered how this animal manages to secure his favorite food, wild seafoal. Sea gulls are so wild that it is difficult even for man to get within gunshot of them.

The sea lion seems to realize that it would be a waste of time to attempt to crawl upon the gulls as they rest upon the water and catch them unawares. So he watches until the gulls are soaring slowly

through the air, close to the waves. Then the sea lion dives into the sea and swims underneath the water for some distance from the point at which he dived, and allows merely the tip of his great nose to appear above the water.

Remaining in this position, he gives his enormous body a rotary motion so that his nose describes a circle on the surface of the ocean. He does this so skillfully that to the gull his nose looks like a small fish. This catches the gull’s eye and it at once darts down with the speed of an arrow, aiming straight for the little dot. The sea lion sees it coming and sinks a few inches, and as the gull strikes the water with tremendous force, the sea lion’s jaws close upward and the gull disappears.

Many a swirl is made in the water of life by Satan to lure mankind. Beneath the surface of sin you will always find the real sea lion! 1 Peter 5:8, *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”*

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**SHOOTING THE BREEZE**—The blessings of living along the coastal areas of the world are numerous. One of the biggest is the breeze, especially during the hot summer months. Sitting out under a shade tree near the water or on a pier in the late afternoon can be relaxing and refreshing. Warm air is not so bad if it is moving, but let it get still—warm and humid—and a breeze sure makes a difference! The “breeze” is good, so why would a person want to shoot it? When I was a child it was a long time before I understood what the old-time fishermen were saying. One would accuse the other of just shooting the breeze, but—with what? I never saw a gun of any kind! Little did I know that it was his MOUTH he was shooting with. My! My! The “bullets” had written on their sides **BOASTING, FOOLISHNESS, EXAGGERATION, LIES, etc.** These people not only “shot the breeze” but occasionally I would hear that they even “shot the bull”.

In the Bible, Job had these breeze-shooters around. He said, *“How long wilt thou speak these things? And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like A STRONG WIND?”* (Job 8:2). The tongue, whose house is the mouth, is quite a weapon. Biblically it is of very high caliber, powerful and destructive as the fires of hell (James 3:6). Old so-and-so is just “shooting the breeze”. Yes, it is a nautical expression, but it sure hits the nail on the head for many of us—even your writer! Let’s enjoy the breeze, not shoot it!

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#### **FISHY HUMOR**

Sunday School Teacher—“Who decreed that all the world should be taxed?”

Fisherman’s son—“The democrats!”

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Two fishermen were talking; one was very fat and the other very thin.

“From the looks of you,” said the fat fisherman, “there might have been a famine.”

“Yes,” was the reply, “and from the looks of you, you might have caused it!”

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Steward—“Shall I send you some dinner, sir?”

Seasick Man—“No, just throw it overboard and save me the trouble.”

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**FISHY QUESTION**—Last edition’s question was, “Why do Chinese men eat more fish than American men?” Because there are more Chinese men than American men! For this edition figure this one out. A boy and a doctor are fishing. The boy is the doctor’s son, but the doctor isn’t the boy’s father. Who then is the doctor?