

Lost

by Jeremy Miller



The goal was to traverse Highway 50 from Pueblo, Colorado to Hutchinson, Kansas. It's the kind of trip you want to take with your 15 year old who needs driving hours to earn their license. The highway is long, curve-less, absent of distraction, and sports rumble strips down each of its wide lanes. Furthermore, in the days before GPS, it was the kind of trip one could do without looking at a map. All you had to do was keep your tires on the highway.

Brown grass clusters dotted the empty landscape. Miles of fence posts kept precise time as they danced along the endless trail of asphalt stretched out ahead of us. No trees, no hills, just an enormous sky and the quiet hum of our little car's motor. The radio was silent and the passengers were sound asleep. When one is alone out on the open prairie, one is forced to reckon with their thoughts. And reckon I did. I reckoned for a long while, in fact. I was still reckoning when my wife's friend, Amy, stirred in the back seat. "Where are we?" she asked. My mind snapped back to its present surroundings. "Uhh... somewhere in Kansas, I'm not exactly sure which town we are closest too," I replied. We sat in silence for several minutes. Then I heard her ask, "Jeremy, why are we in Oklahoma?" I noticed she spoke with a "tone" that frequently accompanies bothered people. "She probably is just tired and should go back to sleep," I thought to myself. "Wait, did she say Oklahoma?"

"Amy, did you say Oklahoma?" I asked, glancing at my rearview mirror. "We aren't in Oklahoma, Highway 50 doesn't run through Oklahoma."

"The sign back there said we were in Oklahoma," she stated rather matter-of-factly.

Our conversation had been quiet, but there is something about tension that mysteriously seems to engage even the

deepest of sleepers. Suddenly everyone was awake and the once peaceful car was abuzz with animated discussion and a large crinkled up atlas being passed between people and seats. I sensed in my spirit a very different kind of reckoning occurring. I kept driving down the road, just in case Amy was wrong...and partly because people are slightly less aggressive toward those in the driver's seat of a moving car. Alas, a green and white sign several miles down the highway confirmed the chaos in the car was not unwarranted. After several minutes spent determining where on earth we were, followed by immensely profound questions like, "how could this possibly happen?", and concluding with several statements about the extreme inconvenience this was to everyone, we finally had the nose of our car pointed toward home.

The entire scene is *now* comical to all of us who were a part of it. However, in those moments of lostness, I easily recall the tensions and frustrations pressurizing the entire event. Most of us don't care to be lost. When we are lost, what we really have lost is control. We no longer feel like we control our own destiny. We have also lost a sense of security. We fear things won't work out like we had hoped. We fear we will encounter things that will harm us. When we feel out of control, it unnerves us, often leading us to say and do things we later regret.

The irony is that in our most bewildering seasons of life, God is often doing the deepest and most dramatic restoration of our soul. What soul has truly learned to trust God in all ways but has never felt the terror of helplessness? What soul has learned the faithfulness of God's provision without ever having faced crippling need? When we are out of answers, we kneel before him and wait. When we are fearful, we are forced to decide whether or not we trust him. Lostness is a gift.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." – Jesus

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