

NIGHT FLIGHT

Intent of the Story:

- ✓ *Technology, science, and mere material means will not suffice to guide us in life.*
- ✓ *Man alone, left to their natural powers will not be able to reach the shores of eternal life.*
- ✓ *We need God and supernatural realities to keep us on track. God will never fail us*
- ✓ *Prayer and knowledge of God are necessary means to a successful living*

THE STORY

Once upon a time, there was an airplane traversing the Atlantic Ocean at night. The passengers were having a grand time enjoying a luxurious meal. The playing of soft music created an atmosphere of peace and well-being.

All of a sudden, the communication and directional systems of the plane failed to respond. There was a blackout in the panel of instruments!

The Flight Engineer could not set things right. The Pilot was in a panic. How could he reach his destination? No land-marks, pitch dark night, over the limitless ocean!

Promptly, the Captain made an announcement:

"If there is an expert in electronics and communication systems among the passengers, kindly identify yourself to the Captain!"

After some anxious moments an unknown passenger got up and walked into the cockpit.

The pilot asked:

"Are you an expert in electronics and communication systems?"

The passenger replied:

"No sir, I know nothing at all about such things!" In anger and ill-humor pilot shouted at him: "Then, why do you come here at all?"

The stranger calmly replied:

"But, sir, tell me what's the problem!? I may help. "The pilot shouted even more angrily: If you do not know a thing about electronics and communications, please; be gone! I have no use of you!" Very politely, the passenger requested again:

"Kindly, tell me what the problem is. I told you that I may help"

The pilot blurted out

Can't you see? All the directional instruments in the panel are gone off. We do not know where we are going. We are lost over the Ocean! And it's night!"

Very peacefully the stranger replied:

"Of Course, I can help you! There is something that never fails. It never failed and it will never, never fail!"

In disbelief, the Captain asked: "What? What's this?"

"The heavens, my dear!" the stranger replied: "The skies! The stars! Quickly, show me the route map over the ocean and our point of destination."

That passenger, who looked like an ordinary man, was an astronomer. He knew the skies as the palm of his hand. He sat next to the pilot with the map on his lap, his eyes glued to the heavens. He surely and steadily directed the pilot in his flight.

At dawn, the plane landed safely on the dot of time at its place of destination.

HINTS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

Ask the participants to write a short commentary on the meaning of the story. The main thoughts to surface will likely be the following

Comment on them:

- Throughout life we are on a journey. From birth to death we are on a flight.
- Our final destination is the Kingdom of God, Heaven.
- Very often we fly over dark and lonely skies. We need help direction and guidance.
- Human means alone - friends, money, material goods, machines, prosperity, and technology - often fail us. We cannot rely on them only.
- Our personal human efforts and abilities will often let us down too. We are not almighty and all-knowing.
- God and the heavens, however, never fail.
- Scientists and technicians alone cannot save us, nor the world, we need men of God, saintly people who study the "skies" and contemplate divine realities to lead us on and the world to safety.
- To reach our final destination we have to raise our eyes above human and earthly realities and consult the "skies". We have to pray.
- As long as we keep attentively looking at God, we shall never lack guidance and direction in life.