

# Dive In: The Doldrums

For hundreds of years, the world was connected by sailboats. Sailing (or rowing) was the most efficient way to cross the large expanses of sea for travel, trade, or war. Sailboats have one fatal flaw, however, that led to their replacement by motorboats. If there was no wind, there was no movement.

The doldrums is a region stretching around the world's equator that, due to low air pressure, has very calm winds. Sometimes winds disappear entirely, trapping sailors for weeks at a time in the blistering heat.

The doldrums could be a sailor's worst nightmare! In the famous poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Samuel Taylor Coleridge described what it was like.

*Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.  
Water, water, every where,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Nor any drop to drink.*

Doldrums could kill a crew if it held them long enough. You could have a million-dollar sailboat and the best-trained crew in the world, but without wind, that sailboat would sit and bob like a buoy.

There are many things that depend on something else to function properly. Cars need gas. No matter how cool its rims are or how high its spoiler, a car without gas is a useless heap of metal. Computers need power. A \$3,000 Mac with all the best software is nothing but an overpriced Frisbee if its battery won't work.

We're like that, too. We need an external "power source" to become who we are meant to be and to fulfill our purpose in life. We need fuel! We need God. We need grace. Grace doesn't just help us to become "religious"; it helps us to function the way God intended.

Today we're going to talk about what grace is and how God gives it to us.

*"Totally love him, who  
gave himself totally for  
your love."*

*—St. Clare of Assisi*

