

Letting God Drive

I have a problem in my marriage. That's okay; Marita has the same problem. We both find it very hard to sit in the passenger seat while the other one is driving. Sometimes, I'm driving, with complete control of the car, and Marita practically screeches from the passenger seat. It scares me to death. "What is your problem?" I cry. "I'm sorry," she responds, "I just thought you were going into the other lane." "Come on, Marita; I know how to drive."

In all fairness, I do the same. Although I've learned to control the screeching and the sudden intake of breath, I'm still constantly pushing the imaginary brake on the passenger side or grasping the handle for dear life. Sometimes, I even close my eyes so I can't see how close we're getting to the cars ahead of us before she puts on the brakes. Of course, my bigger fear is that she'll make a wrong turn because she is pretty directionally challenged.

What is really interesting about this is that both of us are capable drivers. I know she understands how the brakes work. I know she's never rear-ended anybody. She, perhaps, has a little more justification in her fears. After all, I am the guy who swerved to miss something in the road and accidentally smashed our mirror on a mailbox. I am the guy who has gotten into a conversation and accidentally run red lights. However, I haven't been in a wreck in over 15 years. Of course, she did back into a parked car recently, so maybe I have some justification, too.

What is the real problem? Lack of control. When I'm in the driver's seat, I know exactly how much pressure is being applied to the brakes. I have a better perspective on the lines of the road. I'm more in charge of how fast we are going. When I'm in the driver's seat, I'm in control. When I'm in the passenger's seat, I'm not. I want to be in complete control.

Interestingly, my children don't seem to have this problem. They sit in their seats without a care in the world. They never squeal. They never gasp. They never push imaginary brakes. In fact, I remember as a child I never had trouble with those control issues either. As a child, I simply trusted that my parents knew what they were doing in that car and knew where they were going.

I wonder if this is part of what Jesus had in mind in **Matthew 18:3** when He said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

I'm pretty sure this is a problem I have spiritually, too. I don't want God to drive. Don't get me wrong. In my intellectual mind, I admit God knows best. I admit His way works. I admit He has my best interests at heart. However, when push comes to shove, when the car is careening toward oncoming traffic and His foot seems miles from the brakes, I want to jump into the driver's seat and take over. In my head, I want to trust God. In my gut, I want control. I want to manipulate how everything is going to work out. When trouble is on the horizon in my family, my congregation, my work, my life, I let my stomach get turned in knots, I start projecting tragic futures, and I want to figure out how I can manipulate things to turn out the way I want as if I am the supreme, all-knowing being who has all the answers and knows just how everything should go.

Here's the problem. I actually know how it turns out when I'm in control. I've been down that path a billion times. **Jeremiah 10:23** says, "I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps" (ESV). **Proverbs 14:12; 16:25** both say, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death" (ESV). When I'm in charge, I lead myself into sin and death every time.

What I need to do is turn and become like a little child. I need to recognize that God knows how to drive. He knows the way. He doesn't need me in the driver's seat. He doesn't need me to navigate. He just needs me to sit back, relax, and follow His lead. If I'm going to call Him, "Lord," then I just need to do what He says (**Luke 6:46**). I need to crawl up on the altar and sacrifice myself (**Romans 12:1-2**). I need to crucify myself and live by faith in Jesus (**Galatians 2:20**).

What does this mean on a practical level? I need to remember that God doesn't need me to fix my family. He doesn't need me to fix His church. He doesn't need me to protect His people and preserve His way. He will do

all of that. All He has asked of me is to do what He says. I don't need to get stressed about the future, trying to press my imaginary brakes. I need to let God be my fortress, my strong and mighty tower, my redeemer, the horn of my salvation, my strength, my rock (**Psalm 18:1-3**). I don't have to figure things out. I just need to do what God wants. Really, the only things I need to be concerned about is figuring out what the next right thing is and doing it. God has promised that if I seek His rule and righteousness in my life, He'll take care of everything else. I can rely on Him.

Today, I'm going to let God drive, and I'm going to keep my eyes open, my foot off the brake, my hand off the handle. Would you like to go for a ride with us?

--Edwin L. Crozier