

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
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Series: More Than Conquerors  
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Harris Creek, good morning! Alright. Alright. We are moving this week - God willing. My wife and I, we've been building a house, so it's been long anticipated this specific week. We are excited! It's a neighborhood that we lived in before and we're excited to go back because we have friends there. In fact, you know, all around us are Harris Creek people. So right beside us is a Harris Creek family. Across the street is a Harris Creek family. The kids are always riding their bikes and their scooters and in fact the other day our neighbor was riding a golf cart. He was dropping some kids off at school and then coming back around and had stopped at a neighbor's house. It was all good because, you know, she's a responsible driver. She knows what she's doing. But then, kind of in the midst of that another driver climbed behind the will. In fact, watch this. (A home security like video plays. It shows a golf cart; two moms; and some children. At one point a 3-4-year-old child climbs up into the drivers' seat.) He just kind of sneaks up in there. There he is kind of ready. So when you have a different driver, someone not qualified to drive, you never really know what's going to happen. So you kind of look at this, you're thinking, man, what could go wrong? Well, watch this. (Return to the same video. Child has reached the drivers' seat; he turns on the cart; and runs it a few feet into the garage door. Children immediately are screaming, and mom jumps to action turning off the go cart and consoling child. It gets loud!) Absolute chaos! Pretty chaotic.

If you guys don't recognize them, that's Drew Greenway's kids. My kids were tired of me using them as illustration, so I've had to venture out a little bit. I'm impressed by Paige and just how cool, calm, and collected she was able to stay as she brought order to that. But when someone else drives who is not qualified to drive, you experience a wreck. I'm excited to tell you that no one was hurt by that, except the garage door which did need to be replaced. But everybody is safe.

It brings me to my point, though, to ask this question. Who is driving? Who is driving? And we're not talking about golf carts, we're talking about this (holds a handheld model of a brain). Your mind. Who is behind the steering wheel in your mind?

Your mind is one of the most important things about you. Your thoughts start here. Your plans are created here. Your steps are determined here. Memories are stored here. Conversations are planned here. Feelings are born here. And sin, sin is contemplated here. Really the entire trajectory of your life and the choices that you make start here. Who is in the driver seat?

That's the question that we're going to contemplate today as we continue in Romans chapter 8. If you have the wrong driver, you will end up in a wreck. I am a follower of Jesus Christ. I have trusted in His death, burial, and resurrection for the forgiveness of my sins. I believe that my sins were paid for on the cross and that I will be with God forever one day. I believe His Holy Spirit lives with me. God's Holy Spirit, the same one who resurrected Jesus from the dead, lives in me showing me the way to go. I belong to Him. And I desire to sin in my thoughts and in my words.

When someone does something that I perceive to be stupid, when someone hurts me, I have a desire to seek revenge, to get the upper hand. There's a part of me that my thoughts can be prideful. I can wonder what you think of me. I can care way too much of your opinion of me. There's a desire in me to look and to give freedom to my lustful thoughts. There's a desire in me to act out on sinful ideas that are born up here. There's a desire in me to drink too much. There's a desire in me to cope by spending and buying things that I think are going to satisfy something in me. Those two realities sit right there, side by side. That's the truth. They are right there, side by side. God's Holy Spirit lives in me and there's still something in me that desires to do something that's bad for me. That the Scripture is going to call me to put to death. If I let my flesh drive, I end up in a wreck or I wreck my life.

We're in Romans 8 in a series we're calling More Than Conquerors. Last week we looked at verses 1 through 4, really starting in Roman 7 to set that up. Just this idea that we no longer follow the law, but we follow the Spirit. God's Spirit lives with us and He is directing our steps. So what does it mean that Christ fulfilled the law? This is what we talked about last week. This week, we are in verses 5 through 13 where I'm asking the question: Who is driving your mind? The first idea I'll put before you is the fight for the drivers' seat. Then we'll talk about the driver, how the driver determines your destination. And then before you leave here this morning, I'm going to ask you to determine a driver. You will choose your driver before you leave today.

And so just as a reminder, Paul wrote this letter from Corinth. He wrote it to Christians in Rome, both Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians alike in a tumultuous culture of Rome to bring unity and peace. He penned this letter. It's rich with theology and we have just been diving in verse by verse into one chapter, that is Romans 8. I'll start in verse 5. **Those who live according to the flesh set their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the spirit have their mind set on what the spirit desires.** Written a couple thousand years ago and still so true. OK? You wake up and you are a weekend warrior, you think about this Friday. What am I going to do? Where am I going to go? If your mind is set on your pleasure... How am I going to get more? Hey I need to close that deal. What am I going to buy with those things? Or if your mind is set on the spirit... Hey, God is so good. God is so good right now. His word is producing something positive in my heart, just meditating on the scriptures. God, you want me to go and talk to them and share the gospel because I'm on mission for you? I'm going to be with you forever in your Kingdom. And it's different.

**The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.** Flesh is not really a word that we use often, unless we're talking about our skin, right? In this context flesh means your sin nature. Your sin nature is the part of you that desires to sin. It is the part that doesn't want to honor God or the way of God. It is the part that is self-reliant. It hates authority. It hates accountability. It's selfish and self-seeking. It is the part that wants to peel back and hide. You are in Life Group and someone says, "Why did you do that?" "Wait, wait, wait. What!?" You are on the defense saying, "because..." and "Why are you asking me that?" and "I don't understand." If you haven't seen that, you will. Because we are messy and you know that

part of you when someone of the Spirit leans in and it feels threatening. Your flesh feels threatened and you go on the defense.

It says **governed. The mind governed by the flesh...governed by the spirit....** Here in the NIV. That is the Greek word Phronema. Phronema only shows up in Romans 8 – four times. In your NASV is maybe translated like “fleshly-minded” or “Spirit-minded”. It’s what your mind is set on. It says those in the realm of the flesh are hostile to God. They are at war with God. They cannot please God, they don’t have His Spirit. Your atheist friend, even when he/she does something that you perceive to be good the spirit of God is not at work there. It is either done for selfish reasons or we can't understand it. It's not an offering to God. God is not pleased in it. Because God sits outside of time. He lives in eternity. He is not like “Oh man, that is so good that you helped that person across the street. It brings Him no glory if His spirit is not at work.

*1. There's a fight for the driver seat of your mind.*

There is a fight for the driver seat of your mind. You can see it like a fight. You've seen this scene in the movie, right? There's a car chase or something. Someone in the driver seat, someone else is kicking in the window, trying to get in there. Maybe there are weapons involved. They're fighting over the steering wheel; the flesh and the spirit. Both seek to be behind the steering wheel of your mind that takes you places. If you are a believer, a follower of Jesus, you have two options of a driver. Your flesh can drive, or the Spirit can drive. You have options for destinations, life or death. If you are not a believer, the spirit cannot drive only your flesh drives. Your flesh is the motivator behind everything you do. Does it feel good? Do I enjoy it? Do I want to? Your primary motivator, if you're not a follower of Jesus, is do I want to, For the believer in Jesus, “God, what would you have me do?” That’s different. “Lord, I want to do whatever honors you. What would you have me do? That's different.

Sometimes it doesn't even make sense. Like as a non-believer, pragmatism is just about all you got. You know, it's like I'm just going to do what makes sense or what helps me have the most gain. As a believer, it's very different. Instead, I want to do whatever you desire me to do, which may not make sense to the world. It may be different than what the world would have me do. If the enemy can win the mind of a person, he can keep them from the pleasures of God. Just think about that. If the enemy can win the mind of a person, he can keep that person from the pleasures of God.

So, what realm does the enemy play in? What does he appeal to? Flesh. Your sinful nature. It's the part of you that just wants to do whatever you want to do. This is familiar to me as I read this passage. This might resonate with you. I was the youngest of four. I was the baby and so there was a time where all of my siblings are off, they're grown up and I'm still home with my parents who are just about to be empty nesters. They start traveling more, you know. They're going fishing and hunting and in Colorado seeing things. They would leave me back. And I can remember, very vividly, being in high school and Mom and Dad saying, “Alright, we are leaving.” They go and just the sound of that door shutting and then I would go to the living room window where I could see them driving down our dirt road and it was just like, “Whoa! Well, I can go wherever I want to go! I can go to dad's liquor cabinet. I could have some friends come

over.” It was just like this sense of the freedom to drive wherever I want to drive. I remember that feeling and in fact it showed up a few times in my life. Another one is when they dropped me off for college. We were here in Waco, my mom and dad are helping me move in all my belongings, which was a suitcase and a box that we put it in my apartment. And then you know, Mom had some tears in her eyes and says goodbye with a hug. Then they go into the parking lot and drive off. I say, “Whoa! I have the freedom to do whatever I want to do, to go wherever I want to go. I can drive.”

I can remember then as a young adult. It is guy’s weekend, where are we going to go? Look, we could go to Shreveport. We could go to Vegas! What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. You get to Vegas and it's just one more... It's just like I can go anywhere. I can drive anywhere. And then as an adult, you travel for work. You get in a hotel room of some city you haven't been in before. You're on the 7th floor there at the Holiday Inn, and nobody knows you're there. And you have got a TV in your room with all kinds of information coming in through a pipe in your room. You have got a bar across the street. Nobody knows you're there. If you do something, no one's ever going to know. God knows and you are going to know for the rest of your life. As you try to keep that a secret, it's going to rot you from the inside out. And it's going to impact you in ways you never thought that it would, and before you know it, you're walking around the shell of a person. Where you have half of your being outside here and half of your being inside here just trying not to get caught. It's not freedom. It's not freedom. It's the opposite of freedom.

When the spirit is driving, the freedom is better. I have the freedom to share Jesus. I have the freedom to love my wife. I have the freedom to be a great dad to my kids and to make memories with them. I have the freedom to walk up to somebody and just meet a need! Say, “Hey what do you need? I got you! I am here. I am one of God’s agents.” I'm living a life that matters with purpose according to His spirit, that's different. It's different. The reality is your flesh is a terrible driver. Your flesh would love to drive right now. And your flesh is a terrible driver.

When Weston was about six years old, I think we had watched that Dude Perfect episode where they had RC cars. You know? I don't know if you guys know what I am talking about, but long story short, I wanted an RC car, a remote-control car. I really wanted one as a grown man and so I did what any great Dad would do, I convinced my son to want one. I said, “Hey. You know, if you do this, I might get you one.” It came down for him to get one and I said, “What kind do you want?” And he said, “A red and a grey one.” I had a lot to work with, you know. So, he and I, we go to the to the RC store, the hobby shop and we're looking for cars. I told the guy, “Hey, I'd like to get one. We're getting a car for my 6-year-old.” He's like, “Sir, we don't really sell cars for six-year-olds.” I said, “Yeah, I'm going to help him. OK? So, what kind do you have?” I said, “It needs to be red and grey.” That kind of limited it down and we chose one.

I don't know what you know about RC cars, but the game has changed since when I was little. These things are like machines. They go fast and are powerful and they are really fun. So, we get it home and we are there in front of the house. It's like ZCHOOM! I am driving...ZCHOOM! I just do a little donut and turn around. Weston is right there like, “Dad, let me drive. When can I

drive? Let me drive? When can I drive?" I am like, what do you think it is yours? You know? (Crowd laughs.) I am like, "Alright." So finally he wears me down. "Alright, here you go. But be careful, OK? Be careful. It is expensive, you know." So he gets behind that remote control, I mean he cuts right, turns left, right into the curve. It turns to 30 pieces. I was like, "Ah man." But it is okay cause it is a hobby – you can fix it. So we take it inside and get the tools. We repair the car. I am like ZCHOOM! ZCHOOM! I am driving. And he's like, "Dad, let me try. Let me drive. Let me drive." I am like, "But last time that..." "Let me drive. Let me drive. Let me drive!" "Okay, be careful." He gets behind it, cuts left, turns right, right into the curve - explosion. Come on, man! We take it back inside, fix it up, go back outside. I'm driving, ZCHOOM! ZCHOOM! ZCHOOM! He is like, "Let me drive. Let me drive. Let me drive. Let me drive." I am like, "But you are going to wreck it." He is like, "No I'm not. I learned my lesson. I am not going to. You can trust me." He gets the remote control, he cuts right, turns left, right in the curve. Million pieces can't be repaired. It is broken.

And the Lord used that moment. He's like, that's just like you, JP. "Let me drive Spirit. Let me drive. Let me drive Spirit. Let me drive. Let me drive. Let me drive. Let me drive. Let me drive. Come on, man! My turn! My turn! My turn! My turn! Come on, let me go. Let me go where I want to go. Let me do what I want to do. Let me see what I want to see. Somebody threatens me, hey let me respond how I want to respond. Let me drink what I want to drink. Let me experience what I want to experience. Let me buy what I want to buy. I want to do what I want to do, when I want to do it. Let me drive, let me drive." He is like, "But man, every time we do that it is a wreck!" "Nah, I learned my lesson. This time is different." And what I really want to do, and I don't know if you connected this, I really just want to go hands off the wheel and let's just see where this goes. Let's just see where this goes. Let's see what happens. I'm not driving. It goes to a wreck - every time. Who is driving determines where you go and what you do.

**Verse 9, You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God lives in you.** This is a new category of person, not the one who's hostile to God. And I love the way the Holy Spirit, through Paul, just speaks this over you. **You, however, are different.** That's not who you are. You're different. He just says it. He just declares that over you. Not you. You don't live in the realm of the flesh; you live in the realm of the spirit. The spirit of God lives in you. **And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.** Non-believers, they can't honor God. Their job is hostility. That is their job description. **But if Christ is in you, even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.** Because of whose righteousness? Is he saying the spirit gives life because you're going to do good? No! Because of Christ's righteousness. Because of what Jesus did, His righteousness imputed on you, His righteousness covering you, overwhelming you. **And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.**

Guys, the same spirit who got Jesus up. I mean pulled him up; rolled the stone away. That same spirit lives in you. You sit in this place saying, "But you don't understand. I'm so entangled by

sin.” As if God is like, “Oh whatever will we do? I am really stumped with this one. Never seen this before.” No! It's the spirit that raised Jesus from the dead that lives in you.

## *2. Your driver determines your destination.*

Your driver determines your destination. So, you have two possible destinations, life and death. Now, this is under the sun and beyond the sun, right? So, under the sun, if you have the Holy Spirit, the spirit of God can take you to life and peace. That's a destination outlined in the scripture - life and peace. Or you can follow your flesh, which will always lead to death. Now that's a death under the sun, we are talking about. If you do not have the Holy Spirit, then after this life you only experience death, we know that as hell. A place where there is nothing good of any kind. Or if you have the Holy Spirit, to a life forever with God, in a place that we call Heaven. Paradise in the presence of God. And so, the flesh desires to kill you because everything it wants, hurts your relationship with God - which gives life.

So, what does that mean - death under the sun? What do we mean by that? What does that look like? Anxiety. Depression. Despair. Fear. Insecurities. It can look like exhaustion. Hangovers. Pregnancy scares. It can look like heartbreak, guilt, shame, apathy. It looks like a life without purpose. That's the death that the flesh will lead you to under the sun, but the spirit leads to life and peace. That's verse 6 and verse 10.

You have this driver that desires you to have life and have it abundantly and fill your heart with peace. It is the spirit that resurrects the dead. You can trust Him. And the benefit of trusting him is life and peace. So, what does that look like? You surrender to God's spirit. And what marks your life if God's spirit is driving your mind? You tend to be more loving. You tend to be more joyful. You tend to be more filled with peace. You tend to be more patient. Tend to be more kind. Tend to be more good or better. You tend to be more faithful. You tend to be more self-controlled. Because the Spirit is driving, right?

I have a dear friend and he got saved at church camp and then he went to Baylor for college. He graduated from Baylor and moved to Austin. He got married there. He was successful as a marketing director there in Austin. And he and his wife loved to party. That's kind of what they had in common, they would just go out and all the places that Austin has to offer. They would party and in the midst of them partying they both developed a dependence on alcohol. And in the midst of being dependent on alcohol, both committed adulteries, they had affairs. And so now my friend, right, he's in this place where his flesh has just been driving. He comes to this place where he's now divorced. He is an alcoholic and he's looking at his life and he can't find any hope in the midst of it. And so, he loads up a 12 gauge and he's going to end it all. And believers, as God would have it, reached out to him and came around him. They said, “You however, that's not who you are. Remember this truth. The spirit of God lives in you.” And the spirit of God began to do a work. Right?

So now God has done a makeover in his life. And he just called me this week. He left me a voicemail. And it's just like, “Man, I was at Walmart and this couple behind me they were buying a car battery. But they didn't have any money and they were just down and out. I got to buy their car battery and share Jesus with them.” And he was just so excited. And in fact, listen,

here's some of the voicemail. (Voicemail plays over speakers) “I said, Hey Bro can I talk to you really quick? He looked at me like, what are you about to say? I got a pause. I was like man, I used to be an alcoholic for like more than 10 years and Jesus saved me. I have now been sober for over 16. I went from having a gun to my head to having this kid with me and two other kids and a wife at home. God did all that. Anyway, I'm just wondering if you'd allow me to get your battery. But it's not from me. The only thing you got to know is that it's not from me. This is from God; it is from Jesus. And I feel like He would have me get it for you if you allow me that. And he just looked at me dumbfounded and started wiping away tears from his eyes. I was like, you understand, right? Like this is not for me, it's from the Lord. (Voicemail message ends.)

So, it's like, he calls me and he's just excited and he's just sharing. Hey, here's an opportunity God just gave me. And then he's like, and I was with my son. So, we got to talk about discipleship and why we did that. I shared the gospel with this couple. We got to celebrate the work that Jesus did, and bro it's just so much fun. It's just so much fun. And then I went home and my wife and I, we just talked about all evening the opportunities that God give us to be on mission for him wherever we go, even in the store. It's just so much fun. Don't you see what happens when the spirit drive?

Now, this is a guy that has drank deeply from the well of the world and he's telling you this is so much fun. Oh man, I remember 6<sup>th</sup> St. waking up with hangovers next to strangers. This is so much fun. It's just better when the spirit drives. It's better in every way. A lease to life and to peace. But for so many of us, when we say the Spirit drives, “Yeah, well, don't rob banks. Don't kill people.” No, there's like this offensive. Wherever you are, you're on mission and you're looking with the eyes of the Lord to see what He would have you do, who He would have you engage with. Who He would have you share with. What He would have meet, He would have you meet. That's life. That's just better. Why wouldn't we do that every day? Come home every day with a story, “Man, you're not going to believe what God let me do today. The Spirit was driving, and it was so much fun.”

Verse 12, **Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation - but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.** This is kill or be killed language. This is, if you live according to the flesh, you will die. ... **but if by the spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.** The flesh will kill you, so by the spirit kill the flesh. Put to death the deeds of the flesh. It says you have an obligation, but that obligation is not to the flesh, it is to the spirit. That word obligation is actually the word for debt. It is the same word that shows up in the Lord's Prayer – forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. So, he's saying, “You have a debt, but your debt is not to the flesh.” He is saying, “You don't owe your flesh anything. You don't have to listen to it. It's not the God of you. You owe the Spirit everything! You have an internal debt to the Spirit. Allow it to be God of you. Do everything it says.”

What he's saying is important though too, because it's essentially you will never have to sin. You're never going to be in this predicament where you could choose Option A - sin or Option B – sin; and those are your only two options. No, there's always a path that the spirit wants to lead

you, which is not sin. It's life and peace. 1 Corinthians 10:13 - **No temptation has seized you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.** He's going to show you another way.

### *3. Determine the driver.*

Determine the driver, the flesh or the spirit. Determine a driver. There's this Cherokee proverb. It's like one of those stories that your grandmother forwards you in an e-mail, you know, kind of thing. There are some things great about it. There are some things not so good about it. I will tell you both. The story goes that a grandson is talking to his grandfather and he just says, "Grandfather, why is it so difficult to do good but so easy to do what is wrong?" And the grandfather says, "Son. Inside of you there are two wolves fighting. One of the wolves is angry - full of vengeance, wrath, greed, jealousy and hate. The other wolf is loving, joyful, full of peace, patient, kind, good, gentle and self-controlled." And the grandson says to their grandfather, "Well, which one wins?" And the grandfather says, "The one you feed. The one you feed."

What I don't like about that story is that theologically it presents a case for dualism. Dualism is a theological term that good and evil are equal and opposing forces. And that's not the case. That is not what we believe. It's not what the Bible teaches. It's not like there is Satan and there is God, and they are at war and God is like, "Oh gosh, check mate." No, no, there's God (points very high in level of power) and then there's Satan (points very low in level of power). And Satan is a minion to God at best.

But what I like about this story is the application. The one you feed grows stronger. You feed your flesh, and your flesh will grow stronger. The appetite for you to wreck your life will get stronger. You feed your spirit, and the spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead will make you stronger. OK? So that application of that story I love! To give it to you from a scripture...

Before I do, let me say this. I said this before, but it's important. This is the lie of one last time. OK? I'm going to call him one last time. I'm going to drink that one last time. I'm going to smoke that one last time. I'm going to go there one last time. I'm going to do that one last time. I'm going to look at that one last time. See when you feed it that last time, that flesh got bigger and stronger, so it's more difficult the next time. Instead, by the Spirit, say the last time is behind me. You do not need closure with sin. Just close it. It is behind you. Move on. By the Spirit move on.

Here in Galatians 6 he says it like this, **Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the spirit will reap eternal life.** So, if you find yourself in this place where you feel stuck in sin, I imagine that's some of you. You are like, "Man I just... I don't... I am doing the thing I don't want to do." Insecurities have grown to such a place where they feel in control. "I don't know how not to let my flesh drive. I'm just stuck."

I grew up in South Texas and a really nice vacation for us was we would go to Port Aransas. Anybody been to Port Aransas? Yeah, it's kind of beach-ish. It's kind of like a beach and that's where we would go. I loved it! Because there's something special about Port Aransas, something



there you can't do in most beaches. Do you know what it is? You can drive on the beach. Right? You can't do that in a lot of places, but you could drive on the beach. And so, you can imagine when I turn 16, I'm like, "Oh, man, I can go wherever I want to go." And I didn't have a car, but my dad was this cattle rancher. And so, he had this extended cab Chevrolet long bed pickup that he would pull this gooseneck trailer. You know, it's the longest truck you've ever seen. It is so long, and it was standard, manual. So, it had this big stick shift right there in the middle and he would let me take it on the beach. But the problem is there's something with the length of that truck, the fact that it was standard, and the sand. I could not drive that truck on the beach, I would get it stuck. And time and time and time again, people would have to come and help me. You get stuck right there in the thoroughfare and you're trying to be in this cool 17-year-old. "What's up ladies!" But you are stuck, and everybody wants you out of the way. You're like "I'm trying." So, this one time I'm shifting it into first. Giving it some gas. Throwing sand. Shift it into reverse. Give it gas. Throwing sand. I'm not going anywhere. I bury the axle. I got a sense like I'm not getting out of there, you know? So, I look at my buddy, and I am like, "You have got to go get my dad." It's like the walk of shame.

So, he goes and gets my dad. He comes out there, right there in the thoroughfare on the beach. You know where the cars are coming up. My axle is just completely buried, there are some guys trying to lift on the bumper. My dad was like this John Wayne character. And he just walks up and grabs that driver side door. And I'm in there and I'm like praying, like, Lord be amazing right now.... He just opens that door and says, "move over". "Yes, sir. Ok. It is your truck." He would shift it into reverse. Give it a little gas. Shift it into drive and just drive up. I'm like, what in the world?! Where did you learn that? Did they teach that in school. I don't understand. That's exactly what I was doing for 37 minutes, you know? All the sudden you just drive out of there. It's just like... I don't know. Some cowboy skill or something.

But it is kind of how I picture the Holy Spirit to your flesh. "Move over. I'm going to drive now. You keep getting stuck. You keep wrecking your life. You keep driving to things that are hurtful to you. Let me drive now." In summary, there's a fight for the driver seat; the driver determines your destination. So, determine the spirit to be the designated driver at all times. Let the spirit drive.

I can't read this passage and not just be flooded with memories. So, for the first half of my existence on Earth I let the flesh drive. You know. What that looked like for me was always finding identity in relationships with girls. I started smoking weed at an early age and started drinking on into college, which just led to all kinds of addictions. High on the list was pornography. It was just enslaved to it. And all of these, these wrecks that owned me. I moved to Dallas and was just chasing the dollar, trying to climb the corporate ladder and finding identity in all the things of this world. While being a weekend warrior looking for the next party, looking for the next fix, looking for the next outlet, the next coping mechanism.

I was at a club 20 years ago. And I bumped into a friend from Baylor, and she said, "Hey." I said, "What are you doing this weekend?" She said, "I'm going to go check out this church tomorrow." I said, "Great, pick me up. Church. I like church. Church is cool." She did. And I went. I remember I had a little mild headache, hungover from the night before. And she really

exits the story. But I just kept going to that church. I was just hearing truth. There was something there that interested me. There was something new. The Lord was doing a work on my heart, and one day the pastor told this story.

Meanwhile, I'm still partying. I'm still doing all the things of the world, but on Sunday I would go to that church. I'd sit in the back row, hungover, smelling like smoke from the night before. And the pastor told a story. Man, God just uses different stories for different people, different places at different times. But for whatever reason with this story, the Holy Spirit just grabbed my heart. It is a story about a horse. And he said that the horse just wanted to be free; to go and do whatever he wanted to do. And I thought, yes, I am that horse. And he said the people were trying to capture that horse, trying to take him home and tame him. I'm like, no, not me, no way. And the horse in his freedom had to find food and find water and find shelter from the weather, and the elements. But he was free. I was like yes! Free to go wherever I want to go. And there was a drought in the land. The food supply dried up and the horse got weak. So, this local farmer was able to get a rope around his neck. He was able to capture that horse. Oh no! This is not good. He took him home and he put him in a pen. I thought, no, no, no. No pen! He said he loved him. He cared for him. Provided for him and he was able to break him. He was able to ride him and when he would ride that horse, he would lead him to food, and he would lead him to water. He would provide shelter from the elements. I am leaning in, and this is what got me. He said, it wasn't until he was fully submissive to his master that he truly experienced freedom for the first time.

And the Spirit... I just thought, "Man, if there is a God and he created everything, he created me, and he knows the past from the future. He can see all things. Then why would I do anything other than exactly what He wants me to do?" And I just said, "God, you take... from here on out, from this moment forward, I'm just going to do whatever you ask me to do. In fact, I'm going to search this this book for instruction to do exactly what you would have me do. I'm going to pray and I'm going to listen for you to tell me exactly what you want me to do. From this moment forward, I'm just going to do that, and everything began to change.

So, I'm going to give you a minute to do the same thing. Whether you're in this place where you are a believer, you've trusted in Jesus his death and resurrection for the forgiveness of your sins, but you just know there's some areas of your life where you're letting the flesh drive. Or you're at this place where you're like, man, I've kind of always done what I wanted to do. I need someone else to drive. So, I'm going to pray, but as I pray, I'm going to give you time to pray.

And so, Father, we just do that right now. We just ask you to be the driver of our life. Father, would you drive? What I would encourage you to do is just think about those areas of your life where you know you're driving. I don't know if it's you're looking at something you should not be looking at. You are engaged or involved in a relationship you shouldn't be involved in. That you're spending in ways you shouldn't. You're coping in ways you shouldn't. You're drinking in ways you shouldn't. You have friends that you shouldn't have because of the way that they're influencing you. It may be some addiction to social media. Right about now, you probably know what that is. I just want you to bring that before the Lord. Say Lord, "Here's where I'm driving. I'm gripping the wheel, and I don't want your Spirit to drive. I am addicted to my flesh driving in

this area.” So, you say it. You think about it. Don't think about your neighbor. Don't think about what other people are praying or who's going to see you praying. In fact, it's just you and God in the room. Imagine that you're in this big old room all by yourself talking to God. It's just you and Him. Keep thinking about that thing, what is it that you like a dog to his vomit run back to, or that you've been holding on to? Maybe it is something you've been hiding? Maybe it is something you thought, man, I'm going to take that to my grave. Maybe it's something you just can't stop doing. You're so sick of confessing it week in and week out, month after month. You can imagine the Spirit of God just pulling open that truck door and just saying move over flesh. I'm driving now. Just ask the spirit to drive. Just say, “Hey, would you drive?” Express your willingness to surrender to God’s Spirit. To say, I want you to drive. The desires there, even though my flesh wars against the greater desire of the spirit. I desire for you to drive. Would you take me to life and peace? Would you strip me of control and let me trust your control? Help me to believe that you're good.

Just ask God to drive. In your own way right now, in your own space, not thinking about others around you. Everyone has their head bowed, their eyes closed, talking to God. Don't think about who's beside you or across the room or what else is going on, just you and God. You talk to God, take your thoughts back to God. Ask Him to drive.

You don't need to think about how this is weird or different. Just God would you drive. God would you drive? Protect me from the enemy. You drive.

And then just commit the next time your flesh is tempted to fight for the steering wheel ask for strength in that moment to let the Spirit drive. Maybe you need to bring something to the light. You ask for courage to do so. Even the part of you, the fleshly part that says, “No, no, no, no, no. You can't do that.” Oh yeah, yes you can. The spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you. If He doesn't, ask Him to. Look at the cross and say I trust that as a payment for me. I trust that my sins were paid for there. That God raised Jesus from the dead, giving me the hope of eternal life. God, would you help us in that way? Would you drive now and forever? We designate your Holy Spirit as the driver of our mind. In Jesus name, Amen.