

# THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

## Getting Where You're Going

Trying to follow the teachings of Jesus is like driving down a major highway, determined to keep the speed limit.

The newer the driver, the harder it is because driving takes a certain "feel." But very often the new driver is more apt to stay closer to the speed limit than an "old hand" (even if sometimes he's a bit slow, then a bit fast...then a bit slow, again) simply because he's concentrating on it more.

The driver who has been at it for awhile may have the "feel," but other factors often come into play. One such factor is "mind-wandering," caused by familiarity with the road, the car, or confidence in one's own ability. Suddenly, the driver realizes that his mind has been wandering, and the car has either slowed considerably...or a heavy foot has caused the car to go faster and faster.

Then, there's the person who's determined to "keep the law" (driving exactly the right speed) and is going down an incline. He takes his foot off the gas, slightly, to compensate for the down-grade and looks in his rearview mirror to see a truck (or worldly pressures, as it were) barreling down on him from behind. Should he speed up?...Keep his present speed?...Or, (if the truck begins tailgating, with no intention of passing) get mad and go even slower? His mind, now distracted from the original

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purpose of keeping the law, is directed toward dealing with this frustration or outside force; and a battle of wills ensues, having nothing to do with the speed limit.

Or, there is the case where the driver is sticking to the speed limit and he notices that everyone else is passing him by. He begins to feel out of place (after all, one has to keep up with the times); and before you know it, he has rationalized to himself that the speed limit is set too slow...that he is a danger to those around him...and he changes what he thinks is right and zips along after the rest of the world.

Even bumper-to-bumper rush-hour traffic is a problem. It moves too slowly. (It's like looking at the Old Testament without the New...or getting "bogged down" in the letter of the law with understanding or adhering to the essence of the law.) Your best bet is to look for the nearest exit and find a "better way."

Interestingly though, bumper-to-bumper traffic is usually caused by people wanting to get somewhere too quickly...like the people of Moses time, who wanted their "milk and honey" immediately...or, rather, when they wanted it, and ended up wandering in the desert for 40 years.

But, whether it's the new driver, who's really paying attention, or the old one, who's doing the same, there comes a time in every person's driving career when he rounds a turn and sees the speeder pulled off to the side by a police car...and

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*“Many that are first will be last, and the last first.” [Matt. 19:30]*

For, the person abiding by the letter of the law and the essence of the law is going to get to where he’s going in the shortest amount of time and using the least amount of gas.

*(Written, October 12, 1979. Edited, December 3, 2012)*