

Joy Ride

Identifying Our Driving Forces

June 23, 2024

Today we're identifying the forces that drive us, and figuring out what a joy ride is all about!



So, **what drives you?** Cuz we're *all* driven by *something* or *someone*. We're *driven crazy, or up a wall, or to distraction, or to drink!* I heard God prefers a *Plymouth*, cuz Adam was driven from the *Garden* in His *fury!* Millions of books have been sold to help us to be *purpose driven*. So **what are the driving forces behind your daily decisions?** What drives you to *do* the things you *do*? To answer *that*, we gotta *first* answer *this*: **What's it all about?** Seems like a *big question*, but it's kind of *obvious* once we realize what it's *not* about: **it's not about you.** Or *me*. Because we ... were *created*.

For by *Him* all things **[including us]** were *created* ... *by Him* and *for Him*. – Colossians 1:16 NIV

For *from Him* and *through Him* and *to Him* are *all* things. **[Therefore]** *To Him* be the *glory* forever! *Amen*. – Romans 11:36 NIV

So to *seek one's own glory* is *not glory*. – Proverbs 25:27 NKJ

So *what's* it all about? **"HIM!"** Magnify *Him*. *Amen? Amen!* So *why* then do I so *often* *tend* to *make* it about *magnifying me?* Or you, you? **Why do we seem to make it about magnifying everything but Him?** Mankind is *driven* to *seek* a *sense of purpose*. But we usually *begin* at the *wrong end*: our *self*. Big *mistake*, because **focusing on me prevents me from finding meaning.** Know *why?* Cuz it's *not* about *me!* And it only stands to reason, that **created beings can only find their reason for being, by seeking their Creator's reason for creating them.** So, if we *believe* in a *Creator*, *that* should be our *overriding driving desire*. Which is *why*, "to seek one's own glory is *not* glory". Which is *why* *David* said:

When You said **[to me]**, "Seek *My face*," *My heart* said to You, "*Your face*, Lord, I will seek." **[And His face was finally found!]** – Psalm 27:8 NKJ

For God ... made *His light* shine in *our hearts* to *give* us the *light* of the knowledge of the *glory of God* in **the face of Christ**. – 2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV

And so, **it may be all about Him, but it's all because of you.** So we need to do an *about-face* with all our *heart*. Because, *success* and *fulfillment* are very *different driving forces*. **Success comes by attaining what others admire or desire.** Whereas, **fulfillment comes by attaining your reason for being.** So *what's* driving you? *Astronomy* made *little* sense till we realized *planets* must *revolve* around the *sun!* And *life* is *senseless* till we realize we must *revolve* around the *Son*. Cuz only through *Him* can we *find* our **true identity** and **significance** and **purpose** and **destiny**.



Because, **there are only two eternal drivers: God and you;** and **both are driven by one truly, purely, powerful driving force: love.** Which is *why* you're called to be a *driver*. When I was 18, pops was away from the wrecking yard when the MV school district called to take *bids* for two *buses*. So I offered \$105 apiece. But the next day, they called back to say that *I* was the *only bidder*.

And when I went to see 'em, I was told that *one* was *still running*. So I wrote a *business* check for the *other*, and a *personal* check for the *drivable* one. Then I went *straight* to the *DMV*, got a *bus license booklet*, studied it in the *parking lot*, and went back in and *passed the test*. Cuz that's all it took back *then*. Then I went to the old *surplus store* in Mount Vernon and assembled what *looked* like a bus driver's *uniform*. And I *drove around* that night *picking up* my *friends*. And then *their* friends. I'd *pull up* to someone's *house* and *honk*; and they'd *come out* and say, "What's going on?" and I'd say, "I got us a *bus!*" It's very *fulfilling* to *drive others*, when your *only destination* is *joy and laughter and love!* Which is *why* **you're called to be a driver, to offer others the ride of their life.** A *joy ride* like no *other!* Which is why a *self-centered, self-orbiting* life is *ultimately empty* and unfulfilling, and *no life at all*. No matter *how successful* you may or *may not* become. Because, **your Creator wasn't created for you, you were created for Him.**

For You created my *inmost* being; You knit me together *in* my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... Your eyes *saw* my unformed body. ... How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God! – Psalm 139:13-17 NIV



Were you *unplanned*? You probably know *someone* who *was*. My *grandma*, whose *wedding anniversary* was less than *nine* months before my *aunt's birthday*, used to say: "First kid only *takes* 6 months; after *that* it's the *usual* 9." If you were unplanned, you were likely *treated* as a **happy accident**, a **wonderful surprise**, or **the best mistake we ever made**. But it can *feel* like a *nice* way of saying you're *illegitimate*. And maybe you were *wounded* by *that*. But, **that's what we get if we forget our true Creator.** Because *He* wasn't surprised. So your *biologicals* didn't *plan* it; *He* sure did! **He wasn't caught off guard.** Way before you were *conceived down here, accidentally, intentionally, or howeverly,* **you were first conceived in our Father's mind and heart.** Know *why?* To express His *love*. You see, *He* didn't *need* you. **He chose to create you, because He desires to love you!** Know *why?*

... because God *is* love. [And] This is how God *showed* His love among us: He sent *His* one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. – 1 John 4:8-9 NIV

[The Father] chose us in Him before the foundation of the *world* ... In *love* He *predestined* us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will – Ephesians 1:3-5 ESV

So *there's* your *reason for being!* Your **true identity is God's child;** your **significance was set by His death.** Your **purpose is to drive others to adoption.** Because our **destiny is to love and be loved eternally.** So, **we gotta be grounded in His love, as learned from His Word.** It's gotta be the *driving force* at the *center* of our *life*. Because, **if love doesn't drive us, something else will.** Lust. Pride. Jealousy. Deadlines. Painful memories. Take your pick. So **what's driving you?** And *what* do you say we take a *look* at what I *think* might be our *top five driving forces*.



The #1 most common *driving force* has got to be guilt. The ol' *skeleton* in the *closet*. So many spend so much life *pointlessly running from regret and shame* while at the same time *hiding it in* their heart! Which is why: **Guilt-driven people allow the past to control the present.** And the future. But:

Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are *covered*. ... When I kept *silent*, my *bones* wasted away **[in the closet]** ... Then I *acknowledged* my *sin* to You and did not *cover up* my *iniquity*. ... And You *forgave* the *guilt* of my sin. ... The Lord's *unfailing love* surrounds the one who *trusts* in Him. – Psalm 32:1-5, 10 NIV

There's no question, **we are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners!** Our Heavenly Father is a *conscience-clearing phenomenon!* That's His *specialty*. I mean ...

If the blood of bulls and goats ... sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, **[in the OT]** how much *more* shall the blood of *Christ*, who ... offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from *dead works* to serve the *living* God? – Hebrews 9:13-14 NKJ



And if guilt-driven folks are *first* on the hit list, a close second's gotta be the anger-driven. When you're *overcome* with *anger*, **do you clam up or blow up?** I *clam* up, and *clam* up, and *clam* up, and *blow* up! It *resets itself*. Ever said: "I'll *never forgive* them for *what they did!*" That's about as dumb as *drinking poison* so *they'll die*. Because, **resentment is only deadly to the anger-driven fool doing the resenting!** Simply put:



Resentment kills a fool – Job 5:2 NIV



That *doesn't* mean resentment *won't* kill you if you're *smart*. It means, no *matter* how *smart* you happen to *be*, you'd *be* a *fool* to *hold a grudge*.



Thus says the Lord, your *Redeemer*, and He who formed you from the womb: "I am the Lord, who makes *all* things ... and *drives* **[false]** *diviners mad* **[See? Even He drives people crazy!]** ... and makes their *knowledge foolishness*; **[but]** who *confirms* the *Word* of His *servant*, and *performs* the *counsel* of His *messengers*" – Isaiah 44:24-26 NKJ

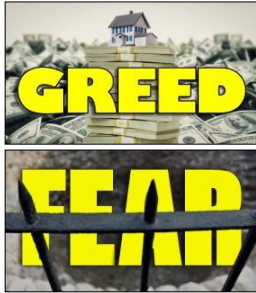
Another *deadly driving force* is approval. Because we were *designed* to need *approval*. But, *from* our *loving Father*. But as we all *know*, all too well, **approval-driven people are controlled by the opinions of others;** *reducing* their *quality of life* to the *likes* of a *performing seal*. So, no *matter* *what* the voice *inside* your *head* has said, **you're not a mistake and you have nothing to prove.** So *stop preforming*. You're *not* a seal. *However* you have *been* sealed. Because:

[God] set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. – 2 Corinthians 1:22 NIV

And if we don't *live in*, and *live out*, *His love*, **we will be driven to seek approval somewhere else, in order to fill that void.** But whenever we *settle* for something *less* than God, or *in addition* to God, we *end up* really *resenting* the *one* whose *approval* we *thought* we *wanted*. Because:

No *one* can serve two masters. Either he will *hate* the one and *love* the other, or he will be *devoted* to the one and *despise* the other. – Matthew 6:24 NIV

And there's only *One* whose *approval* is *selfless* and *loving* and *utterly satisfying*. So, **we're either seeking that, or some other, much lesser, disappointing source.** Which brings us to greed, the *driving force* of the *disappointing source* of stuff! **Greed-driven people desire to acquire and succeed at any cost – including the cost of our own fulfillment.**



We all *begin* by *believing* that more *money*, more *power*, and more *stuff*, will make us more *satisfied*, and more *secure*, and *less afraid*. But by our *mid-thirties* almost everyone *comes* to *realize* that *that's not true*. So why do we keep living as if it were? Cuz we're *driven* to make the *destructive mistake* of **connecting self-worth with net worth.** Even though, *deep down*, we all know that **our value isn't determined by our valuables.** *True satisfaction*, and *significance*, and *security* can *only* be *found* in that which can *never* be *taken away*. And Jesus *couldn't* have *made* His *thoughts* on this *more clear*. Saying:

“Life is *more* than *food*, and the body *more* than *clothes*. ... the *pagan world runs* after all such things, and your Father *knows* that you *need* them. But seek His kingdom, and *these things* will be *given* to you as *well*. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been *pleased* to give you the kingdom.” – Luke 12:23-32 NIV

And that, little flock, *brings* us to *fear*; our *final* top-five *driving force*. **Fear-driven people are confined and tortured in a self-imposed prison of dread.** But isn't it *time* to *break out*? Haven't you *suffered enough*? So *escape!* **Release yourself to the reality of the reason you were created** – to *be loved* and to *love* – and you'll *drive out* the *driving force* of *fear*. Because, our Father, your Creator, is *love*, and is *perfect*, and as you *might* already *know*:

Perfect love *drives out* fear – 1 John 4:18 NIV

And *guilt*, and *anger*, and *approval*, and *greed*. Because *perfect love* is *perfect*. But until you *see* it, and *embrace* it, and *center* your daily life *around* it, you'll *allow* the *force* of *fear* to *keep you* from *becoming* the *true you*, you were *created* to *be*. Because you were *created* to **be loved**, and to **know you're loved**, and to **be driven by His love**. But, *that has* to *begin* with *Him*.

Because *He* himself *gives* all men *life* and *breath* and everything *else* ... God *did* this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each *one* of us. ‘For in Him we *live* and *move* and have *our being*. – Acts 17:25-28 NIV

And *thereby*, our *reason* for *being*.

Which *means* **there's no such thing as illegitimate children, just illegitimate parents.** And *that's* only because of how *they* were *driven* to *react* to the *reality* of that *situation*.

But, **for us it's all about Him, because for Him, it's all about us!**