

This is the Day...Thursday

July 21, 2022

Wait Your Turn

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” (Romans 12:12)

In December of 1976 I received my official North Carolina driver's license. It was one of the most exciting days of my life. I had sat through all the classes. I had passed all the written tests. I had even found a way to parallel park during the driving test. And now I was driving. I was like most young drivers. Lots of confidence, but no experience, and that can be a dangerous combination. But I road down Franklin Boulevard in Gastonia like I was a Rockefeller and had the world in my pocket. One hand on the wheel, windows down with my left elbow on the door. I had it all figured out.

I was confident that I knew and understood all the rules of driving. Drive on the right side of the road. Obey the speed limit. Don't pass on a solid yellow line. Use the turn signal. Don't pass a stopped school bus. They were all easy rules to follow, and Mom and Dad made it clear that breaking one of those rules would result in me riding on two wheels again instead of four. My instructor had trained me very well. But there was one aspect of driving about which my instructor failed to instruct me properly. He did not warn me that there are some people in this world who do not obey the rules. They even make up their own rules!

During my first drive, I was travelling down Second Avenue in Gastonia. Second Avenue is a nice two-lane road which runs alongside Lineberger Park. There is a four-way stop sign where Second and Third Avenues intersect. As I pulled up to the four-way stop, my worst nightmare came true. Two other vehicles also pulled up to the other stop signs at the same time. Immediately, my mind began to race as I tried to remember the rules. We all looked at each other wondering, “Whose turn is it?” After a long delay, one car pulled through the intersection and then the other. By the time the second one was gone, two more vehicles had arrived. I assumed it was my turn and as I began pulling forward, one of those vehicles sped through the intersection and then the other. As another vehicle pulled up, I was becoming aggravated because it was “My Turn!” So, I hit the gas and sped through the intersection.

Sometimes it is hard to wait for your turn. And it is even more difficult when you believe you have been patient long enough. Life can have a way of testing our patience. We work and plan and wait for those things we want, but they remain elusive. We want that new house or that better job. We want to get past that illness or have an answer for that big decision. But sometimes it can seem like our turn never comes and we just want to hit the gas and move forward.

On this day which God has given you, if you find yourself waiting at one of those stop signs of life, be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Your turn is coming and only God knows the best time.