

DEVOTIONAL

WEEK ONE *Drive through it*

by: Lori Doner Jones



STARTING OVER
when it's time to let go, and let God

Over the past summer I spent most of my time in this little gazebo tent in my backyard. My husband started to call it my gazebonacle, because this is where I started each day, and where I ended up at the end of the day, looking for what God had to tell me. One such day my thoughts turned to this phrase: "You can drive through it....".

It's a line from a movie- which I haven't seen or even thought of in years, and yet on this summer morning, out of nowhere came those words..."You can drive through it" and I knew what it meant... I knew that's what I had been waiting to hear.

Now, I am not saying God speaks to me through action movies, but I think He does guide my thoughts to silly anecdotes to write devotionals about, and it's through thinking and writing these, that I can lean in to what God is trying to show me and teach me.

I think sometimes life feels a bit like a racetrack- where I am racing towards something or some result, and everyone else is rushing around me. It's busy, chaotic, and filled with noise and danger, maybe some pain and hardship, and sometimes, I feel a bit out of control.

As a teenager, I was a big Tom Cruise fan -in the 90's he made a movie called "Days of Thunder" where he's a racecar driver. The story goes something like this - he's a thrill seeking guy who really knows nothing about cars, but he can drive, and he gets partnered with a veteran racing personality that is put in place to manage and take care of the car. Played by Robert Duvall, "Harry" doesn't like Cole Trickle (Cruise's character) at all in the beginning, but quite predictably, he evolves into a mentor for the young racer. They grow in fondness for each other and there's a sense of trust that develops between the two unlikely partners. Cole ends up in an accident about midway through the movie which gives him a sense of trepidation about his job - maybe makes him feel the danger a little more than before, and makes him nervous. In the last race, the one Cole has been working toward the whole season, this fear climaxes. About midway through the race, an accident happens on the track. You can hear Harry in his earpiece instructing him: "there's an accident on turn 3, there's cars spinning down the track.... There's oil at the bottom - You have to go high..."- Harry has a view of the road ahead that Cole can't see. He's in his ear telling him how to navigate the danger ahead, he's trying to lead him away from trouble and trying to guide him. But Cole can't hear him...You can see Harry is very concerned about Cole, as the cars spin around him and Cole stops interaction entirely on the headset.

Cole goes silent, his fear rushes in and he's deep inside his own mind, circulating around in his uncertainty, paralyzed by fear; all he can see ahead is smoke and chaos mixed with flashbacks of his previous accident. He can't see for himself where to go, or what moves to make. His view is obstructed, and he's painfully aware that one wrong move could cost him everything. He's afraid...he's been here before...he's gripped by fear and uncertainty. In his earpiece he hears Harry calling to him, urging him to come out of his trance-like state, and saying this: "You can drive through it... Cole.... I know it in my heart, you can drive through it, "



And so, the decision becomes can Cole trust that voice in his ear? Can he trust that Harry can see what he cannot. Can he put his life in Harry's hands...Can he drive through it?

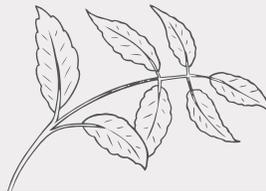
I feel like these are the words God gave me that day in the gazebonacle. "You can drive through it..." In that moment, on that day, all I could see was smoke and the unknown – it felt like I was speeding out of control, and there it was... a voice in my ear saying – "You can drive through it...." You don't need to see the other side right now.... Drive through...."

In times like that, when we are faced with life's hardships, and we are smack dab in the middle of something that has gripped our heart, I think there's part of us that wants to stop and examine all the wreckage – wants to stop on the track and make sure we see every twisted piece, take a mental inventory of every artifact and broken fragment laying on the track. We want to ask "why". We want God to explain it to us, rather than guide us through. We want to wallow in the destruction, rather than speed by without a second glance and keep moving, when we know that's the safest thing to do. We want to see through the smoke, and see the answers, when often God's plan does not include answers today – or maybe not for a long time.

Cole, in a split second decision trusts in Harry, and punches the gas, taking the outside wall, drives into the smoke and danger and through to his victory. One second of indecision, potentially changes the outcome. If he hit the brakes instead of the gas, maybe he crashes. If he stops to look, he probably dies... But instead he trusts in Harry. He's at a precipice moment – the moment where he needs to choose fear - or faith. Of course, it's a movie and real life isn't quite so exciting. In real life the moment doesn't always end in joyful victory.

But we still have those precipice moments, don't we? Moments, where we have to choose to keep going, to keep in the race, to persevere, and maybe moments where we need to start over entirely. Maybe those moments of starting over for you feel like a lot like an impending destruction. In these moments we cannot predict or control the outcome – they simply require us to "let go, and let God",...

God never said following Him would be safe. He never promised us a life without chaos, smoke and danger. In fact, He promises that as believers, life might feel a whole lot like being on a dangerous racetrack. But when we face life's troubles, we **can** drive through it, because if we are listening, He will be in our ear, guiding us through the wreckage, through the smoke, and the things we cannot see, and cannot understand. He doesn't always clear our path for us, but He helps us navigate it, and we can trust Him. Even if the moment doesn't end in victory, He assures us that our triumph IS coming. The race isn't over yet and all I want is to finish well. I can drive through it... and so can you.



you are not alone...

Do you need Prayer?
Connect with us through our prayer team at
pray@springvale.org

Or reach out to our women's ministry team at
women@springvale.org

This week's speaker:
lridonerjones@hotmail.com



WHAT IN THE WORLD
DOES THAT HAVE TO DO
WITH THE YEAR OF

Jubilee

You may be asking yourself right now – what does this devotional have to do with this week's teaching on the Year of Jubilee?

Good question! I might be stretching here– but this is what I think!!

In my video I wanted to stress the concept of restoration and reset in the Jubilee; the idea of "starting over". But there's another big concept in the Year of Jubilee for us to learn from, as equally important to Starting Over; and that's about trusting God for His provision and believing that He will care for us.

How can we start over, how can "we let go and let God..." if we aren't fully secure that He loves us and He is able to see us through?

Celebrating the year of Jubilee, for the Israelites, required trusting God completely for His provision. It was, metaphorically, about "driving into the unknown" and surrendering our own ability to see what was coming next. The law stated that every seventh year the ground was to be unplanted and not worked. That made the 49th year a sabbatical year and was then followed by the Jubilee in the 50th year, so the ground was to be left fallow for two years ! No new crops could be planted during this time, until the third year, and then they would have to wait until the third year's harvest before food was available. They would have to depend on God to provide. Imagine that! It would be for us, like not getting paycheque for three years! The people were to trust God - totally and fully – and drive through it.... without being able to see what was ahead...

Prayer:

Lord, thank you that you never leave us, that you are always the safe and trustworthy voice that is close-by, that even when we don't want to listen, you are near and your mercies are fresh each day. Help us to trust you, when we cannot see the answers. Help us to wait on you and your provision; your wisdom and your timing. Help us to drive through, when you say it's safe, and let you take control.