

Freedom?

Being homesick is a common symptom for college students like myself.

So I take every chance I get to come home. I've had a few different opportunities to go home for a few days this first semester of college. The most memorable was the weekend of our bye week for football. So it was refreshing to have a bye week and be able to go home. Little did I know that I would have a drive back home that meant a lot to me.

To start my trip as a broke college student I had to ask my dad for gas and food money like usual. It's comforting that I have someone to financially provide for me but at the same time I wish I could take care of myself. So I filled up at the nearest gas station and got myself a snack. I ended up having trouble with my phone the whole trip because my data was running out which was a real pain in the butt. I still need to get with my dad to help pay for this if you remember me saying he was financially responsible for me.

I was on my way with a broken phone, a full tank of gas, and an open road in front of me that I would be on for 4+ hours. Like many I love the freedom I have when I'm behind the wheel of my 2015 Toyota Tacoma with the ability to go wherever I want. I was thinking about a lot of different things on the road trip as I was driving. It was nice to not be able to use my phone other than messages, maps, and music because I wanted to control my environment. Most of the time you find out you don't actually have as much control as you think you do.

I was just driving along and the long road I had been cruising on had unexpectedly come to a halt. There were about 6 cars stopped in front of me behind a stop sign with a lady sitting in a chair monitoring the situation. I was very confused about what was

happening but I figured it was some kind of road work but I couldn't tell because the road had a big bend in it. I was very impatient at first and was inside my truck talking to myself getting frustrated because I can. I agreed with myself that I'd wait to see what happened because it must have been some kind of convoy deal where they all released us at once. The clock was ticking as minutes upon minutes had passed and I started getting restless and frustrated like anyone would expect from randomly being stopped for a reason that was a mystery.

I finally broke and decided to get out of line and drive past everyone and the stop sign and the lady monitoring everything. I knew what I was doing probably wasn't ok but I did it anyway. But I was in my truck and I was behind the wheel and I was determined to do it anyway. As I drove by the lady I knew I messed up. She stood up and said hey what are you doing as I drove by. All I could think was that I didn't care because I was tired of waiting. I drove past her and kept going but I didn't get far before I was unexpectedly spooked by a large convoy of cars following behind a truck with hazard lights directing them through where I had just come from about 30 yards behind me.

Without hesitation I immediately pulled over because I knew I was supposed to wait and that I wouldn't get away with my prideful scheme. Usually it doesn't work out in your favor anyway, right? I wasn't at all shocked when the lady in the truck leading traffic leaned out her window and yelled "Hey, what are you doing passing up my stop sign like that?" I felt slightly embarrassed but I thought to myself that she couldn't do anything other than yell at me so what did that matter.

After everyone had driven past on that side the truck turned around and started the new escort to the unknown road ahead that had caused the annoyances that I was experiencing. It was now my turn and opportunity to get in line and follow the lead because I had realized she knew best and there must have been a reason I had to wait. Oftentimes it's hard to wait in traffic without getting impatient and jumping the gun like I did which ultimately could've caused me a lot of trouble.

We drove for a good while before I finally understood why I had to wait. But it was because they were giving the road a fresh new pavement of asphalt. I could've definitely gotten myself into trouble with this one because there were parts of the road that were still fresh that weren't closed off. I felt a sense of relief after I had found this out. What was once impatient anger towards my sense of freedom being taken away soon turned into the feeling of comfort that a little bit of my freedom was taken away so that I could ultimately drive safely and be protected from getting myself into trouble.

As a college student I can speak for many other college students that if it was up to us we would do literally everything the way we wanted but it can't always workout that way. Yes, it is annoying and a pain at times but usually it is easy to come to terms with because we realize we are being kept from future trouble and stress by just having a little freedom withheld from us.

Everything moving forward about my trip was normal. I made it to my destination after a long trip that had a temporary halt in it that ultimately showed me a great lesson and helped shape a new idea about automobility and my freedom. Even though I was to do everything my way all the time, I can't always do that because there are consequences.

I also learned that I need to learn to trust the authorities in my life that sometimes put a hold on my freedoms because it will serve me well in the long run. I have learned to be patient and content with my circumstances and to be still where I am.

Sometimes to get to a brighter tomorrow you have to sacrifice that which will occasionally bind you.

Whether good or bad, freedom is a gift that God granted us.

Make sure to use it wisely.