

YOU CAN IF YOU WANT TO... BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO

Ben Kinchlow

A "revelation" is usually associated with the spiritual aspect of our lives, and many times it has a direct religious connotation. However, "revelation" simply means the unfolding of something that had previously been hidden. It does not mean that it is completely unknown; it just means it has been hidden from **you**.

I experienced just such a revelation some years ago. I was driving down a highway in central Florida at about 80 miles an hour. It was a bright beautiful day and the highway was clear and uncrowded. Occasionally another car would approach in the distance and then flash past me at about the same speed. It occurred to me that if another driver veered into my lane just as we passed each other, we would smash together at a combined impact of 160 miles an hour!

Just then a very strange thought flashed across my mind; "*Why are you driving on this side of the road, Ben?*" "Well," I answered myself, "This is the side of the road I'm **supposed** to drive on!" Then this thought: *Do you know you can cross over to the **other** side?* "Yes," I thought, "I could, but I'm not supposed to!" Then this thought: *Why do all the oncoming cars stay on that side of the road? It's not as if there's a wall down the middle; there's no wall, just a yellow line. Yet we all stay on our own sides. Amazing!*

As I drove along, I thought about that yellow line. The asphalt on that side was just as smooth and level as on my side, and there was no traffic in front or behind me; and, if a car did come, I had plenty of time to get back on my side. *Why not ease over and drive in the other lane?* I quickly warned myself, "Don't cross that yellow line!" *But you can!* "I'm not supposed to!" *But you can, there's nothing stopping you!*

Now that was a very simple, yet profound, thought. I really **could** cross that yellow line and drive in the opposite lane if I chose to. After checking the rearview mirror and looking up and down the road, I gently eased into the lane on the other side of the yellow line. I was traveling in the lane reserved for oncoming traffic. Suddenly, my heart began pounding, my palms began to sweat; "This is wrong! I'm not supposed to be here!"

A quick turn of the wheel and I was back in the proper lane. I wondered...what had I been afraid of? Why was my heart pounding? Why were my hands sweating? There was no oncoming traffic, I could see for miles, and it was perfectly safe. I did it again, and this time I forced myself to drive about a mile down the empty highway and then pulled back into my lane...and stayed there.

As I continued safely on my way (staying on **my** side of the road), I had a revelation. What the saints of old called an epiphany, a sudden and exciting glimpse into one of the deep truths that God has given us.

Like most people, I had been going through life believing I was completely trapped in, or restricted by, imaginary yellow lines. I wasn't sure where they came from...parents, neighbors, peers, or my imagination. Sometimes I even thought God had drawn these yellow lines, and they had become impassable barriers.

At this point, let me clearly state, without reservation, that I am not advocating driving on the wrong side of the road, breaking legally established laws, or violating the rights of any other human being in any way.

The reality is, most of the yellow lines in our lives exist solely in our minds. Most of us either do not recognize it or we are afraid to exercise the God-given freedom we all possess...**the power to choose.**

The truth is, we have absolute and total freedom to ignore any barriers, to cross over those imaginary "yellow lines," and cruise freely along the highway of life.

Out of that moment of revelation came this freedom for me: "*As a human being made in the image and likeness of God, I have the awesome God-given right to exercise my freedom to **choose.** Only **I** have the legitimate authority to exercise choice for myself, and God Himself will not abrogate that right.*"