

# Driving With Our Brakes On

## Does this describe our Christian life?

**Many Christians live like a man driving with his brakes on.**

The car running with its brakes set is not standing still, not quite, but it is making a hard job out of an easy one. It is labouring unnecessarily, using more fuel than it should and sending up a stench from its overheated brake linings. And if the situation isn't corrected, it will not be going anywhere very long.

It is, of course, friction that retards the car's progress, for all brakes work by friction. The car is temporarily at odds with itself; one surface wants to revolve and another surface in contact with it wants to stand still. **This clash of purposes sets up friction; and friction always wins at last. Nothing can continue to move if it is opposed by enough friction.**

Even the most perfectly operated car cannot escape some resistance to its forward motion. There will always be gravity, air pressure and the unavoidable pressures of working parts that will tend to slow it down. But these are figured in and overcome by the steady application of energy to the wheels. **It's the brakes that give a car a hard time.**

Now all this would seem to be a parable of some kind.

The Christian need not expect to escape Opposition. As long as Satan stands to resist the sons of God, as long as the world and the flesh remain, the believing man will meet Opposition. Sometimes it will be sharp and obvious, but **mostly it will be just the hidden and unsuspected friction set up by circumstances.** No one need be anxious about this, however, for God has figured it in and made allowance for it. That kind of friction does little real harm. **It will not retard progress much, and the very necessity of overcoming opposition will but add strength to the Christian's moral muscles.**

**But there is another kind of friction which retards spiritual progress and does real injury to the soul. It is the friction created by inward maladjustment.**

Our Lord had this in mind when He spoke of the value of the "single eye."

**Matthew 6:22-23** [King James] *"The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"*

James referred to the same thing when he told of the wavering man of double mind who was unstable in all his ways.

**James 1:5-8** [NIV] *"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."*

**While the heart is at cross-purposes with itself, there can be no inward harmony, only discord and carnal heat that slowly wear out the life.**

**One source of friction is resentment.**

**To hold bad feeling against another** is to put the brakes on; no matter how sincerely we desire to go on in the holy way, **we are held back by the grinding of resentment within us.** Morally resentment is static and will brake to a stop any soul that will harbour it. It is vitally important to remove the

pressure that is checking forward motion. This we can do by forgiving our enemies and accepting pardon and cleansing from the Lord.

**To name all the possible causes of inward friction would be to list the works of the flesh in their entirety.**

**Romans 7:18-25** [NIV] *“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do, this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law **but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind** and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”*

**The flesh waging war against the spirit [mind]: that is, it seeks to stop the motions of the maturing heart and bring it to a standstill.** Or, failing that, it will put as much pressure as possible on our spiritual life and slow its progress as much as it can.

**The sad thing is that so many of us seem willing to let things go on that way.** We “grovel here below,” creeping forward painfully and at a snail’s pace, when we might be racing unhindered toward the prize.

**Let’s check up on ourselves. Possibly we may need to take the brakes off.**