

Lessons on the X-15

When I was 3, I had an X-15.

Picture a small trike with more noise than brakes – and a whole lot of reckless joy.

I loved racing down hills on that thing – the wind in my face, the rattling wheels, the rush of freedom.

But I had one problem: I didn't trust the pedals to slow me down. Instead, I'd press my shoes against the concrete. It worked... sort of. But it shredded my sneakers and bloodied my toes.

It drove my mom crazy – but it did keep me out of her hair.



My parents told that story for years...

it revealed something true about me:

I've always tried to control the uncontrollable.

I love adventure... to a certain point of fear.

Fear is a balancing act.

It's good to have fear – otherwise, we might manufacture our own premature demise. (Like racing your X-15 off a ledge into oncoming traffic.)

But fear can also keep us inside.

Keep us fortifying our overblown rainy-day funds.

Keep us binge-watching the latest on Netflix.

Keep us blaming people, parties, and our own pitiful limitations.

And keep us from ever testing the thrill of the X-15 we call life.

We try to control pain – both the kind we feel and the kind we cause.

We try to manage our image and outcomes.

Sidenote: Sometimes we even try to manage God's image – keeping Him neat and predictable– a Sunday School friendly version rather than this boundless ground-shaking Savior.

The Lion will not dwell in our cage.

Safety can be appreciated,

but life won't stay inside the lines. Collisions happen. Hearts break. People disappoint us.

And yet – this is where life actually begins.

To avoid the mess, we turn to our self-invented tools:

People-pleasing.

Perfectionism.

Escapism.

Addiction – the “easy button” we press to avoid our deep need for connection.

They promise relief, but they deliver isolation.

The truth is, life with Jesus isn't tidy. It's wild. It's unpredictable.

It's the rush of the hill – with a Savior who says, “Trust Me. Don't drag your feet.”

Surrender isn't giving up; it's opening up.

It's connection. It's risk. It's grace.

Maybe the invitation today is this:

Trade your torn shoes for courage.

Stop trying to control the ride.

Be like Jesus— Live without cages.

There are no cages in heaven — and the only ones here are the ones we build ourselves.

I'm still that kid on the X-15, learning (again) how to let go and trust the wind.

I want to live like Jesus lived— Cage Free.