

Challenged by Life...Powered by God

(Case Studies in Christian Challenges)

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This monthly series of case studies illustrate the challenges presented to us as Christians. Facing these common challenges is inevitable. How we respond to those challenges is what defines us as human beings and whether others observe and mimic or take notice and mock. It should be our desire as Christians to serve as that coveted example worth mimicking 100% of the time. See if this case study has presented similar decision points and challenges in your life. I would love to hear your reactions, thoughts and alternative approaches in the comments section below.

The Case of Broken Operations

When you have a 4 year old grandson you have the constant challenge of having to repair items because in his world, lots of things get broken. They get broken mainly out of being inquisitive and learning about life. Or in some cases things get broken because of excitement, exuberance and not understanding how to be careful and gentler. So we have a few choices when addressing these challenges. One option is to not let him play with things, constantly watch him and don't let him engage in activities that are fun and exciting. That sure doesn't sound good! Another option is to yell and berate him when he breaks something so that he knows he did something bad and shouldn't touch that item or play in that way again. That certainly sounds horrible as well? So how do we address this challenge?

Choose to Turn Negative to Positive

I have chosen to take the challenge of breakage to the teaching moment of fixing things. Everything that has to be repaired has become a grandson teaching moment as we team up to make things right again. Not only is this a good activity between us, it provides a chance to learn and build confidence. When asked, "What can you and PaPa fix? His answer is ANYTHING!" Somehow, I just don't think that can ever be a bad approach.

Lessons from Mom and Dad

Mom taught patience and understanding when faced with the challenges of youthful exuberance. Once when my dad complained a bit that we were wearing out the grass in the backyard playing baseball, my mom put an end to the discussion very quickly with this comment. "Just relax and enjoy...we will have plenty of time to raise grass after we raise our children!"

Dad taught me a valuable lesson about fixing things. He stated, "Before you can fix something you have to understand how it works. If there is a prong in a machine that is suppose to come in

contact with a hook to make some action occur, that item does not work if the prong is broken off. Knowing how something works allows you to figure out how to repair it.”

How Do We Apply Lessons Learned?

What Mom and Dad have both taught me is how to apply those two valuable lessons to handling the challenges of real life. After 73 years of marriage they have put patience and understanding to work every day. The challenges of life never go away; it is our reaction to those challenges that makes the difference. Has every day of my parent’s life been good and has everything that has happened been positive? ...Of course not. When those challenges occurred they fell back on the principles of knowing how something works. If you focus on the foundations of love, respect, faithfulness, hard work and a belief in God with a strong desire to follow the path he has chosen for us, you have the ability to repair anything that is broken.

Thanks Mom and Dad for showing me how I could “fix anything!” If I can successfully pass that concept on, then your influence will live on for generations to come.

What are your thoughts?