

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 a Positive Challenge

Human beings generally view challenges as something negative that is happening. That is not totally the case. Positive changes or circumstances that occur can introduce significant challenges that must be managed. Here are some examples:

- Winning the lottery! It is staggering the number of lottery winners who end up losing all the money and many friends along with it. The success of having new found money must be managed in regards to finances as well as the personal relationships.
- Starting a new job! The excitement of the new position can present problems such as working too hard and trying to learn everything in one day, or ignoring friends and family during a time when you really need their support the most.
- Moving to a new, exciting city! Seems like that would be easy. But what about leaving your old friends, the challenge of making new relationships, the stress of finding your way around or locating new services, etc.
- Having a new grandchild! What a joyous event! But what about the feelings of current grandchildren? Does it change your abilities to provide loving, family based day care?
- Moving into a new home! Can we really afford this? Are the neighbors nice? What if we need to sell?

The List Goes On and On...

I just listed 5 events in the previous section that on the surface seem wonderful and they are. But that does not mean that these events do not present challenges. This is a partial list to get you thinking but the list of positive challenges can go on and on. You may have been feeling very good about your positive list before and hopefully you still feel that way. You should never have to apologize for good things happening in your life. This thought provoking commentary is about avoiding the common errors of managing positive events in our life and turning them into negative challenges.

Following God's Simple Direction Will Guide Us

God's plan for life is very simple. Consistently put the needs of others ahead of your own. If you come back to that concept with any challenge you have or decision that must be made, you can never go wrong. It's so simple, but often difficult for humans to execute. So what does this mean? How about in the example of the lottery winner, you set up college funds for your children or grandchildren, make automatic donations to your church, establish a trust fund to provide grants for meaningful community projects and hire a trusted advisor to make sure money was available to meet basic needs. With that scenario, do you think any lottery winner would go broke? So work your way on down the list, tell your loved ones that they are more important to you than any job and then back it up with your actions. Make sure your grandchildren know how important each of them is to you. Tell your friends that you can never replace them. You get the idea...

Matthew 20:16

"So the last shall be first and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."

What are your thoughts? If you have thoughts or comments on this challenge or any previous challenge, please send an e-mail to KevinShrake@yahoo.com.