

Investigation



The Locksmith

The importance of showing up was brought to my attention the other day. Not by something I did, but by someone I observed.

I was having a bad day!

On Sunday I broke a tooth. I had scheduled a dentist appointment for that Tuesday and when I got there, the dentist said it could not be repaired and must be extracted. She asked if I was prepared for that. I didn't see any reason to wait so I told her to go ahead. She started working on it. Apparently, even though it was broken, it was attached firmly. As she worked on it, I could see she was getting a little frustrated. I wanted to say something, but it is hard to talk when your mouth is numb and has a bunch of stuff in it! She actually accused me of not letting it go! I think she was joking because I wanted it out, too! At one point she made the joke that it was as hard as pulling teeth! Through the pain and tears I managed to laugh. When she took a break and had her hands and tools out of my mouth, I told her about the Navy dentist who had to knock my teeth out. I let her know it wasn't her fault, that it was just the way God had made me! She eventually was successful!

That was when the real trouble started. Before I had gone in, I decided to leave my coat in the truck so that I wouldn't have to keep up with it. Well, when I went to get in my truck, I couldn't find my keys! I had left them in my coat, which was in the truck. I had a spare set, but because it was cold that morning, I had used them to warm up the truck. Both sets were in the truck and the doors were locked!

I thought I might call my wife to get some advice and help. That was when I discovered that my phone was in the truck also! I didn't know what to do, so I prayed. I talked to the receptionist, and she suggested I call a locksmith. I thought I had another set at home, but my house key was with the car keys. I decided to call my wife, Pam, to run it by her and see what she suggested. It is always risky to bring her into my problems, because I knew she would let me know how stupid I am. I had no excuse; I am very stupid sometimes and this was one of them!

Anyway, I got the courage and had the receptionist call her. Well, the first time it was a busy signal, and I was just about going to have a locksmith come. As I waited and worried, pondered, and wondered why this was happening, the receptionist cried out, "Its ringing." She had gotten Pam on the phone.

I talked to Pam and asked for her advice. I told her I thought I had another set at home. She suggested getting someone from work to bring her keys to me and then I could get into the apartment and retrieve the other set. I told her to call around and see if someone would come and help me. She called back and said they were on the way. The man showed up and took me to the apartment. Wouldn't you know it, I couldn't find the other set. I guess it was only stored in my mind!

He took me back and I had the receptionist call a locksmith. When he showed up, I was surprised to find out it wasn't a *he*, but was a *her*.

She seemed rather young, so I asked her how long she had been doing this kind of work. She said three years.

As I watched her work, I was becoming very impressed by her actions. She got some tools out of her van. She first used a balloon type device to put in the door crack to open it a small crack. She then had a piece of vinyl strip that had a string on it. She looked at me, smiled and said, "*This is my favorite tool!*" I asked where she got it. She said she had made it herself. She slid it in and put the string around the lock stem, pulled it tight, and then tried to pull it up. It slipped off a couple of times and she soon gave up on that. She then opened a zipper bag and used a key like device with a pick. The idea was to push each tumbler into position to move the lock. She fiddled around with it for a while and then gave up on that method, too. She kept apologizing and at one point wanted to know if I wanted to just go inside and wait. I think she was trying to get rid of me. I understood that action, because sometimes it is hard to perform when there is an audience. By then I was fascinated watching her work. Mainly because she was following the same steps I would follow in trying to repair things. I recognized the behavior as that of a young technician that someday would be a great technician!

I watched her as she stopped and thought about the next step. She looked in the passenger window and intently spied the keys in the ignition. The ignition key was plugged in, but the door key was hanging visible. She asked if it was the door key. I had put a piece of white tape

on it so that I could tell the difference and I assured her that it was. She stared at it and then got out her laptop and started searching. She found what she was looking for and told me she was going to make a key and see if it would work. She got into her van.

As I waited, I was still wondering why these things had happened. A broken tooth and now these keys locked in the truck. as I waited my mind went back to when I had first started teaching Sunday School. The first Bible book that I taught was *Philippians*.

That was when the Bible really started opening up to me. Before I had learned things from preachers and teachers. But when I started teaching it, God started teaching me out of it. One valuable lesson I learned was from *Philippians 1: 12*

“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;”

What I had learned was what I was experiencing. The things that happened to Paul had a deeper, more important reason than for him to be just living life or experiencing problems. The purpose of life was to use circumstances and opportunities to tell people about Jesus. Finally, God was trying to let me know that the reason I was having a bad day, was to let people know about Him!

Earlier I had tried to witness to the receptionist. As I was trying to tell

her my testimony, we kept getting interrupted. I could sense that she wasn't really interested anyway.

When the locksmith had arrived, I was only about halfway through it. Now it was dawning on me that I needed to talk to this woman. But I needed an opening. She came back with a key and tried it. It didn't work. She again intently stared at the key through the passenger window. At one point she got a little ladder and used it to peer through the windshield. That didn't give her any better view, so she came back to the passenger side. She said, *"Aren't you cold? Why don't you go back in and I will come get you when I get it open?"*

I knew exactly how she was operating! I never like fixing things with an audience. Especially when you are not sure if what you try is going to work! Also, if you make a mistake, you don't want the customer to see it! I was helping a friend of mine install carpet one time. He told me, *"If you make a mistake don't say oops or anything. We don't want to cause the customer alarm. I can fix any mistake you make. Just show me privately!"*

I wasn't going anywhere. By now I was focused and fascinated.

She looked at the laptop and typed a little. She then went back and made another key. I waited and prayed.

She came back and again tried it. Still no success.

Once more she concentrated on the laptop, looking ever so often in the window at the hanging keys. She went and made another one.

She tried it again and it would not open.

Ok. Now was my chance.

I said to her. *“Look, I am a technician and maintenance man at the University. Many times, I will be trying to fix something and not be having good success. Then I remember that I should have prayed beforehand and asked God for help. So, I will stop what I am doing and pray and ask for God’s help. Why don’t we pray about it?”*

She agreed. So, I bowed my head and closed my eyes and started praying out loud.

I prayed for God to give her wisdom. For Him to guide her life and reveal Himself to her and her purpose in life. I specifically prayed and asked Him to help her get this truck door open.

She went back and made another key.

As soon as she put it in, it turned, and the door was unlocked!

She looked at me with a surprised smile on her face! I told her that God was the answer to all her problems. I then gave her a postcard tract and invited her to church. I told her that she would fit right in and that the church I go to is the friendlies church I have ever been involved with.

I stopped there. I want God to work in her life and for Him to reveal Himself to her.

This perfectly illustrates the concept of showing up. I showed up because I had a broken tooth and a busy mind. The dentist showed up and is taking care of my worn-out mouth. The locksmith showed up and by applying the steps of fixing things, was able to unlock my truck. God showed up and did what He does brilliantly. He solved my problem and is working on her problems.

The side story behind all of this is that my wife did not give me a hard time about being so stupid. Being the prudent woman that she is, she suggested I give her the extra key so that she has it on her key ring for the next time I make this bone-headed mistake!

Hopefully, there will be the desired conclusion of this story. I am praying that God will bring this girl to church and will save her soul! She is in His capable hands!



All writings, podcasts, and videos are copyrighted. Please develop your own ideas in your own words. While the material is copyrighted, the ideas presented here may be freely used to bring glory to God and make yourself and others successful! Please learn from what God has taught me! You are permitted to read and learn from this material. You may print, teach, and distributed it to others. Just don't take credit for it!