

May 30, 2010
Journaling Our Life's Experiences
2Corinthians 11:23-29

If we would stop and really think about it, each of us has a wealth of life experience. Some of that is wonderful to recall, and some of it is distressing. These experiences are a valuable part of what God has been at work doing in your life. We need to remember today that God does not waste a hurt. We need to remember that our experiences shape our ability to minister to others. And we can also remember that God wants us to use our experiences in some ministry.

Why is job experience of major importance to a prospective employer?

1. 2Cor 11:23-29. When you see this listing of Paul's hardships, how do you react? Which one would have been the worst for you to face? Which one would have been no big deal? What are the qualifications you could list on YOUR resume?
2. Philippians 1:9-14. Paul said his experiences helped something. What was it? How? How can your actions bring praise and glory to God? What if that experience of yours was a hardship? When we have a hurtful experience, does that cloud our view of God? Do we forget his goodness and love? What are some of our typical responses about God when we have an unpleasant circumstance?
3. Romans 8:28. This is easy to read, but hard to stick with it. Do we *really* believe this verse? How would our perspective change if we *truly* believe this verse. When something difficult comes our way, what is typically our first question for God? What is a better question? Do you really believe that everything that has happened to you has been for your good?
4. James 1:2-4. When was the last time you did this? How would you describe your attitude toward trials? What is it that enables us to respond the way James prefers?
5. 2Corinthians 1:3-4. Have you experienced this Godly comfort during a trial? Have you had a chance to share that same comfort to someone else in a similar situation?
6. Philippians 3:7-11. As you look back on your life, how has every experience enabled you to know and serve Jesus better?

Spend a few minutes recording at least one experience in each of these categories:

MY SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES - How you became a Christian, times you've trusted God, etc.

MY DIFFICULT EXPERIENCES- A trial you faced that you could use to encourage a fellow Christian

MY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES- school or seminar training, books that have changed you, etc.

MY MINISTRY EXPERIENCES - church work experience you can share with others

These experiences help shape who you are in Christ, and how you can effectively be a servant of the Lord. Your particular situations may prepare you for a quite unique place and time of service.

Will you determine today to allow God to use your unique story and experience to shape a Godly future for yourself, your family, and your Christian community?

As we think about our mission in life, it really is to 'connect to Jesus and to each other'.
Won't you today make a commitment to do both?