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The Crystal Ball

By Staci Stallings

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Wouldn't it be nice to be able to see into the future? Especially at those times in life when the road forks, and you have no idea which fork is the best choice. You could choose X, and it could work out marvelously—or it could be a total flop. Or you could not choose X and wish for the rest of your life you had.

Recently I've found just such a crystal ball. No, it doesn't literally allow us to see into the future, but it does allow for the best decision to be made at every fork in the road every single time. What is this crystal ball? Where can you get one?

Well, think for a moment. If I had this crystal ball, what would you be willing to pay for it? Would it be worth ten dollars? A hundred? A thousand? Remember, it will unerringly tell you exactly what is the best thing to do every single time. Surely that would be worth a few dollars in a trade.

Now, what would you say if I told you that this crystal ball is monetarily free. That's right. It costs nothing at all... However, it does require something, and that something is giving up the control you think you have over a situation. It means giving up the notion that you know what the best outcome in a situation is. Here is reality: You don't. You can't. You don't have all of the information to know what is the best outcome in a situation.

But if you don't, then who does? One name: God.

Of course, God who is everywhere in all times and all moments knows. Why? Because unlike you, he can see the whole picture. He can see every ramification of every possible decision in any given situation that you can make. In short, He can see with perfect clarity the choice you should make.

While listening to Bruce Wilkenon's excellent audio, "A Life God Rewards," I heard one line that he really doesn't go on to discuss and expand on. It's more of a transition line pulling together two other thoughts. However, in that line, I realized a lesson that I had used but hadn't put words to. He said:

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"As the only person to come from eternity to earth and then return to eternity, Jesus knows the whole truth—past, present, and future—and can give you a one of a kind perspective," Wilkenson says. "For example, he can see your present from a moment far out in your infinite future and tell you exactly how to prepare for what is to come."

Wow! What an unbelievably crystal ball that is! Think about it. If Jesus loves you beyond measure and He wants only what is best for you in the long run (and that means the really long run of eternity), doesn't it make sense to allow Him to guide your life?

Unfortunately that's not how most of us pray. We say things like, "God, if you'll only let me get this job, then I'll be happy." "God, I just need a way to get to work. I'll be perfectly happy with that 20-year-old Honda. Please, if I can just have that..." And God says, "Well, okay, I really wanted to give you this

brand new Lexus, but I want to make you happy, so here's your Honda."

What I'm suggesting here is a radical change in thinking. Instead of being outcome-specific in our prayers, wouldn't it be better to take our hands off the wheel and let Jesus decide what's best for us?

True story, my first book had been in the hands of one company for more than a year. They had been promising during the course of that year that it would be out "next month." However, the "next months" had strung together to make a year, and I was getting frustrated. Throughout the course of the year, I had gotten these little pushes that I was to put out a second book with a different company, but I resisted. I didn't want two books out at the same time. I didn't want anyone in the first company mad because I went with a second company. In short, I was paralyzed by a decision that could radically change my future, and I wasn't at all sure which choice to make.

So, I made a deal with God. I basically told Him that I didn't know what He wanted me to do, and I didn't want to make a mistake. So if He didn't want me to put out the second book, He needed to get someone from company one to contact me in the next two weeks. Then I put that decision aside and went to work on other things. When the deadline came, I still hadn't heard anything, so I said, "Okay, 24 more hours, and then I send it in."

Still nothing. So I sent the second book. Two days later company one emailed to give me a publicist. When she later questioned the second book, I said, "God made the decision not me." You know, I have never regretted that decision—even though it was highly unconventional.

I'm not saying you should go around giving God ultimatums. I now realize a simpler method is just to put every day in His hands. Give Him the reins of deciding what's most important for your time. Then when things work out, you know it was His will. When things don't work out like you expected, it was His will, and He has a better idea.

Then all you have to do is do your best, work as hard as you can, and let Him make the decisions. Pray only for guidance and for peace no matter what happens, and I think you will be amazed at the number of incredible answers that will start popping up in your life.

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Life is meant to be lived—not just survived. Find out how. Visit StaciStallings.com. You'll feel better for the experience!

Through The Looking Glass

By tony dean

My mother used to take me along when she visited an old lady down a cobbled lane who had a crystal ball on her dining room table and a pack of playing cards. My mother was superstitious and really believed a lot of what she was told by the old lady. She wanted to know what the future held not only for herself but for me, her only little boy. I was about five or six years old at the time, and used to gaze at the reflected images upon the crystal ball of the sunlit window behind me and the lace curtains, although the old lady would place her hands at either side of the crystal ball and say that she could see the future and told of what she saw, I could only see the reflection of that window with the lace curtains. The old lady was either a genuine medium or was just guessing what my mother wanted to hear to keep her coming back for more of the same, and make herself a small income to supplement her pension.

We all of us are seekers of knowledge to enhance our lives and most of us would admit we are a little superstitious but may not believe that anyone could foretell the future. If we really needed to know the future as regards our business, in particular, we would look at 'trends', and facts and figures on charts and graphs, so we may be able to predict where our business is going, we none of us would trust in an old lady with a crystal ball. If we wanted to be successful in business we would arm ourselves with sufficient knowledge to make it happen, and where else to look for knowledge but on the internet where all manner of business books are online, written by experienced business people who have 'been there—done that'.

The internet is the first place people now go to find something out, whether it be for personal use or for business use, for there is a mind-boggling explosion of knowledge on the internet, most of which we are never going to read, simply because we would need to live to 900 years old to be able to find the time and that's supposing no more knowledge gets added in the meantime. In that 900 years, inevitably, a lot of the information will go out of date, so we need to live another 900 years to catch up on the 'updates'. This could go on forever, for there would always be more knowledge coming along we need to keep track of.

Yes, the internet is a wonderful depository of knowledge, the knack of using it to full advantage is to keep trawling and discovering new web sites and then having found some we like, for fresh new content, regular updates, etc., bookmark them in your browser, so you can find them again.

None of us are going to live to 900 years, so we need to maximize our time on the internet, for there are approximately three billion web pages indexed by Google, and more are being added every minute of every day, even while you have been reading this.

Tony Dean is a published author and runs a web site at

Through The Looking Glass
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