

“Easy” Fixes

At one point of my life, I was a fair “shade-tree” mechanic. Though having never worked specifically as one, I had “turned wrenches” on practically everything from single-cylinder two-stroke “weed-eaters” to replacing engines, transmissions, clutches, hydraulic motors, and such on passenger vehicles, “big” trucks (the kind with huge diesel engines and air brakes), bulldozers and construction equipment, and lots and lots of farm tractors... which became the primary source of my reputation.

So, brethren (and even folks that knew me from the community) often asked for my help with their “tractor problems.” On one such occasion, an elderly brother from church sheepishly asked if I could come out and “take a look” at his tractor. His grandsons had been “bush-hogging” (using a tractor with a heavy duty mower to clear bushes, brush, and small trees) to clear shooting lanes down through the woods for the upcoming deer season when the normally faithful green machine died suddenly and refused to restart. Though it still had all the necessary fuel and fluids and the engine would “spin,” as he explained, the “old Deere” simply declined to run. With great difficulty, they had retrieved it from deep in the woods and managed to even push it back into the barn, and had subsequently tried “everything we know” to revive the beast, but nothing worked. As he told me what to him was a baffling and lamentable tale, I thought I already knew what was wrong. But, I agreed nonetheless for him to take me to see if I could resuscitate the beloved but deceased longtime member of the family.

He parked in front of the old barn and obligingly opened the gate for me. As he was reclosing the gate to keep the curious cows out, and thus had his back to me, I immediately spotted what I had suspected to be the culprit - the wire that had been jerked from its terminal on the fuel shut-off valve on top of the injector pump by the brush “the boys” had traversed. I quickly stuck the bare wire back in its previous location and hit the starter button and the “old girl” immediately roared back to life. Astounded, he whirled around and completely abandoned closing the gate. “What did you do?” he managed to close his gaped mouth long enough to ask. Being the sometimes “devilish” preacher that I am, “I laid hands on it and healed it!” was my quick retort.

It only took a couple of minutes more to permanently secure the wire back to its former position and function. My “work” was done. It was an “easy fix,” but he still insisted on taking me back into town and buying my lunch in grateful appreciation. What they had “worked on” for several days took mere seconds to repair to full working order. The difference between their efforts and mine was simple: **experience** – I not only knew how the fuel system and “kill switch” on that particular model worked (electrical power from that little wire was required to open the valve on the injector pump thus allowing life-giving fuel to flow), I had seen and repaired the exact same issue previously on other tractors!

What does this little reminiscence have to do with spiritual things? One of my favorite *proverbs* comes from Proverbs 14:6b, “... **knowledge is easy to him who has understanding.**” Though the proverbial sage assuredly did NOT have tractor fuel injection systems and kill switches in mind, the principle is the same. Sometimes, if not oftentimes, our most baffling, troublesome, continual, and even infuriating problems in

life are “easily fixed” by a little **“knowledge”** and **“understanding.”** And from whence does this **“knowledge”** and **“understanding”** come? Well, tractor/mechanical issues aside, it comes from **God generally**, and **His Word specifically**. Without the benefit of His omniscience, even life’s “little” problems become “BIG,” bewildering, and inevitably impenetrable.

When our lives become a “continual exercise in crisis management” fueled by one seemingly insurmountable problem after another, it may well be that many if not most of them may be “easily fixed” by simply drawing upon the **“knowledge”** and **“understanding”** provided by God in the **divine text of our Bibles**. So rather than pleading for the removal of all of these problematic “issues,” ask Him for **“knowledge”** and **“wisdom”** to properly **understand** and **deal** with them, cf. Jas.1:3,5.

Furthermore, and in keeping with our illustrative narrative above, you might also enlist the help of someone who has “been there” and “done that” before themselves. It might be an “easy fix” for them with their *knowledge* and *understanding* of God’s operator and repair manual (His Word) and the *experienced* they’ve gained from it. (Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA; online at vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)