

GETTING YOUR WRENCH ON THE RIGHT NUT ----- *Willis E. Elliott* #1807

In Breakfast for the Hungry Hearted one Feb'84 Saturday, a hands-on tool-master, Mel Hartzler, opined "An important skill in the art of living is getting your wrench on the right nut." From here on you could write this thinksheet yourself. But it's my paper, so I'll do it. One way is to compare/contrast four situations:

CD (WRONG WRENCH, WRONG NUT)

If it isn't too depressing, remember three of these situations in your own experience. If it is **RIGHT** too depressing, remember a few from history.

E.g., imagine how Adam/Eve felt just after the Garden gate closed with them on the wrong side. (Mark Twain said the whole mess could have been prevented--natural evil eliminated, moral evil refused existence--if God, instead of forbidding the apricot, had forbidden the snake, which then, logically, would have been eaten.) I remember being repeatedly terrified of reciting in school: reciting may have been the right wrench, but I was the wrong nut--so I thought. Later, I saw that my situation-definition had been wrong. Anyway, CD is "out of it" incompetence, at least at first glance. To speak psychiatrically, it's schizophrenia, at least at first glance.

| WRENCH | NUT |
|--------|-----|
| A | B |
| C | D |

BC (RIGHT NUT BUT WRONG WRENCH)

You have a grasp of the problem, but you're prepared to deal with some other problem. Maybe you're resentful that what you've got to offer just doesn't fit; maybe you'd fit if you weren't rigid. Maybe you're able, but unwilling. Maybe you're part of the right wrench: God used a two-part wrench (viz., Moses + Aaron) to move the Pharaoh nut. Or just maybe, perish the thought, you yourself are the wrong wrench for this right nut, this thing needing done now--and you're to get someone else or, even worse for your ego, just get out of the way. Your wrench may be needed, now or later, on some other nut. Maybe "it's time to move," job-wise or geography-wise or both. Or even people-wise: God does not ask folks to hang in with each other till death do they deal. Said J.P. Donleavy in "The Ginger Man": "When you don't have any money, the problem is food. When you have money, it's sex. When you have both it's health, you worry about getting ruptured or something. If everything is simply jake then you're frightened of death."

AD (RIGHT WRENCH BUT WRONG NUT)

You've got something to serve God and the world with, but you're having trouble finding the right nut to get your wrench on. Unemployment or underemployment, e.g. As a young missionary in the Philippines, Frank Laubach couldn't get his gospel wrench on the Muslims till he hit upon teaching literacy. Before the end of his long career he'd set up literacy programs for 93 nations. A perpetual praiser of his was "May my fire enkindle their fire" (for missionaries, "re-enkindle"--e.g., 13Apr37 diary, p.40 of LEARNING THE VOCABULARY OF GOD: A SPIRITUAL DIARY, Upper Room/56). Further note on FL: When our son Mark was 5, FL was delighted with Mark's reading of material written in FL's just-invented phonetic alphabet (in the presence of Mark's parents and FL's family--his wife and son Bob, who now carries on his father's work in his U. of Syracuse professorship). That phonetic alphabet proved to be a universal wrench (which now has several technological parallels).

AB (BOTH RIGHT, WRENCH AND NUT)

Of course this is "where it's at," "what it's all about." Competence, appropriateness, adequacy, relevance, the dignity of labor, shalom in the active mode (complementing peace, shalom in the passive mode).