

Get Rich in 2022!



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Why do you do the things you do? What principles guide your life?

Do you have a “What goes around comes around” philosophy and so you do good to get good back? Or are you a “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” kind of person? Perhaps this is like the first quote but without an

expectation that others will treat you well in return.

Do you think the best about others, knowing that you have no idea what they are going through at any given moment? Do you further this by offering kindness and grace in every area of your life?

Do you have a short-term perspective? In that, you do what feels good now without thought to how it might affect you or others in the future? Or is your perspective more long-term, believing that everything you do can impact you and others in big ways—negative or positive?

What if we combine the good parts of these and put them into one? You do unto others in good ways, in grace-filled ways (because we are all going through something), no matter if you are at home, work, or out and about. You do good, even to the least deserving, because good is what you would want to be done to you. You don’t do good for the purpose of getting good back, you do it because you believe that everything you do or say can make a great and positive impact on others. Wow! How our world would change if this were how each of us lived!

When my husband and I opened our auto repair shop a little over 10 years ago, our children were 18, 11, 9, and 7. Fast forward to now—Jake is 28, Jace is 19, Briella is 17 and Jayden turns 22 today. Good grief, it is like we blinked, and they all became adults. Let’s just leave this here to think about as we rewind the clock.

I’d like to tell you the reason we opened our auto repair shop was only to fulfill our dream of taking the best care of customers while caring for their vehicles. But the truth is, there was more. We were jobless and needed an income. My husband knew this business and though we didn’t know why, we felt called to open our shop.

We scrubbed floors and walls and stairs and hoists. We painted and tiled and did all the paperwork necessary to start a business. We got a loan, ordered equipment, designed our facility. We interviewed, sometimes in paint-stained, grout-covered clothes. We worked endlessly and slept little. I barely remember seeing our kids in those early days.

When we opened our doors on July 1, 2011, swarms of people came through them. Our plan was for me to make our shop pretty and get it off the ground then go back to being a stay-at-home mom. But our plan was not God’s plan.

I was needed to help run the business—doing the behind-the-scenes things as well as shuttling and running errands and so much more, while my husband worked tirelessly to run the shop. My days of being a stay-at-home mom ended and I quickly had to learn how to juggle my new responsibilities at the shop and home. Honestly, looking back, were it not for God, I truly wouldn’t know how I wore so many different hats and did any of my roles well.

Not only was Jesus my strength, but He also poured out His grace on top of me and my family. To use the words of my beloved friend Lynn, who recently spoke of her difficult journey, nailed it when she said this, “Thankful to God, who calls us to do hard things and then gives us buckets of grace”.

Oh, how I needed buckets back then. I screwed up—often. I let people down—every day. I said the wrong things—all the time. I did the wrong things—probably more often than not.

I recently read [this](#) post by a colleague of mine, Heather, about owning a business:

“Running a business is REALLY hard.

What they don’t tell you is that it can cause severe anxiety and it drains you mentally to the point of depression in even in the most laid-back people.

People will talk about you, compare you to others, use you, create gossip, and view you as a service and not a person anymore. You have to worry about if you forget to email/message someone back, are they going to think it was on purpose? Did you disappoint them? Will they hold that against you? When, in reality, you just can’t get to everyone’s messages and emails that day.

Starting up and running a successful business puts incredible strain on personal lives and relationships, many of which fail because there is just often no work life balance. You need to be the director, the worker, the admin, the marketing team, the accountant, the cleaner... all whilst being a parent, a husband or a wife, family support, friend...

There’s a reason you don’t see many people succeed in small businesses after 5-10 years. It takes a toll. It’s completely exhausting. Especially this past year (2020). Here’s a small reminder that we are just normal people with hectic lives. Be kind, be patient ... and hopefully more of us will stick around!”

Her words hit home for me. Not only was there a tidal wave of pressure in the beginning, but it has also come in waves over the past ten years in different shapes and sizes. Take 2020 for example. We had to be brave for our employees and our customers—calming fears with smiles, while on the inside my husband and I were stressed, exhausted, and scared too. We had to make decisions we never signed up to make. And we’ve had to suffer repercussions—repercussions that don’t seem to end. For example, the notice we just received that our unemployment rate is going up over 5 times what it was to pay for the lack of funds for unemployment over the last 2 years, even though we did not let anyone go.

Some people think or say, “it’s all part of owning a business” or “you’re rich, you can afford it” or “it must be nice owning a business, your employees do everything, and you get to reap the benefits”.

When I heard things like this in the past, I used to snort and be a little cynical in how others perceived me. Now, I just realize that we are all ignorant because we don’t understand what they have experienced or what they are going through. We don’t know what we don’t know.

Let’s get back to business—with all of the blood, sweat, and tears that have dripped over the last ten years, I have asked myself, “Why did we do it? Why are we still doing it? Knowing what I know now, would I do it again?”

The answer to these has come in the last couple of weeks in two parts.

Part One:

No, we were not at every single event for our children nor were we able to do many things we would have liked to do as a family. Yes, we had to make many sacrifices. But this is where the bucket of grace comes in.

Three out of our four children were home for the holidays. And what I experienced as I was in their presence was incredible joy. The incredible part was the fact that all my children got along, for maybe one of the first times I can remember. What’s more, they even had fun together and with us—making gingerbread houses (pictured here).

But the joy was that despite the sacrifices we’ve made, God’s grace has turned our children into kind, generous, grateful, caring, serving, compassionate, joyful, knowledgeable, and hard-working individuals.

In my joy, I also wondered, was it a little bit more than grace? Did we do something to make this happen too? Maybe, just maybe, our kids learned from their hard-working parents who have persevered through so much adversity. Maybe, just maybe,

they saw how we loved and served them while also loving and serving our customers and the people who work for us, and it has taught them how to love and serve well. Maybe, just maybe, they have learned that when someone is in need, they sacrifice their own time to help. Maybe, just maybe, as we have donated to many people and causes, including sports and school activities that were important to them, they have learned to give generously. And maybe, just maybe, we have lived out the advice I recently saw in a quote from Bruce Lee, “Instead of buying your children all the things you never had, you should teach them all the things you were never taught. Material wears out but knowledge stays.”

Part Two:

Good people are hard to find. Look around. Every business is looking for good employees. People who show up on time, work hard, have integrity, are positive and respectful ... people who care.

We have worked hard for the last ten years to find these kinds of people. The end of 2021 was the first time ever that we truly saw that our entire team was full of these people—including three who left for different reasons but have returned.

Why did they come back? What is it about our shop that makes people want to return? I don’t know for sure but I do know this:

We are a family. Perhaps that is why some small shops are called “Mom and Pop shops”—because the mom and the pop work hard to make it a family. I could list everything we do to pour into our family. But then I’d have to list everything we’ve done wrong too. And that would take forever.

So, let’s just go with this:

We are two imperfect people, created by a perfect God, to do hard things. We work at everything we do for Him. We care big-time about other people—not just in who they are when they are with us at the shop, but who they are in the other roles they have in life. We don’t just have listed values for the sake of looking good. We live by those values, we take ownership of failures, and do what we can to instill them into our business family.

So, here’s the answer to my questions about why we did it, why we are still doing it, and would we do it again:

We did it because we are called to do hard things. Sure, we could have found jobs working for others, but we felt led to open this shop. At the time, we didn’t have a clue what was to come, but now that we do, we know, without a doubt, we were meant to do this so that we could get rich—rich in spirit that is. Because of this richness, we are still doing it and would do it again.

It was through the blood, sweat, and so many tears that God used to break us and learn that we could not do it on our own. It was through His guidance that we grew, did things better, and loved others more.

It has taught us how to do good unto others—because it is the good thing to do. Not so that we get it back. In fact, there have been many times that we received evil for our good. But, we do it because it is good and we are called to do good.

It has taught us that everyone has a story—and we never know what it might be. It is our job to allow the grace and love that we have been given by God to flow through us onto and into others—even when they least deserve it.

And it has taught us that everything we do has an impact. We have certainly learned the negative impact we can make by doing things wrong. For those times, there has been repentance, change, and grace. But to know that we can make a difference by doing good really forces us to strive for this in all we do.

I wonder if in the New Year we might make a new kind of resolution—we can resolve to do good, no matter what. We can resolve to have compassion and offer grace, just because. And when we do these things, we will have a far better return on our investment for we will be rich in spirit.

What do you say, want to get rich with me in 2022?

