
BETTER FOR IT

Part 2: How to Respond in a Crisis

Most of us are feeling ready to get back to “normal,” but to simply revert to our old habits and ways of being after this trying season seems like... a waste? As Andy put it, *pain without gain would be a shame*. So what opportunities for improvement have the last couple of months highlighted in your life? What would a better plan look like moving forward? Don't just get through it. Be better for it. But to do this, each of us will need to exercise our specifically-human superpower. While human beings can't control the circumstances of our lives, we do have an unprecedented ability to control our response, to learn from our experiences, and to progressively become more adaptable and resilient. Never underestimate the power of a measured response. Because we're no better than our responses. But our responses can make us better.

Start Talking

1. When you find yourself in a difficult situation, what does your default response tend to be? Fight or flight? Give an example.
2. What's the most difficult decision you ever made? Why?

Looking Back

1. What did you begin doing last week to ensure you will be 'better for it' later?
2. What “Defense Systems” or habits did you wish you had implemented before this all started? How have you started to incorporate those habits now?
3. What physical object are you using to create a reminder of this season? What is it serving to remind you of? What are you hoping to take away from this time?
4. When did you experience moments of peace? When were you tempted to (to quote C.S. Lewis) “leap back to the toys,” – those old comforts that keep you from experiencing the



reality that human beings spend every moment fully reliant upon the grace of God?

What About You?

1. Did you grow up assuming that if God is *with* you, things will go well *for* you? Or something similar?
2. Who do you respect most? Why? Does it have anything to do with their response to adversity? If so, what would their story be if they had reacted as expected?
3. How do you define the difference between a measured *response* and a mere *reaction*?
4. When have you successfully exercised a measured response in your life? When have you merely reacted?
5. When bad things happen to you or around you, do you tend to interpret this as evidence that God is gone or displeased? Why or why not?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: Genesis 37: 26–27. 39: 1–20.

1. What all happens to Joseph during his teenage years? What kinds of traumas, emotions, and complexes do you think this would inflict upon a person?
2. The passage insists that God was “with” Joseph, and yet Joseph’s circumstances continually deteriorated. How do you make sense of this?
3. How does it make you feel that rather than “earning” freedom or personal prosperity with his obedience, Joseph merely brought success to his master’s household?
4. What do you think it felt like to be Joseph throughout this years-long struggle? What accounts for his continued ability to respond to his circumstances so well?
5. What would a mere “reaction” have looked like?

Putting It All Together

1. Is there anything you would do differently if you were confident God was with you?
2. Is there an area where you are reacting as expected rather than exercising your responsibility?
3. How can you begin exercising your “measured response” muscles in small ways this week? What are three ways you can prepare to choose obedience even when it’s difficult?
4. Where do you anticipate you’ll be most tempted to “react” in the coming week? How can you prepare yourself to enact a measured response?
5. Think of three things you would do this week if you were confident that God was with you. Is there any good reason not to get started?

