

Catholic Men's Ministries
Of Indian River County Florida

THE "IF/THEN" LOGICAL EQUATION? by Robert G. Borelli
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"Do You Know Where you're going to? Do you like the things that life is showing you?
Where are you going to? Do you know?"

Do you get, What you're hoping for? When you look behind you There's no open doors.
What are you hoping for? Do you know"? **

**Songwriters: Gerry Goffin / Michael Masser (Theme from "Mahogany")

As the lyrics above suggest, somewhere in this modern period of time, a significant number of us began questioning historical norms, and by such, created confusion. Could this really be an over-complication of life?

Benjamin Franklin had his own methodology on un-complicating the making of decisions. He took an If/Then approach. What he did was make two columns on a piece of paper. One column listed all the positive things about saying Yes to a questionable decision. The other column listed all the negatives about saying No to the questionable decision. At the end he simply added the two columns separately. IF the positive column had more entries than the negative column THEN his conclusion was to Yes the questionable decision.

The If/Then logical calculation worked for Mr. Franklin on the application of his formula. But is it the gold standard? The answer is a No. Simply because Old Ben already knew the THEN part of the equation. He just needed to come up with the proper IF(s). There are simplistic(s) in some common sense IF(s)/Then(s). Examples are, If you are cold, Then get closer to the fire. If you are hot, Then step away from the fire. Here is one very logical If/then. How about, If you were born, Then you will Die. I'll get to that later.

So for simplicity sake, no brainer types, there are many instances where the If/Then can be accomplished with a simple IF as in the above examples. Because life is not simple, decisions are not simple. What does not change much is the THEN (desired outcome) but the IFs do change. They cease being the simple logical decision making process and become an algebraic decision process. The factors that come into play are "Ands" "OR's" "Greater Than", "Less than", "Equal To" "Not Equal To" Etc. So the If you are cold, how close do you need to be to fire to make the Then. Try this, If you are Cold and a fire is 10 feet away and you are 10 feet away, and each foot forward is 2 degrees warmer, and you want to be 10 degrees warmer, mathematically, the Then calculates how close you need to be the fire. I'll let you do the math.

Another example.

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How about this? If I work out in a gym and I lose 20 pounds, Then I will feel good about myself. OK how about; If I work out in a gym and I lose 20 pounds and I feel good about myself and can get into a 32 waist pants, Then I will have more confidence about myself. Even Better! How about, If I work out in a gym and I lose 20 pounds and I feel good about myself and can get into a 32 waist pants, and have more confidence about myself, Then I will be happy. Really?

So, it becomes pretty complicated, using the paragraph above, to get to its Then(s). This is because as the Then(s) changes, the Ifs will need to change even more. Should life be that complicated?

Simplicity speaking, back to If I was Born, Then I will Die. What does that really mean? Quoting Mark Twain, "The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why." That second most important day of your life, I absolutely believe refers to the Purpose you were born, and with that, should come the acknowledgment that you will die. So if this is fact, Then does it really matter if you lose 20 lbs. and can get into a 32 waist pants? Sure, if your Then, is that you want to look good at your wake. I very much doubt that is the Then one is striving for. Rather, if one concentrates on exercising the "Why", one was born, and can attribute that to God and His Son Jesus, Then one's Ifs will be extremely un-complicated and one will find Peace and comfort.

For clarity, Try the reading below:

Galatians 5:16-25

Brothers and sisters, live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want. But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, lust, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.

There it is. All the Ifs you will ever need. So! IF you live by the Spirit, and not gratify the desire of the flesh, THEN You will inherit the kingdom of God. You can't get any happier than that. Pretty un-complicated to me.

So What's in your IF/Then Calculations?

03/07/2020