



Week #4  
"Stuck in a Tough Relationship"  
then  
Connect with God

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## **Intro**

Have you ever gotten your car stuck? As an avid Jeep enthusiast for the last 25 years, I have found myself in a lot of difficult off-road situations. I have pulled many vehicles out of mud and sand holes. I have even gotten stuck myself a couple times!

### **So what causes people to get stuck off road?**

1- Sometimes people attempt something their vehicle isn't capable of (like the minivan I pulled out of deep sand in the 4 wheel drive area of Brigantine Beach).

2- Sometimes people have a lapse in judgment and get themselves stuck. I accidentally backed into a hole in Maine and got stuck in my Dad's pickup.

3- Sometimes conditions change, and what was once passable, no longer is.

**So, how do we relate this to our spiritual life?**  
**First of all, I think we have all found ourselves in each of these 3 situations, so let's take them one day at a time.**

## Day #1

Perhaps we attempted something that proved to be too difficult, and we failed. Then, we believe that God let us down because "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.", Philippians 4:13. But, we often fail to read the preceding verses 11 and 12, where Paul says "Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need."

So, often well meaning Christians will quote that verse and say that Jesus can help us to accomplish anything. Then, when we fail, we wonder why God didn't keep His promise. But, if you look at the preceding verses, Paul is speaking of God giving him the ability to handle any situation, good or bad.

**Here on day one, let's take the opportunity to ask God for forgiveness if we have been angry with Him for a situation He has allowed. Remember, God knows you were angry, it's not a surprise to Him. But WE need to repent of it and turn the other direction.**

Spend some time meditating on Philippians 4:11-13, and 1 Timothy 6:6. **Write down any thoughts that would apply to your life.**

## Day #2

Sometimes we are sailing along in our Christian walk, and then we do something stupid. We look at the wrong thing. We go to the wrong place. We hang out with the wrong people. Or we just plain make the wrong decision. Sometimes those decisions hurt the ones we love, sometimes they hurt only us. But they put a stop to our forward momentum in our walk with Jesus. The prodigal son made decisions like these. Luke 15:13 says, "he squandered his property in reckless living". If that is you, know that the father in the parable represents God, who is waiting to welcome back His prodigal child with open arms. You don't have to clean yourself up, you just have to run back to Him.

**Read Luke 15:11-24.** A little side note as you read this passage- Picture yourself as the prodigal son expecting to come home to an angry father and have to beg to be made a servant. Then picture the delight and epic love he must have felt as his father ran to meet him and restored him. Scientifically, your subconscious mind can't tell the difference between a real event and an imagined one. The feelings and reactions are the same, as if it actually happened. So, you want to reframe your thoughts from "God would never want me back after I did XYZ" to "I'm God's child and He loves me more than I could know!" It will change your emotions and your actions throughout the day to more positive ones.

## Day #3

Has something in your life radically changed? Health? Divorce? Death of a spouse? Death of a child? Something out of your control that stopped you dead in your tracks? I went hunting once with my dad during a blizzard. Getting to my hunting club was fine, I had a Jeep, after all. The way back with over 18" of snow was a different story. The road home was now a significant challenge, and we got stuck.

**Sometimes we need a push to get us back on the right track. Start a practice TODAY of reading your Bible and spending time talking to God in prayer. Start with something simple like a chapter in the Gospel of John. Or read the "Proverb of the day". Proverbs has 31 chapters, just read the one that matches today's date. Do SOMETHING to start your forward momentum again!**

There is one last thing that all these off road "stuck" scenarios required- a buddy vehicle to pull you out of the hole you were in. **Find a friend in Christ you can confide in, and ask them to keep you accountable as you get "unstuck".**