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2132 words

Seasons of Life: Learning and Growing in Relationships

Dennis and Robin Creason, 4/10

Giving glory to God, Dennis Creason quotes Psalm 24:1, “*The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.*” He continues, “Since it’s His people and all His stuff for His kingdom and His glory, God calls us to different seasons to relate with different people and to serve in different ways. And as long as we’re faithful with responsibilities He gives, He’ll continue to give us additional responsibilities.”

Background-Dennis:

Dennis grew up in Shawnee Mission and says, “I was born to a single mother and, as far as I know, I never met my real father.” Dennis has one older sister. When he was six, his mom married again and had another daughter.

He attended Old Mission Junior High and High School, and went with his family to a Nazarene church. There he learned lots of biblically based rules but not about developing a relationship with God. Despite that, a big influence in his life during those school years was Kansas City Youth for Christ. From 1981 through 1987, Dennis grew in his Christian faith and helped start YFC clubs at two different high schools.

After his high school graduation, Dennis and his sister stayed behind while their parents moved to Springfield, MO. That is when Dennis began drifting from God and attending church only occasionally. At Johnson County Community College, he started in the art and design department and later switched to automotive classes. Being encouraged by automotive teachers, he pursued that field and got a job at a dealership his second year in college. He worked as a car service department advisor for twelve years.

Overcoming Fear’s Power:

Dennis admits having a childhood fascination with very dark poems and stories by Edgar Allen Poe and also to watching horror movies. That was the open door for fear to rule in his life from his youth until he was thirty-years-old. He says, “I thought it was normal to wake up terrified, locked in bed, couldn’t move, couldn’t talk, just trapped whenever fearful situations or conflict would come up.”

Dennis describes his personality as a blend of super-strong confidence and an overwhelming fear. However, he allowed fear to rule and capture him, which

affected his development of relationships with others. His fear led to distrust and distance and held him back from choosing to try anything new or different in relationships. Instead, Dennis usually chose to do nothing.

Finally, Dennis realized his unhealthy fixation with fear and chose to study from 1976-1980 the tape series, “*Freedom from Fear*,” by Dr. Michael Youssef (current website, www.leadingtheway.org). He learned healthy fear is a gift from God. In addition, he read fictional books by Frank Perretti revealing life as a battle between heavenly and demonic forces. Concerning that battle, the devil likes for people to stay helplessly confused. Nevertheless, in Dennis’s case, Dr. Youssef’s teaching, Perretti’s books, plus booklets with much Biblical truth by Derek Prince armed him with God’s truth to suppress the enemy’s lies.

He learned that healthy fear brings about a closer relationship with God along with a desire to please Him. He concludes, “I found out the cause of my earlier fear was I’d given the enemy authority to a lot of things in my life that I shouldn’t have given authority to. A combination of learning spiritual truth with a study of fear set me free.” (See John 8: 31, 32).

Self-Directing to God-Directing:

In 1991, Dennis married. He admits, “That was one of the times I heard God’s voice the strongest, because I, for a long time, argued with Him about whether I should be in this relationship. I ended up marrying her. The one good thing was—Cole was born in ’92. But we were divorced shortly after he was born.”

Following the divorce, he soon chose another unhealthy relationship and quick marriage despite his co-workers warning him. He had no former experience with alcohol or drugs but soon discovered his wife’s addiction to both substances. His second divorce occurred five years later.

Near the end of his second divorce in 1998, Dennis worked for Universal Underwriters as one of their top producers. Then, with no reason given, they let him go. Dennis then started working for Aristocrat Motors. Repeatedly, while working there for two months, he heard about a great pastor at Heartland Community Church. Finally, he visited that church and got invited to a gathering of the church single’s group, *Fusion*. He arrived to a big crowd of singles. When he saw Robin, he said to himself, “I’ve got to know this girl.”

Robin’s Background:

Robin and her parents lived in Mission. There she and her mother went to a Methodist church, where her dad attended occasionally. Robin says, “When I was four-years-old, I received Jesus at my mom’s friend’s house. I remember their daughter and I both got saved the same day. And then, I was also filled with the

Holy Spirit the same day! When I was four! I remember! I was about seven when Mom and I started attending Full Faith Church of Love.”

After twelve years of marriage, her parents divorced, and her dad soon married again. Since her mother could not afford the home in Mission by herself, she had other single mothers and their children live with them. Robin remembers, “My mom also sacrificed so I could go to Maranatha Academy for two years. There, in third and fourth grade, Mary [Sprague] and I met and were like super-good friends.”

Two years later in 1980, her mother married Phil, a godly man from Full Faith Church. The family moved to Stillwell for three years, and Robin attended two different schools. After their renter moved, they moved back to the family home in Mission. There she went to a public junior high before space opened up for her and her sister to attend Maranatha. Changing schools had been very difficult for Robin who was shy with low self-esteem. But Robin, who loves to sing, remembers being encouraged by Maranatha’s music teacher. She reacts, “That was awesome, cause I never really had been encouraged, you know.”

Robin attended Maranatha Academy through her high school years. She admits, “I don’t know if I appreciated the foundation I got there. I also got the name Airhead, because I was naive about drugs and alcohol—you know, just all that stuff!”

That nickname further lowered Robin’s self-esteem, and she made poor choices in dating a guy. But her parents soon made them break up. For that she is now thankful. She then attended Evangel College in Springfield, MO, where she sang with some ensembles and also worked several jobs. She remembers never feeling comfortable with a worldly crowd but admits, “I was walking with the Lord, but I have to say, I was not growing in the Lord.”

In 1993, she started teaching, and toured a summer with the Christian Continental Singers through some states and in Europe. All singers raised their own support. In that summer, God revealed deeper depths of His love to Robin through answered prayers. She started Montessori training during her third year teaching in 1995, became a certified Montessori teacher in 1997, and then began teaching in a Montessori school.

PART 2:

Meeting, Dating, and Marriage:

Still single at age thirty, Robin felt stagnant, for she was not meeting other godly young people. Then, her former roommate invited her on a ski trip with the single’s group, *Fusion*, of Heartland Community Church. She enjoyed that and began regularly attending *Fusion*.

She met Dennis at a crowded party a few years later and found herself thinking about him afterwards. The next Sunday she went with a *Fusion* group to

the Apple Fest. She found out Dennis was also going and driving a Jaguar! So, Robin rode with him in the Jaguar along with another man and her friend Laura. Unknown to these passengers, Dennis had borrowed the Jaguar from work to impress Robin. The two made connections throughout that day at the Apple Fest, and she says, “I found myself not attracted by Dennis’s appearance or by the car but by his gentle spirit.”

Desiring to date Robin, Dennis says, “God reminded me that I needed to share with her about my past, the sooner the better. I didn’t want her to invest in the relationship if there were things in my past that just didn’t meet her standards. So, I made arrangements to see her, and I told her right away. She really respected that.”

He adds, “We continued to see each other, almost every day. And it was just always peaceful. In fact, people regularly would ask us how long we’d been married when we had only known each other for three or four weeks. It also helped our relationship that we knew a bunch of the same people so we were able to immediately check each other out and get feedback from others. In a very short time, our friends simply flat-out asked, ‘When are you guys going to get married?’—which was kinda’ awkward, but kinda’ good at the same time.”

Robin had a list of things that she required from her future husband, so Dennis also wrote a list of what he looked for in a wife. They were amazed how almost every area matched up, with only a few things they needed to discuss. They married in 2001, about a year after they met.

Life Church Involvement:

In 2002, they got a letter from Clint and Mary Sprague that said they were coming back to Kansas City to start a church. They loved the pastor at their church, but they felt little connection with almost no friends their age.

Dennis continues, “We both knew instantly that we were supposed to be a part of that church. We came to Life and immediately got involved. We had thirty-fifty people at our house every other Friday the first several years of Life church. *Building Community* was the name of that Life group, and it continued until about 2007.” Then fall of 2010, they revived that Life Group.

From the very beginning, Robin sang on the worship team almost every service of every week. Dennis knew if he wanted to see his wife, he also needed to be on the worship team. But he did not play an instrument or sing, so he learned to run the soundboard. They both served in multiple ways at the beginning stages of Life Church. In addition, Robin also sang for six and a half years with a Christian Blues band. Currently, Robin is a Girl Time table leader, and Dennis participates in Real Men.

At this time, they are also taking a break from the worship team. Robin says, “One of my goals God has called me to do now at church is to look for people who don’t know anybody, introduce myself, and make sure that they feel welcome.”

Oaklawn Christian Montessori School:

When Life Church was growing and building, Dennis and Robin started a school in their home, Oaklawn Christian Montessori School. Dennis also got Montessori training. They continued to pray and work with the Lord, and He miraculously provided them a home on adjoining property, financial means to maintain and enlarge the school, bus needs, committed parents of students, and children to teach. Someday, they hope to build themselves a log home on the school property. While they may face overwhelming challenges, they know that Jesus is always greater.

Whether God directs the opening of more schools or downsizing, Dennis and Robin seek to teach these children at a young age the full truth of God. Having learned that the spiritual gift of tongues is a form of fighting the enemy, Robin expands upon this goal, “I feel it is very important to equip the children in ways to fight the enemy with the sword. We teach them to stand upon God’s Word.”

Wanting Children:

Obviously, with their love for children, they desire to bring up their own children. However, they suffered two miscarriages within two years. After the second miscarriage occurred, they spent the day together, and God revived their spirits with His assuring words, “Your hope is greater than your circumstances.”

With hope in a great God, Dennis sums up, “God is all about relationships. His Word shows us that our relationships with humans reflect our relationship with Him. So if we don’t invest and sacrifice for people, we don’t have a healthy relationship with God.”

Robin and Dennis keep on listening to God and growing in relationships. God continues to give them hundreds of children to serve, love, and co-parent. Robin concludes, “In everything I’ve experienced, God teaches me and is helping me to grow in some area every season of my life. Plus, Dennis and I are growing together.”