Twitter Thread by Blake Burge ■



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25 years ago my father made me a deal...

I only had to do one thing.

I failed.

THREAD: A story about a father, a son, and life meeting you halfway.

It was the summer of 1996, I had just turned 15 & like any 15-year-old boy, I only had one thing on my mind.

OK, maybe two.

Other than girls, the main thing I wanted, all I could talk about, was a car.

Or in my case a truck.

The deal was simple.

Over the next year, I'd be given chores to complete around our home.

With an agreed-upon hourly rate, I was free to work as much, or as little, as I choose.

At the end of the year, whatever I earned, my father would match.

Up to $2500.

Best case scenario?

I earn $2,500, my dad matches $2,500.

I've got $5K to spend!

Look out world, I'm gonna be rich!

There was only one catch, I had to do the work.

Not only did I have to do the work, I had to ask what work needed to be done.

I came out of the gate fast.

Asking my father for anything and everything I could do to earn a buck, and he obliged.

Each time I asked, he had a new project ready and waiting.

The opportunity was there, and I was seizing it!

Over the next few months, I continued to work and my wallet began to get fat (or so I thought).

$500, $750, $1,000... This was going to be a piece of cake!

Then it happened.

I got lazy.

I became comfortable.

I took my success for granted.

You can probably guess what happened over the next few months.

That's right. Nothing.

I thought I was in the clear.

I figured I had enough of a head start.

I'll kick back, relax, & take a couple of months off.

Before I knew it, the year had passed.

I hadn't met my goal.

Surely my old man would understand.

I still wanted, in fact, I NEEDED a truck!

As fate would have it, about this time, a co-worker at my father's office just happened to have one for sale.

It was a beauty. A classic.

I loved it.

My father and I loaded up in the family suburban and headed out to test drive what I had already decided was "my" truck.

It was even better in person.

A 1972 Chevy-C10. Partially restored, meticulously cared for.

I couldn't wait to take it home.

It was time to talk money...

The negotiation began.

As my father and his friend discussed pricing, fear began to set in.

From what I could overhear, the truck was out of my range.

The man wanted $7,000???

Was he crazy?

Couldn't he see how much I loved this truck?

Surely he'd make us a deal...

I was wrong on all accounts.

The man was not crazy, he did realize I loved the truck, and he was, in fact, already offering my father a deal.

$6K. His bottom dollar.

Too bad for me, not only was this $1K over the max I could have earned, it was $2K over what I had.

As I told you earlier I failed to reach my goal.

I had managed to earn $2K which my father matched with $2K of his own.

I had $4,000.

My father thanked the man for his time & said we'd be in touch.

We got back in our car and headed home.

Without "MY" truck.

As we drove, I asked my father what we were going to do.

"Are we going to get it?"

It was at this moment, my father gave me a gift, although not the one I had hoped for.

He calmly told me we would not be buying the truck.

I didn't have enough money.

I was so mad.

"But Dad, I'm good for it!"

"I'll do more chores, I'll pay you back, can't you just spot me the difference?"

He simply replied, "you didn't do the work."

You see, my father was willing to meet me halfway.

The problem was, I hadn't carried my half of the deal.

You might be asking, "but you said your father gave you a gift?"

He did, and over the course of a lifetime, it has carried far greater value than the truck I thought I couldn't live without.

Work ethic.

25 years later, I've never forgotten what it felt like driving away that day.

Throughout my adult life, this lesson has helped me to understand one thing.

Life, in general, will meet you halfway, but your half comes first.

You've got to do the work.

In the current age of instant gratification, it's good to be reminded, work comes before the reward.

When you're in the grind, it's not always easy to see the light at the end of the tunnel, but it's there.

Do your part.

Life will meet you halfway.

Thank's Dad.

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> — Blake Burge \U0001f4a1 (@blakeaburge) June 8, 2021