

The Widgets and the Gadget

Once upon a time an owner and president of a company built a factory to manufacture high quality widgets. Soon after the factory went into production rebellious workers deliberately disobeyed the president's instructions causing extensive damage to the process and, as a result, defective widgets were produced. The workers did not sense the gravity of the problem they had caused and, in fact, they were so insensitive to the desires of the president that they couldn't even tell the difference between a good and a bad widget.

Seeing this, the president installed an expensive gadget to test the quality of each widget as it came off the production line. Of course, most of the widgets tested bad since the process was out of control. At this point the workers knew that they were making bad widgets but, try as they might, they couldn't bring the process back into control. Very frustrating!

Seeing the dilemma, the president himself went into the factory and patched up and tuned the process enabling the production of good widgets again. Those workers who realized that they could not have righted the process on their own and sincerely wanted to produce good widgets eagerly went back to work and produced good widgets again. However, some grumbled and said that it was the gadget that caused the bad widgets to be produced in the first place; after all, they never saw any bad ones until the gadget was installed. The gadget is creating all of the problems—get rid of it, they said. Still others said that since the process had been corrected and good widgets could be produced, there was no longer any need for the gadget. Get rid of the gadget, it only gets in our way, they said.

The president smiled and said that the gadget surely didn't cause bad widgets, it only made the workers aware that bad ones were being manufactured. Also, although the process had been corrected, bad widgets could still be produced and the gadget would indicate this. He knew that the workers needed to be aware when bad widgets were being produced so they could come to him for the necessary help to get the process back into control.

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2/24/79

Note: Although this story is actually an allegory, it comes close to being a parable when read in conjunction with a study of Romans 6 and 7.

Note: Minor changes have been made on 3/1/2013