

Game night...

Well it has been quite some time since I played Dungeons and Dragons. Even longer since I played a Paladin. And I found out that sometime between the time I last played one to the current time, the Paladin (Holy Knight) went from being a scourge to all that is evil, to a joke commonly referred to as Lawful-Stupid.

If you are familiar with the game, it is one that takes place in the minds of the players. One person sets up the location/world/adventure, the others take their generated characters through this world. There are many different types of "Role Playing" games. Some take place in modern times, others in the realm of comic book heroes. I've played both of these types and many more. My favorite by far has been the realm of fantasy fiction dealing with Swords and Magic. That is the realm of Dungeons and Dragons.

I played at the time when many religious groups thought this was nothing better than evil incarnate. I had many conversations with them in my college days. What they never knew was that good generally triumphed over evil. Good characters of the "worlds" were generally more powerful than the evil. Good characters would band together and stay together more easily by the very rules of the game. Playing evil characters could be fun, but you generally ended up playing alone, or you hid your evilness from the others of the group. After watching many games, movies and reading a whole lot of books, my general rule for life is "Never work for the Bad Guy". That only gets you a really short life. In the realm of Dungeons and Dragons, evil rarely prospered. This did change occasionally from group to group, but for the most part the rules stayed consistent in this.

Now back to the Paladin character. They were the protectors of all that was lawful and good. And if played well, they could

become the most powerful characters in the game. They would have the backing of their order, followers and religion to help conquer evil. As I was saying, somewhere from the time I last played this type of character and today, they became a joke in some circles. From what I can gather, and have seen this was true in a lot of cases. The people playing this character did not know what it was to be Lawful and Good. The character from this ended up somewhere between "Dudley Do-Right" and the "Super Friends", without the dumb luck of Dudley, or the massive power of the Super Friends. The name "Lawful-Stupid" was a good fit. Hopefully I can play this character with a bit more flair...

This of course got me wondering why would someone have a hard time playing a character that was "lawful-good". By definition this is someone who obeys orders, follows the rules, deeply devotional, regimented in all they do, looks out for the poor, helps the needy and cares for the weak. All in all sounds like a good type to be around. But this was not somebody who 'blindly' followed the rules, or obeyed corrupt orders. They should help the poor, needy and weak, but not just by charity. Teaching them to fend for themselves, lifting them out of their need and weakness would be the best choice. Too much devotion to the spiritual can make you blind to the world around you. If you have this spiritual calling, it is best to share it with those around you, at least by example. Regimented life can also go too far. Being too picky about the order of the day, can make you miss out on opportunities to help others. Sometimes this can be very difficult, especially with peer pressure. Do you then scale back your beliefs, or follow them to an extreme. In either case you have warped them from what they once were. You are no longer a person of conviction, but one of wishy-washy behavior. In other words somewhat of a joke.

Now in the preceding paragraph was I talking about the game, or real life? I don't think that matters a lot. People have a

hard time playing a Good character, and some have trouble being Good in real life. It is all in how we view the world. I am trying to play a “good” character in a game I get to play with my oldest daughter and her (dare I say my?) friends. I try to be a “good” person in my daily life. I’ll let you know which one is easier...

Daughter #1

My oldest daughter and I have a different history. I met her when she was around 18 months old. I was a big [Dungeons and Dragons](#) player when I first met my future wife and her daughter. This charming little 18 month old helped me roll the dice so necessary in the game. I sat on the floor behind a ‘fortress’ of a coffee table with my books, and bags of dice. She sat with me, playing with whatever toys she had, and rolling the (according to her) color balls. Didn’t matter to her that they were pyramids, cubes and other solid shapes. She really made an impression on all the gaming folks. Somehow this got in her blood, because now she is in her own gaming group. They are good gamers, and they even allow the “Old Man” to pop in from time to time.

Now, because of the wishes of my late wife, my eldest did not know that I was not her bio dad until after my wife’s death. We were going to answer her, if and when she ever questioned her heredity. Things came up, when I thought that it was time to tell her. I’m not sure if my wife would have agreed, but I didn’t have her to ask. Apparently, I was as good a father to her as I was to her sisters. She thought I was kidding. Seeing that I’m a big prankster on the 1st of April, I guess I can understand where this comes from. She was a bit (maybe an understatement!!) shocked. I recall her wondering if this

changed anything. My response to her was simple, "Our relationship will only change if you want it too, I've always known. I will treat you the same as always. I was the lucky one, when I got married, I not only added a wife, but a daughter at the same time. It wasn't hard to love these two precious people."

Now my eldest didn't always follow the rules of the house. Her life was spent trying to push the limits. Not that she was ever a bad kid, but she did seem to want to push her parents as far as she could. I always thought she did this because she was super intelligent. I know she kept her mother and me on our toes.

Again I will say, I really don't have a favorite daughter. They all stand out in many ways. I love them all dearly, but the eldest does hold a special place, she is the one I chose to make mine.