

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 23

Dearest Grandchild,

In our last letter we talked about being “born again” and in this letter I want to delve into that subject more deeply.

In general, there is a great difference between what God “creates”, and what man “makes” out of God’s creation. Everything God creates, the more closely you examine it, the more beautiful it becomes. A snow flake, for example, is beautiful on a mountain, but even more beautiful under a microscope. A picture painted by man of that mountain, however, cannot stand careful scrutiny. The most closely you examine a man’s painting, the more brush marks and human imperfections are seen.

Since God gives physical life it can stand careful scrutiny. We are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14). Since God also made spiritual life, it too can stand careful scrutiny. Note this association. As we have borne the “likeness” or “image” of our earthly father, we shall also bear the “likeness” or “image” of our Heavenly Father” (1 Cor. 15:49).

THE “IMAGE” OF PHYSICAL LIFE

Dr. C. Everett Koop points out that when a baby is conceived the: *“the genes, like letters of a divine alphabet, spell out the unique characteristics of the new individual.”* “The utter complexity of this “image” is beyond human comprehension.

When a child is conceived, every aspect of that child’s physical development is determined by its own unique genetic code from day one. Human growth is directed by a blueprint, or “image” that we have received from Adam. Please prayerfully consider how God knitted us together in our mother’s womb. We are indeed “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14).

- The human brain contains 100 billion neurons, each of which is linked to as many as 10,000 other neurons.
- The eye is an interrelated system of about 40 subsystems. The retina of the eye has 137 million rod like cells that handle black and white, and 7 million cone like cells that allow us to see in color. The eye, the optic nerve, and the visual cortex are able to capture, deliver and interpret up to 1.5 million pulse messages a milli-second.
- Some consider the ear to be the most complex sensory system in the human body. It is able to process minute waves of sound pressure from air molecules banging against the ear drum into the neural signals that are sent to the brain and interpreted as sound. Remarkably, our brain can compute the minuscule difference between when sound enters our ears so we can tell which direction the sound is coming from.
- The human heart beats 70 times per minute and pumps 7 tons of blood every day.

- The circulatory system in our body is 60,000 to 100,000 miles long.
- The arteries relax as the heart beats and contract between beats, thus supplying the tiniest branches of the circulatory system with a smooth and constant flow of blood.
- The blood contains 30 trillion red cells that are destroyed at the stupendous rate of 72 million a minute. As they are destroyed the body salvages 85% of their vital iron which is returned to the bone marrow for the manufacture of new hemoglobin. Without this ability to conserve iron we would all die of anemia.
- The speed of the blood is controlled by the vasomotor center at the base of the brain. Blood flows slowly when resting, but faster during strenuous activity.
- The kidneys contain 64 miles of piping and every day separate 180 quarts of filtrate from the blood. 178 quarts of purified blood are returned to the system, and 2 quarts are extracted as waste.
- The liver is designed to see that the blood contains the exact amount of sugar needed at all times. When you have eaten more than you need, the liver will store the excess and keep a reserve supply of aminos and glycogen for emergencies.
- The human body not only grows according to the divine blueprint, but also has the capacity to heal itself and to reproduce.
- Beyond these, there are countless other human characteristics spelled out in our genetic code. Like snowflakes, each new person is unique. We have our own personal fingerprints, voice print, facial features, and physiognomy. “Eye scans”, for example, can differentiate us from every other person on earth just as our fingerprints do.
- Please remember that all of this and much more, was placed by God in your genetic code from the moment of conception.

THE IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY

When we are “born again” God promises to “write” His laws in our hearts and in our minds. This promise, as you know, was made by Jeremiah centuries before it came to pass (Jer. 31:33).

- The Hebrew word for “write” is “kathab” and is found over 200 times in the O.T. Scriptures. Significantly, this is the word used in Ex. 31:18 to teach us that the Ten Commandments were “written” by the finger of God. Note that the old covenant, that is the Ten Commandments, were written by God on tablets of stone, and not changed. The people were forbidden from tampering with the laws of God. They could not add to, nor diminish from what God had written (Deut. 4:2). When Moses received the Ten Commandments we are told that even God “added nothing more” (Deu. 5:22).
- The same is apparently true of the new covenant. The Greek word translated as “write” in this regard is “epigrapho”. (Epi = upon; grapho = to write) The five uses of the word “epigrapho” in the N.T. Scriptures do not refer to a writing in progress, but a writing that has been completed. It is used in:
 - (1) Mk. 15:26 - of the writing on the cross.
 - (2) In Acts 17:23 - of the writing on the altar to an unknown god.
 - (3) In Rev. 21:12 - of the names of the 12 tribes written over the gates of the New Jerusalem.

(4) In Heb. 8:10 - of the new covenant when God writes His laws on the hearts of believers.
(5) In Heb. 10:16 - of the new covenant when God writes His laws on the minds of believers.

- This is significant for you, because when you are “born again” God places in your mind and heart spiritual potential that you will spend a life time developing!

PHYSICAL NOURISHMENT

The microscopic human life in the mother’s womb must have nourishment to survive and grow. For approximately nine months this nourishment comes from the mother by means of the umbilical cord. Afterward, we receive nourishment orally. Without physical nourishment we will die.

So God has placed hunger within to help insure our survival. The greater the hunger the greater the effort we are willing to make to satisfy that hunger. Since food is essential to our survival, when the Hebrew people got very hungry they were highly motivated to get something to eat. The manna that God gave them from heaven, however, was not easy to obtain. Please consider:

- Manna fell from heaven and was gathered outside of the camp.
- From the center of the camp to the outside was approximately one mile (a Sabbath Day’s journey).
- Since there were two or three million people gathering manna at the same time, it must have been necessary to walk several miles in order to gather a days ration.
- There was only a small window of opportunity to gather manna. It appeared after the dew was gone (Ex. 16:14), and it melted away when the sun got hot (Ex. 16:21).
- The manna was like “thin flakes” (Ex. 16:14), and each person had to gather about 2 quarts every day. This was not easy!
- The manna had to be gathered daily, for anything left over developed a bad smell and maggots (Ex. 16:20). An exception was made each week for the Sabbath so that on the sixth day they could gather two days provisions and it would not spoil (Ex. 16:24 - 30).
- Once gathered the manna had to be washed, prepared, and cooked. In the wilderness, of course, water and wood were not easily obtained.
- Even though the miraculous manna came from heaven as a gift from God, a great deal of time and energy had to be expended every day in order to actually “eat” what God had provided.

SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT

When faced with the temptation to turn stones into bread, Jesus reminded that devil that “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). This is a quotation from Deut. 8:3: **“He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”** Please note that feeding the people with manna was to teach something! IT WAS TO TEACH

THAT MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD!

There is an obvious connection between eating manna and studying the Scriptures. Both are essential! Just as physical Israel could not live without manna - spiritual Israel cannot live without the Word of God. Like newborn babies crave milk, Christians are to crave every word that comes from the mouth of God (1 Pet. 2:2). Just as physical Israel would shrivel and die from the lack of manna, Christians can shrivel and die without daily nutrition from the Word of God.

The noble Bereans set a wonderful example for all believers in that they studied the Scriptures every day (Acts 17:11). Just as the Hebrews spent several hours a day to survive and grow on manna, the Bereans spent several hours a day to survive and grow on the Scriptures. Imagine, if you can, what it would be like to study the Scriptures in Berea 2,000 years ago. Since the printing press was over a thousand years in the future, copies of the Scriptures were both rare and expensive. The local synagogue normally had some books of the Hebrew Bible, but they were not easily accessible. The noble Bereans, like the ancient Hebrews, had to leave home and walk somewhere to get nourishment. The Scriptures in Berea were undoubtedly under lock and key in the "holy ark" at the local synagogue. Since there would not be Bibles for everyone, some people would obviously have to wait in line. Since there were no chapters and verses in the Bible at that time, it was not easy to find and verify the teaching of Paul, but they did it anyhow! The Scriptures are explicit: **"Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."** (Acts 17:11)

Most people in the world are like the ancient Hebrews in that they spend a large part of the day simply surviving. Without money, fast foods and microwaves, they are resigned to a life of hardship and hunger. Yet, these are often the very people with the greatest hunger for Biblical teaching. One missionary from Africa contrasted his students there from his students in America by pointing out that in Africa they would walk many miles to hear Biblical teaching. These eager students would seek out the front seats, and gladly stay there for hours. They constantly hungered for more spiritual food. In America, by contrast, even the students in a Christian College drove to the campus in cars, slouched down on the back row and said: "Do I have to know this for the test"?

Please consider again these inspired words: **"Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good."** (1 Pet 2:1-3) Jesus said it like this: **"Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you."** (John 6:27)

I love you!

Grandpa Boyce