

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 101

Dearest Grandchild,

Today's lesson, # 101, will focus on the 2 Cor. 4:18: **‘So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.’** As you know from school, the expression “101” refers to courses that are basic and introductory. When Granny and I went to Kentucky for Sophie's commission, we stayed in the same motel as Isabelle and Brandon. Since their room number was #101, Brandon quipped that “Motel # 101 was so basic that all they had was a bed and didn't even have a bathroom”. Yeah right! Well, anyhow, let's focus on Christianity # 101 and deal with some basic and introductory facts that every one needs to consider.

Paul points out that the things which we see with human eyes are temporary. This should be obvious! My good friend Galen Farnsworth would often remark when he saw a rusted out junk car - “Just think, at one time someone drove that car off the show room floor when it was brand new”. He was right! Not only do cars grow old, people do too. Just a few months ago Galen himself died. His body, like the car, was once new. Now it is in the grave returning to dust. Not too long ago Galen was agile and healthy. Among his many talents, he had a beautiful voice and produced DVDs with Christian music. He was also a skilled carpenter who specialized in making grandfather clocks. He was also a faithful writer and preacher. His life on earth, however, was temporary. There are over 7 billion people on earth and every one of us are only here temporarily. You know the Bible is right! Everything you can see with human eyes is temporary.

One of the temptations Jesus faced in the wilderness involved earthly kingdoms which Jesus could “see”. **‘Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’** (Matt 4:8-9) Just think how foolish Jesus would have been to have traded His soul for those kingdoms. EVERY ONE OF THOSE KINGDOMS JESUS “SAW” 2,000 YEARS AGO IS GONE! Thank God the Kingdom of Heaven will never pass away.

While estimates vary, some have calculated that the average nation only lasts about 200 years. Nations are temporary. People are temporary too. As of 2015 the Japanese have the longest average life expectancy which is 83.7 years. The U.S. is 31st on the list. Our life expectancy is 79.3 years. A house lasts a few decades. A suit of clothes lasts a few years. A hair cut lasts a few weeks. A good meal lasts only a few hours. While these temporal things are necessary, they are not something to sell your soul for. Please consider investing your time and energy in things that are eternal. This is Christianity # 101!

Our enemy, the devil, is a scam artist and deceiver. He delights in swindling stupid people. Note that Satan didn't offer Judas Iscariot all the kingdoms of this world. He didn't have to! Satan knew that Judas was so stupid that he would cash in his soul for a measly 30 pieces of silver. How much will the devil have to offer you ?

As you plan your life, please at least consider things that are eternal. There is nothing wrong with “having money”, but there is something wrong when “money has you”. Many years ago I was privileged to interview the late Roy LaTourneau on KOBC radio in Joplin. His father, R.G. LaTourneau became a multimillionaire by inventing and manufacturing gigantic earth movers. He never let money go to his head, however, and determined to live on 10% of his income and give the other 90% away. Laying up treasure in heaven was very important to him. Roy had the same philosophy. At the time of our interview he was using his millions to help churches in Latin America through a program called “20 - 20”. He was targeting the 20 capital cities in 20 Latin American countries.

Some time back I was asked to fly over to Independence, Kansas and pick up Tim Valentine. His airplane was in the shop at Mizzou Aviation here in Joplin, and he needed a ride over so he could pick it up. Tim is also a multimillionaire. LaTourneau was one of his mentors. Valentine also lives on 10% and gives 90% away. Even though he is involved in many business enterprises, he still spends most of his time preaching. One of his Christian Ministries is called Jeremiah 29:11, Inc.

At the opposite end of the financial pendulum is the late Clarence Greenleaf. After graduating from college he started preaching in Grundy, Va. and stayed there until he died. The congregation grew from 67 to over 1,000. They operated a youth camp, Bible Institute, homes for the elderly, and encouraged their brethren to leave the “mother church” and start a new church in every “holler”. Clarence didn’t criticize anyone else for owning something, but preferred not to do so himself. Consequently, his house, car, etc. were all owned by the church. Like everyone else, when he died he took nothing with him. No matter how much we “own” on this earth, we will leave it all behind when we die.

I’m not sure where God will lead you, but I am certain that if your only focus is on what you can see, you will be a fool just like the man Jesus described in Luke 12:13 - 21.

The Scriptures teach, **“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”.** (Col 3:17)

As you know, our five children have all been called to do different things for Jesus. John is on staff at a church. David is a lawyer and judge. Mary is a housewife and mother. Steve works for the government. Paul is helping godly men be elected into office. While each “calling” is different, all of them can be done in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I pray for everyone one of you, every day! I am planning to go to heaven, and I hope you are planning to do the same.

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce