

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 178

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with the importance of evidence. Evidence is the basis by which we determine what is true. When I a boy back in the 1930's, cigarette manufacturers claimed that smoking was good for your health. In the 1950's the "evidence" was mounting that smoking was not healthy. Today the case is clear. The evidence proves beyond a reasonable doubt that smoking is bad for your health. Unfortunately, some deny the evidence and keep smoking.

The Christian faith, of course, is based on evidence. The Apostle John recorded miraculous signs performed by Jesus for the specific purpose of proving that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God (Jn. 20:30, 31). Unfortunately, not everyone believes the evidence.

J. Warner Wallace is a homicide detective in Los Angeles. He specializes in "cold cases" committed so long ago that no direct evidence or eye witnesses are available. He still gets convictions. Some of his high profile cases have been covered by NBC's Dateline. Warner was an avowed atheist until the age of 35. At that time he dared to consider the evidence for Christ using the same tools and integrity he used as a homicide detective. Today he is a devout Christian, an internationally known author, and a staunch defender of the Christian faith. For further information about him link to coldcasechristianity.com

Sir Isaac Newton discovered the law of gravity. He saw it as "evidence" of God. He wrote about this evidence in *Principia Mathematica*. It was first published July 5, 1687. It is still regarded as one of the most important studies in both the science of physics and also applied mathematics. Newton's discoveries provide the basis for many of the scientific advances of the Industrial Revolution. Newton was the first to hold the prestigious Lucasian Chair at Cambridge University. Unfortunately, not everyone accepted the evidence for God as he did. In fact, recently atheist Stephen Hawking held this same prestigious chair at Cambridge. In his book *The Grand Design*, Hawking argued "*That because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing*". As someone said: "If you are not confused by this you are just not thinking clearly". Sadly, Hawking passed away Mar. 14, 2018.

Paul wrote that the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers (2 Cor. 4:4). No wonder some people cannot "see evidence". Take, for example, the chief priests and elders of the Jews. When the soldiers reported that the tomb was empty they refused the evidence and paid the soldiers a "large sum of money" to lie about it (Matt. 28:12 - 15). When a crippled man was healed in Jerusalem these same men couldn't deny the evidence but still commanded the apostles not to speak to anyone about Jesus (Acts 4:16, 17). Some "can't see" and others "won't see". How sad!

A review of Nobel prizes awarded between 1901 and 2000 indicate that 65.4% of Nobel Prize Laureates identified as Christians. While this should be seen as "evidence" that faith in God does not prevent someone from being a scientist, there still remains a bias against believers in academia. The good news is that if God be for us, who can be against us (Rom.8:31).

Some the most powerful evidence for the reality of God involves conversion. The late Clyde Thompson earned the moniker of being the “Meanest Man in Texas”. He was sentenced to death in the electric chair the age of 19. After his death sentence was commuted he gave his heart to Christ and became a Christian. After spending more than 28 years in prison he was paroled and spent the rest of his life selling Bibles. The transformation of his life is undeniable evidence. It is also a fact that faith based programs in prisons have transformed thousands of other lives. Dr. Catherine Hess states that “faith based” Teen Challenge is the most successful anti-addiction program she knows of. Dr. John Howard, member of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug abuse, agrees and states: “Of all the programs reported to the Commission, the most successful is the religiously based program conducted by Teen Challenge.” This too is “evidence” for God!

It would be easy to find many who will testify about the transforming power of faith in their own lives. The evidence indicates that attempts to transform people without the power of God are doomed to failure. Julian the Apostate, for example, tried to make pagan priests behave like Christians. It didn’t work! Historian Philip Schaff observed that Julian’s efforts were like “*galvanizing a decaying corpse, or grafting fresh scions on a dead trunk, sowing good weed on a rock or pouring new wine into old bottles, bursting the bottles and wasting the wine*”.

Fortunately, we have personal access to this evidence. We don’t have to ascend into heaven or descend into the deep to meet Jesus. He is even now a very present help in time of trouble. Whenever we believe in our heart and confess with our mouth, we will be saved (Rom.10:5 - 11).

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce