

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA
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Dearest Grandchild,

I'm sure it is hard for you to believe, but once upon a time Granny and I were as young as you are. Like the comedian said: "We were born at a very early age". After being born we went through the age of diapers, pre-school, and kindergarten just like you have done. Fortunately, both Granny and I survived school with no major problems. During those formative years both of us were good students, and both of us made the wise decision to accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord of our lives. Both of us were buried with Him in baptism and raised to walk in a newness of life (Rom. 6:1 - 7). Both of us have given church a high priority in our lives. This year we celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary.

With the hope that it may be of help to you, permit me to share the Scripture that God used to help bring me to Christ. Perhaps this same Scripture will also have a positive impact on your life. The Scripture is 1 Cor. 3:18 KJV: **"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.**

I first heard that Scripture as a student in High School. In those days God had little or no influence on my life. I was in good health. I was making good grades. I had offers for scholarships to college. I was even popular enough to be elected the king of our school. Then this Scripture penetrated my selfish little world. It was planted like a seed in my heart and mind. It began to grow and caused me enough discomfort that I re-examined my priorities. It even caused me to think seriously about the malignant problem of self deception. It enlarged my vision of the future to include what would happen to me after I died.

Up to that point, the decisions I made were primarily made to please myself. What God wanted was not a priority at all. I was very interested in athletics, and "all" of us who made the varsity teams were in 6th hour athletics. This was the last hour of the day and enabled "us" to continue working out after everyone else had gone home. "All the guys" dressed in much the same way. We "all" had hair cuts that were similar. We "all" shared the same crude language and off color jokes. Not one of my close friends in 6th hour athletics went to church or made any pretense of following Christ. If I decided to follow Christ, I would have to be different. In retrospect it seems silly to please your teen age friends and forget about God, but that's how immature I was at the time.

I tried to put that Scripture out of my mind. As I dreamed about the future, however, that bothersome Bible verse haunted my mind. Was I willing to become a fool to find wisdom? Someone said that the world has been saved by those whom it considered to be mad men. The more I thought about it, the more clear it became that only a fool would say in his heart that there was no God (Ps. 14:1). If there was a God, it is the ultimate foolishness to live your life without Him!

Here are some examples from history for you to ponder.

- The critics of Christ said: **“He is out of His mind” (Mk. 3:21).**
- Jesus noted that Jerusalem had consistently killed the prophets and stoned those whom God had sent (Matt. 23:37).
- Stephen said to those who were about to kill him: **“Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute?” (Acts 7:52).**
- Festus, the governor, shouted at Paul: **“Your great learning is driving you insane” (Acts 26:24).**
- In 1490 a consensus of the “wise” appointed by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella concluded that the plans of Christopher Columbus were impossible.
- In 1825 the Quarterly Review stated that the very idea that a locomotive could travel twice as fast as a stagecoach was “palpably absurd”.
- In 1839 Dr. Alfred Velpeau opposed anesthesia during surgery and stated that *“Knife and pain are two words in surgery that must forever be associated . . .”*
- In 1865 Dr. Ignaz Phillip Semmelweis was committed to an insane asylum because he insisted that doctors wash their hands before examining a patient.
- The purchase of Alaska from Russia was ridiculed by congressman John A. Peters in 1868 because he considered Alaska to be “worthless territory”. The “wise” critics called Alaska “Seward’s Icebox”.
- A Philadelphia newspaper made fun of Alexander Graham Bell’s telephone and described him as a harmless madman with a useless toy.
- The Literary Digest predicted on Oct. 14, 1889 that the automobile would never be as common as the bicycle.
- The first steam boat was called “Fulton’s Folly”.
- In 1903, reporter Alpheus Drinkwater heard about the Wright Brother’s experiment with the airplane, but chose instead to cover the grounding of the U.S.S. Moccasin. He made this choice because “he knew the Wright Brothers were crazy”.
- In 1913 a U.S. district attorney prosecuted inventor Lee DeForest for daring to sell stock in his Radio Telephone Company. The prosecutor was convinced that promising to transmit a human voice across the Atlantic was “absurd and deliberately misleading”.
- On Jan. 13, 1920, the N. Y. Times criticized Professor Goddard for believing that rockets could operate in space. On July 17, 1969, they formally retracted their criticism just before the Apollo space craft landed on the moon.
- Admiral William Leahy, speaking of the atomic bomb to Pres. Truman, said in 1945: *“That is the biggest fool thing we have ever done . . . The bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives”*
- The Science Digest predicted in 1948 that problems relating to sending a man to the moon would take 200 years to solve.
- Remember! : **“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”**

Here is a poem that I committed to memory many years ago. I do not know who wrote it.

Thank God for fools!
For men who dare to dream beyond the lean horizons of their days.
Men not too timid to pursue that gleam to un guessed lands of wonder and amaze.
Thank God for fools.
The trails that ring the world are dark with blood and sweat where they have passed.
And they are the flags of every flag unfurled, their ashes and oblivion at last.
Thanks God for fools.
Abused of low estate, we rear our temples on the stones they laid.
And ours is the prize their tired soul might not wait. Theirs the requiem of the unafraid.

Receiving Christ was not an easy decision. It never is! I counted the cost for several weeks, and then went forward at invitation time to confess Christ. As silly as it might sound, I started carrying my Bible to school. I remember an embarrassing experience at Bible Club when we were asked to turn to Psalm 151. It seemed that everyone there but me knew there were only 150 Psalms. All the smiling faces turned to me as I fumbled for a long time looking for the book of Psalms. Then everyone had a good laugh when I finally caught on to the joke. In a way that embarrassment was like a badge of honor. Paul wrote: **“We are fools for Christ” (1 Cor. 4:10)** and somehow I felt a distant kinship with that great apostle.

A passage from the book of Galatians has also had a great impact upon my life. Paul wrote: **“Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.” (Gal 1:10)** I became a preacher because I thought it was what God wanted me to do. God, however, may be calling you to an entirely different ministry. Your ultimate goal is not to please your parents or your peers, but to please God. **“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)**. One Bible word for “gift” is “charisma” from which we get the English word “charismatic”. The root “chara” means “joy”. The point is, that when God gives you a gift, the use of that gift will bring you joy.

While the world has been saved by those whom it considered to be madmen, those considered wise by human standards may well be considered foolish by God. Here is a story told by Jesus that illustrates the importance of an eternal perspective. **“And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.' " "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:16-21)**

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.” (1 Cor 3:18 KJV)

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce