

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 19

Dearest Grandchild,

Since “New Years” is another “Special Day” I am taking the liberty of including another article from the book “Special Messages for Special Days”.

This article on “Focus” will be self explanatory, and I hope beneficial.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians: **"This one thing I do . . ."** (Phil. 3:13.) This concentration of mental, physical, and spiritual energy is commendable.

Seven or eight years ago I purchased a watch for about twenty dollars. It keeps excellent time, and I feel lost without it. Twenty or thirty times each day I look at the watch to see what time it is. This watch, however, also has the date in the upper right-hand corner. When I am focusing on the time I never see the date, and vice versa. Now, I am looking at the same watch with a different focus. This time I am not looking for the time, or date, but the manufacturer. The word "Timex" is now quite obvious. It is written in gold letters on a black background. I didn't see it, however, until I looked for it. Changing my focus a fraction of an inch informs me that this watch is water resistant to a depth of 100 meters. Changing my focus again, reveals four buttons. Each is clearly labeled. Even though these labels are less than an inch apart, I can only focus on one at a time. One button is labeled "mode," another "set," another "al. on," and the fourth "light." With a different focus, the word "quartz" can also be clearly seen. Though I have owned the watch for years, this is the first time I remember reading that. A jeweler might look at the same watch and see several blemishes where the plastic has been scratched. With a different focus he would note that four screws must be removed to replace it, etc.

I have a good friend who can see everything, but cannot focus on anything. He is legally blind! The ability to focus is an integral part of success in every area of life. Take athletics, for example. The quarterback may have a sore foot, a sick child, and bills that are past due. When the ball is snapped, however, he needs to have total focus on the play at hand. If he throws the ball, his receiver also needs the same type of concentration. The receiver must not be distracted by the fear of a hard tackle, or anything else. Many mistakes in life come as the result of a distracted focus. When we try to do too many things at the same time is when we wreck the car, break the dish, or drop the ball. They have a saying in Asia: “He who chases two rabbits catches neither”. But now let us focus on a spiritual application of this obvious truth. We cannot serve two masters. We cannot focus on both God and mammon. We cannot plow a straight furrow while looking back. If our eye is clouded by sin our whole lives will be filled with darkness. If our eye is single, our whole body will be full of light.

Paul wrote to the Philippians that he was going to focus on only ONE THING (Phil. 3:13). He was going to focus on Christ! He was going to forget the distractions of the past and press for the

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. When the time of his departure was at hand he had finished his course, kept the faith, and was expecting a crown (II Tim. 4:7.)

Paul's inspired philosophy of life is particularly appropriate while we are making New Year's resolutions. Let's all focus on pleasing Christ in the coming year! Each of us, of course, will be doing different things, at different times. We are different parts of His Body, with different functions to perform. Whatever we do, however, we can "do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3:23). He wrote the same truth to the Ephesians. We are not to work with "eye service" as "men pleasers," but "with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men": (Eph. 6:7.)

I just received a phone call from Doug Williams in Garden City, Kansas. Doug is a "pilot's pilot" and once had the goal of logging more flying hours than anyone who ever lived. He was ahead of schedule to meet that goal when Christ changed the focus of his life. Now he works as a hospital chaplain helping people prepare for eternity. He called to tell me of a mutual friend, Jayne Chrouser, who has an inoperable brain cancer. Such news reminds me of a saying made famous by C.T. Studd. "Only one life will soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last".

If you are interested, Jayne has just posted a 5 minute testimony on Vimeo. You can see this by googling "Vimeo - Jayne Chrouser" or by clicking on <http://vimeo.com/115151338>

I love you!

HAVE A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Grandpa Boyce