

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 103

Dearest Grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with the power of God. Paul said it is able to accomplish "immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20). Not far from here is a huge shovel that was once used to mine coal. It is called Big Brutus. One scoop from that shovel will hold 90 cubic yards of material. This is enough to fill 3 railroad cars. Big Brutus is run by electricity, but compared to the power of God the power of that shovel is insignificant. Just think how much power it takes to light up the sun, especially when the sun is so small by comparison to billions of other stars. God's power is everywhere. Einstein said that the power of the atoms in a paper clip equal 18 kilotons of TNT. The point is obvious, God has lots of power and wants to share that power with you!

Today we will limit our focus to the power of God manifest in volcanoes. This should be practical as it provides an easy to understand example of how man's failure to recognize that power has fatal consequences. Volcanoes, of course, are only one tiny example of God's immeasurable power

Perhaps you have heard of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius on Aug. 24, 79 A.D. Pliny the elder went was curious about what was going on and made the fatal mistake of going toward the volcano for a closer look. He never came back. Thousands of others, of course, also died. A firestorm of poisonous gas and molten debris killed thousands of victims and completely destroyed the resort cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae. Ironically, the fact that these cities were buried beneath 19 - 23 feet of pumice stones and ash preserved them for 1,700 years from vandalism, looting, and the destructive effects of the weather. Excavations began in 1748 and reveal how everyday life in those ancient cities came abruptly to an end.

When I was in the Caribbean some years ago I heard of the eruption of Mt. Pelee on the island of Martinique. It happened May 8, 1902. The city of St. Pierre, known as the Paris of the Caribbean, was completely destroyed in a matter of minutes and 30,000 people lost their lives. Many people could have escaped but didn't consider the smoking volcano to be that dangerous. This day in history notes: *"Caught up in the midst of an important election, residents of Saint Pierre failed to heed the mountain's warnings and evacuate. The nearby residents mistakenly believed that the only danger from the volcano was lava flow and that if lava started to flow, they would have plenty of time to flee to safety. In fact, some people came from outside the city to view the action, even after ash from the eruption began to block roads."*

A more recent example of volcanic power involves the eruption of Mt. St. Helens on May 18, 1980. The power of that eruption was said to equal 400 millions tons of TNT. This would be equal to 20,000 atomic bombs the size of the one dropped on Hiroshima. A crusty old hermit named Harry Truman is representative of millions who disregard the power of God. He stubbornly refused to flee and died in the disaster. How sad! His death ought to be a stark reminder of how foolish it is to

disregard the power of God.

Solomon said that **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” (Prov 1:7)** Your future can be enhanced by a right relationship with powerful people. Making a good impression on your teacher, your banker, or your boss, can often enhance your opportunities for the future. Making a good impression on God, of course, is most important, and ought to be our number one priority.

The Christians in Mexico have a saying that conveys this important truth. When asked how they are doing, they often reply “estamos arando”. This means “we are plowing.”. The “Rest of the Story” as the late Paul Harvey would say, explains the saying. That saying is said to have come from a fly riding on the horns of a giant ox. Someone asked the fly what he was doing. That’s when the tiny and insignificant fly responded, “estamos arando”. Without the ox the fly could do nothing, but while riding on the ox he considered himself to be plowing many acres of ground.

The late J. Russell Morse moved as a missionary to China in 1921. His primary work was among tribal people so primitive they had not yet discovered the wheel. Once while back in the states on furlough he spent a sleepless night shivering under a thin blanket. The next morning his hosts asked how he slept. He reluctantly confessed how cold he was. They responded: “Didn’t the electric blanket work?”

Bro. Morse had never heard of an electric blanket before. He had no idea that warmth and comfort were instantly available if he had only turned on the power. This is an important lesson for all of us to learn. God is our refuge and strength and a very present help in time of trouble (Ps. 46:1). I pray that you will surrender to God and access His mighty power any time you are in trouble!

Here is a link to a short video of how the power of volcanoes can be used for physical things. May God give you the wisdom to use it spiritually.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jARDdWuFpK8>

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce