

**LETTERS FROM GRANDPA**  
**# 192**

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with spiritual training. Paul told Timothy: **“Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:7, 8).**

On July 4, 1919 Jack Dempsey defeated Jess Willard for the Heavyweight Championship of the world. Willard was over 6' 6" tall and weighed around 240 lbs. Dempsey was 37 years old, 6' 1" tall, and weighed only 187 lbs. Willard made Dempsey sign a release for fear that the huge champion might kill his diminutive opponent. He needn't have worried. Dempsey knocked him down 7 times in the first round and is reported to have broken his jaw, ribs, knocked out his teeth, turned his face into a bloody pulp, and caused hearing loss in one ear. (You can “Google” this fight if you are interested). Dempsey was the Heavyweight Champion from 1919 to 1926.

My father, H. B. Mouton, was 16 years old at the time. Dempsey became his hero and dad began training to be a fighter. He once won a bet by running from Galena to Baxter Springs, Kansas. When he moved to Tulsa his road work involved running several miles to Sand Springs and back. On week ends he would go over to Osage County and fight an opponent for \$50. Dad told me that in a street fight the average man would whip himself after 3 minutes because he was in such poor shape. The many hours of boring exercise are worth it, however, when you climb into the ring with a real opponent. Dad never made the big times but described himself as only a “ham and egg” fighter.

The purpose of this letter involves spiritual training! Today we will focus on only 3 spiritual exercises, # 1 Bible reading, # 2 Prayer, # 3 Church attendance. You may not see the need of these exercises until the devil gets you into a spiritual fight. At that time your spiritual training will be invaluable. Physical training only involves what happens “here”, but spiritual training involves both the “here” and the “hereafter”.

Please read the Bible every day. Man does live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). The Bereans were considered noble because they studied the Scriptures every day (Acts 17:11). Remember, these noble Bereans didn't have personal copies of the Bible. They had to go “every day” to the synagogue and perhaps stand in line for the privilege of studying the Scriptures. There is no excuse for us to not read the Bible every day. A boxer suffering from malnutrition is at a disadvantage, and so is a Christian. Please read the Bible!

Please pray! God is a very present help in time of trouble (Ps. 46:1). He wants to help us, but sometimes does not do so because we do not ask. James said: **“You do not have, because you do not ask” (Ja. 4:2).** Not one sparrow falls to the ground without the knowledge of God so certainly He is interested in what happens to you. That's why Paul wrote: **“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God that transcends all understanding, will guard your**

**heart and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6, 7).**

Please, as a part of your spiritual training, be regular in church attendance. **“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).** Note the two fold aspects of church attendance. It not only helps you personally, but also enables you to help others. It is hard to “exhort one another” to be faithful to God if we are not faithful.

Many years ago Don Arnold was in holding awaiting major surgery. He had not yet received a pill or shot and yet in 5 minutes I put him sound to sleep. I even told this story to Aunt Mary as a possible cartoon. A pulpit in pre-op might provide a medical break through. I know a little about boring sermons as I have delivered plenty. In the past 65years I have also listened to my share of boring messages. This, however, does not relieve me of my responsibility to meet with Jesus and His church on a regular basis. Remember! When you come to church you also come to: **“Thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speak a better word than the blood of Abel” (Heb. 12:22 - 24).**

Please read the Bible, pray, and go to church. Please **“Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:7, 8).**

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce