

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA
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Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will again deal with your mind. A robot doesn't have a mind, but you do. Under normal circumstances you can control your mind. Normally, you can think about anything you want to. Paul wrote: **"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things" (Col. 3:2)**. As we say, under normal circumstances you can do it. It is possible, however, to lose control of your mind. Our dear friend, the late Mike Pratt, wrote in his journal on April 28, 1970: *"Worry is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained"*. You know this is true! The Niagara River flows north from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. It forms part of the border between Canada and the United States. Much of the river is calm and peaceful where swimmers and boaters can have fun and be safe. Downstream, however, is Niagara Falls. At the falls the river is raging with such force that it sends six million cubic feet of water over the falls every minute. If you drift downstream too close to the falls you can lose control. There is a point of no return. The same is true of our mind. That's why it is important to set our minds on things above while we can. Isaiah promised perfect peace to those whose mind is focused on God (Is. 26:3). So today's letter will encourage you to think about God and set your mind on "things above".

Another dear friend of our family was the late Ardell Moore. Our families spent much time together. After his wife Sue passed away he married Edie Bowers. This godly woman believes that God gave her this poem to help people control their minds:

*"The heart is a garden where thought flowers grow.
The thoughts that we think are the thoughts that you sow.
Every kind loving thought bears a kind loving deed.
While the thought that is selfish is just like a weed.
We must watch what we think of each minute of the day
and pull out the weed thoughts and throw them away.
And plant loving seed thoughts so thick in a row,
that there won't be room for the weed thoughts to grow".*
Edie Bowers Moore

In addition to this poem let us consider again these poignant words written by Charles Haddon Spurgeon on Jan. 7, 1855. He was twenty five years old at the time:

"It has been said by someone that the proper study of man is man. I will not oppose the idea, but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God's elect is God; the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of a child of God is the name the nature, the person, the work, the doings and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father. There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all of our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep that our pride is drowned in its infinity. Other subjects we can compass and grapple with; in them we feel a king of self-content, and go our way with the thought 'Behold I am wise'. But when we come to this master science, finding that our eagle eye cannot see its height we turn way with the thought that vain man would be wise, but he is alike a wild ass's colt; and with solemn exclamation say: 'I am but of yesterday and know nothing.' No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind than thoughts of God.

But while the subject humbles the mind it also expands it. He who often thinks of God, will have a larger mind than the man who simply plods around this narrow globe . . . The most excellent study for expanding the soul is the science of Christ and Him crucified, and the knowledge of the Godhead in the glorious Trinity. Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as the devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity.

And, whilst humbling and expanding, the subject is eminently consolatory. Oh, there is in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound; in musing on the Father there is a quietness for every grief; and in the influence of the Holy Ghost there is a balsam for every sore. Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest refreshed and invigorated. I know of nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as the devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead. It is to that subject that I invite you!"

It is hard to walk an unused path. Your first efforts to focus your mind upon "things above" may be difficult. Initially your first efforts at daily Bible study and prayer may seem awkward and mechanical. Every day you walk that path, however, makes the journey easier and more natural. We start with all of me and none of Christ. Then we progress to some of me and some of Christ. Our final goal is all of Christ and none of me. Paul put it like this: **"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 3:12-14).

Please **"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things"** (Col. 3:2).

I love you,

Grandpa Boyces