

May 2021

GETTING OLD

1Peter 1:3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and unfading, reserved in Heaven for you.

Php1:21

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

I am 83 and all my family from my youth is dead. I am an old man making my way to death and thereafter. This leaves me looking at my position currently with a new perspective.

I have had a good life and trip with God. I could complain about a few down times but overall my life has been fun and rich with Connie and the kids and friends AND GOD. I have been walking with God for 50 years and I have learned God to be kind, caring, patient, supportive, Giver of a full life, very wise Lord over all, dependable, and in control.

Upon reflection, it appears to me that our life is a continual graduation of one growth level to another. Let me demonstrate.

1. I started at birth as a toddler. I developed my motor skills and practiced becoming a human during this time.
2. Age 2 to 5, I graduated from childhood to kindergarten. I learned to start thinking and began to develop relationships with people outside of my home.
3. I graduated to grade school where I learned reading, writing, and arithmetic.
4. After grade school, I moved on to Jr. High where I learned “big classes” like Algebra.
5. Next was high school where I believed I had arrived. I studied Calculus, read the classics, and learned how to play a musical instrument.

6. I graduated from high school and on to college in another city. This is where I learned many big disciplines. I also learned about young women and drinking before graduating.
7. After graduation from college on to Shell, IBM and marriage. I had at last arrived as an adult citizen.
8. Next came children and family life. My wife and I lived life.
9. Eventually, the kids grew up and left us and we started the adventure into old age.
10. And now old age where I have no professional skills and very little physical agility. I cannot dance, play tennis or run. The question is: Am I ready for being old and dying?
11. Then on to Heaven which is just another step in my mission of graduating. Heaven is my next growth adventure and a reward from Jesus, God. My life has been only an entree to Heaven and forward. Hell is not, for me, a potential choice.

It appears to me that everything up to our death and the transfer to the hereafter is just graduating from one phase of life and preparation for the next until we reach old age.

And then it is graduation into Heaven where it looks like to me, we begin a new growth with God. I know I looked forward to each "next step" and learning more until finally when there was no graduation to a "next step" in this world.

The question for all of us is: Are we ready for old age and death?

The strategy of God is that our next step after point 11 above will be Heaven (or Hell). We are to continue to work towards it until we die.

Here are three questions everyone must answer:

1. How do I know if I will get into Heaven or not? Am I ready?
2. Am I spending my life (following the world) or investing (following God and Jesus) in my future residence in Heaven?
3. How should I prepare for my next "class" which is in Heaven? The Bible says:
 - a. Be absorbed in the Word. Be a student of the Word.
 - b. Model your life after the teachings in the Bible.
 - c. Invest your life in others, do not just spend it.

d. Take as many people to Heaven with you as you can.

God's only strategy, as I see it, is to prepare us for Heaven. Are you preparing in habits, health, friends, and time with God for your next step into old age and then Heaven? Let our minds be anchored in Heaven and not on the TV.

But do not stop and focus on death. This is just another step in your development for Heaven.

Read and think on Luke 16:19-31. In my humble opinion this is not a parable, but a true story of Lazarus and the Rich Man that Jesus had witnessed. If so, the Angels will come to get you at the exact time of your death and before you physically die.

Though I do not have scripture to back this up, I believe we will continue to develop in Heaven throughout eternity.

Applications:

1. Take time and begin to focus your life on the future with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Can you focus on Heaven and excel in achievement on earth? There are many examples that say yes.
2. Rehearse daily what you did with your day and how much time was spent on investing with God and eternity.
3. Live out Matthew 6:19-21: "Do not lay up treasures on earth for yourselves, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up treasures in Heaven for yourselves, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Where is your treasure? My attention and effort will go towards where I think my treasure lies. This is the time for personal realignment and I encourage you to get after it.