

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

How old would you be if you didn't know how old you were? This famous question, by a well-known baseball philosopher, provokes many thoughts on the subject of growing old. We like the grandmother's answer to her granddaughter's question. The young girl turned to her grandmother and asked, "Do old people think any differently than young people do?" The grandmother responded with a smile, "No they don't, and I know, because I have asked them."

It has been said that we are only as old as we feel and based on this, some young people evidently feel very old at times. Probably how we feel does to a great degree determine how old we seem. We read concerning Moses, "And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." No doubt he did not feel a hundred and twenty with health this good.

The big questions are, how old do we feel, and do we think any differently than we did 10, 20 or 30 years ago?

If we have been faithfully doing our godliness exercises, then we really should be thinking better than we did before. We realize that to some degree, physical exercise does seem to help keep the body feeling young. It just stands to reason then, that godly exercises should keep our minds spiritually alert, for Paul has told us that "Bodily exercises profit little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having a promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

What spiritual exercises do we do every day? Every athlete knows that he must do his stretching exercises daily, followed by a vigorous workout to keep his body in shape. If this is true physically, isn't it also true mentally and spiritually? The mind that is not stretched seems to shrink and the brain also needs to have a vigorous workout to keep it in shape.

Those in the world are far more conscious of their bodies than they are of their minds, but we are different. We realize that we cannot by taking thought add one cubit unto our stature. Jesus said so, but by taking thought we can add great spiritual height. Paul has told us that if "Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fullness of God."

So our minds can be expanded by faithfully doing our godliness exercises on a daily basis. It is up to each one of us to work up our own exercise program just as an athlete would do in training for a championship event.

We really are in training for a championship event, for we are all preparing for the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ who will determine at his coming just what kind of spiritual shape each of us is in as a result of our godliness fitness program.

Those who have faithfully kept up their spiritual exercises will be accepted by our Lord to be with him in his kingdom forever. Then it won't make any difference how old we are, for we will be like the angels which cannot die, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

When George Gershwin was a young struggling musician he applied for a job at the office of the famous and well established composer, Irving Berlin. Berlin looked over the qualifications of his young applicant and said to him, "I'll pay you double the salary that you are now making to come and work for me. My advice to you would be for you to turn it down. If you accept, and become my employee, you will become a second rate Berlin but if you will persevere and continue to struggle on your own, you will become a first rate Gershwin." Needless to say, George Gershwin did turn down the offer and went on to become a famous composer in his own name.

There is a temptation to all young people to admire the characteristics of someone older, and attempt to copy their style, their delivery as a speaker, their mannerisms, perhaps even their material. By doing this they become a second rate copy of the one they admire when they should have realized that no two people have ever been made alike, not even identical twins.

God does not want us to compare ourselves to one another. We can always find someone to compare ourselves to, that makes us feel superior. We can also find someone to compare ourselves to that makes us feel inferior. When we look at the one, we think, "Well, I am not so bad after all." or "I can never play the piano like him or sing like her or speak as he does, so why try." Paul tells us that "we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: But they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

God only expects each of us to do our best for Him. He does not expect us to do someone else's best, for we are not someone else. We are different. God made us each different and He knows that there is someone who can do anything we do better and someone who can not do as well. All He asks of us is, that we do the best we can do for Him.

The question we need to ask ourselves is this. Are we doing our best? If not, why not? We cannot justify our poor job by saying "well, we just cannot do this as well as so and so." That is not the question that is being asked. Are we doing the best that we can do? God will not be pleased with an half-hearted effort when He knows we could have done better.

We live in an age of mediocrity where it is uncommon to find people doing their best. "Do just enough to get by," seems to be the motto of our age and this attitude can become our way of life in our service to our God.

We might deceive others into thinking that we are doing our best, we may even fool ourselves, but we will never deceive God. He is watching everything we say, think, and do, and He knows if our efforts in His behalf are half-hearted or our very best.

Let us resolve to give God the best we have to give. We want to be the best person we can possibly be in the service of our King.

By adopting this attitude towards God, we will discover that not only our life in the Lord will improve, but it will even affect our relationships with all those with whom we come in contact in our every day life.

Solomon instructed us saying, "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." When we obey his wise advice we find that the joy of doing our best will help us become as good a person as is possible.