

CHAPTER 14

My Going On and My Growing Up

Why does a person need to **go on** and **grow up**? Because each person must move ahead through time. I must move into tomorrow and into the day after tomorrow. I must enter into next week and into the week after next week. I must move into next year and into the year after that. My going on and growing up **now** will help me to be **ready** and **prepared** to face the days that lie ahead.

Looking At Me

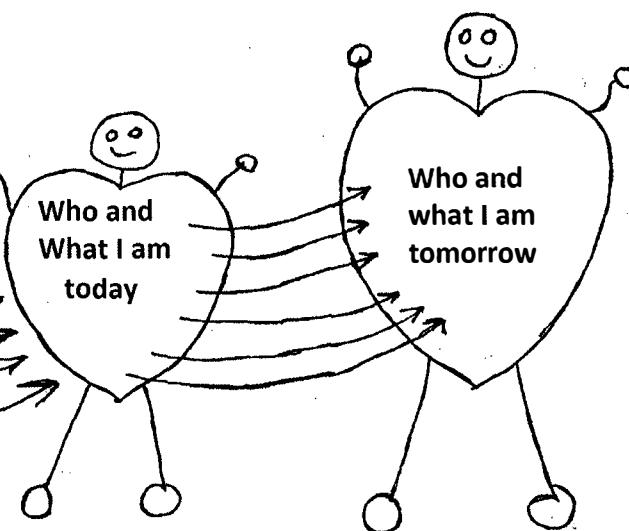
Try this exercise. Find a picture of yourself when you were much younger (two years old, four years old, six years old or older). First take a good long look at yourself in the mirror. Then take a good long look at yourself as you appear in the picture. What differences do you notice?

This is a simple way to see that you are changing. You once were like the picture and if you had looked in the mirror then that is what you would have seen. But now you look in the mirror and you look different. At a future time (five years from now, ten years from now) a picture could be taken of you. Would you expect this picture to be different from what you see in the mirror today? _____ Time marches on. Can you stop time? _____ Can you stop yourself from growing older? _____ We cannot stop the seconds from ticking away, but we **can** do something to get ready for **tomorrow**. What we think **today** and how we think **today** and what we do **today** and how we do it **today** can help to prepare us and make us ready for the days ahead.

The ingredients that you are working with today will make possible the recipe of tomorrow. If you have no flour today, are you prepared to make bread tomorrow? _____ If you have no ice cream today, are you prepared to make a milk shake tomorrow? _____ If you have no chocolate chips today, are you prepared to make chocolate chip cookies tomorrow? _____ The recipe which you will make tomorrow depends on what ingredients you have today. This is the way it is with living. There are certain ingredients that go to make up my life **today** and these same ingredients will work together to make me what I will be **tomorrow**:

INGREDIENTS

my home
 my family life
 my relationship to
 parents
 brothers & sisters
 others
 my attitude-good or bad
 my actions-right or wrong
 my thoughts-healthy or
 unhealthy
 my words-wholesome or
 filthy
 my physical health
 my mental health
 my spiritual health
 my heart (getting hard
 towards God or getting
 soft towards God)

RECIPE

My attitudes and actions **today** are very important because they work together to make me what I will be **tomorrow**. For example, if a person is a complainer at age 11, will he probably be a complainer at age 13? _____ If a person uses bad language today, will he probably use bad language next year? _____ If a young person is learning to be kind and courteous and respectful to his parents **now**, will he probably be this way next year?

Health

How I take care of my body today will pay off for me **tomorrow**. Your body is the **house** that you live in, and you are to be the caretaker of that house. You are to take good care of it. What would you think if your neighbor never took care of his house-- never painted it, never mowed the lawn, never trimmed the bushes, never picked up papers from his lawn, never fixed his windows when they got broken and so forth? Such a person would be a very careless caretaker! How well are you taking care of your house? If you are a believer in Christ, **who** else lives in this house (1 Cor. 6:19)? _____ Does this make it even more important to take good care of this house? _____

What happens if a person does not take good care of his teeth today? What kind of problems might he have later? _____ Such problems might not show up after a week or two weeks or after a month or even several months. But somewhere in the future the dentist will find some problems.

It's important what we eat and even more important how we eat. How should a believer eat: (circle the correct answers)

- thankfully
- complaining about the food
- prayerfully
- with poor table manners
- enjoying all that God has given to him

Resting and sleeping are very important also. If I am not resting mentally and physically, then my body is getting worn out faster, and sooner or later it will have trouble. I need to help my body. If the family car gets old and worn out you can buy another one. Can you do this with your body? _____

Work and Money

We need to learn to work and be responsible in the jobs that we have been given to do. What are some of the jobs have you been given to do?

_____ Your work is not the same as the work that your Mom and Dad do. They are older and more responsible. Their work is adult work. But think about this: Were they ever your age? _____ If God permits you to live, will you someday be their age? _____ This is why we need to learn to work and be responsible **today** so that we are prepared and ready to work **tomorrow!**

Every young person can work and do the little things which they are given to do and to do them the best that they can. Others may not even notice the things that you do, but who does notice? _____ He says that we are to be "faithful in that which is L _____ (the little things)" (Luke 16:10). Working faithfully at the little things **today** will prepare us for the bigger things **tomorrow**.

If a person is lazy and refuses to work at being responsible at age 11, do you think he will be much different at age 12? _____ How we handle things **today** or how we fail to handle things **today** will either help us or hinder us **tomorrow** when we seek to handle even bigger things.

It is also important to learn how to use money. What are some things that you use money for? _____ Do you ever use your money to pay for the electric bill or the phone bill? _____ Who pays for these? _____ Do you use your money to buy the groceries for the family each week? _____ The last time your family got a new car, did you pay for it? _____ Do you think that someday you might need to buy your own groceries and perhaps even buy a car? _____ Learning about money now and how to be careful with money now can help me to know how to use money in the best way later. If I am careful about the pennies and nickels and dimes which I have today, then this will help me in the future when I have dollar bills and \$20 dollar bills or even bills of greater value.

Friends and Foes

Friends come and friends go and I need to learn that friends are not all important. They have a real place if they are the right kind of friends. The wrong kind of friends can be real trouble. Which is worse--having the wrong kind of friend or having no friend at all?

_____ Why?
 _____ We need to learn whom to trust and whom not to trust. According to Jeremiah 17:5 whom should we not trust?
 _____ According to Jeremiah 17:7 whom should we **always** trust?
 _____ Is He a Friend who will never let us down?

Learning how to handle our friends and foes is important and it will help us in the future. When David was young he learned how to trust God to take care of his enemy, Goliath. Later he had to learn to trust God to take care of an even greater enemy, King Saul. Later he had to trust God to take care of an even greater enemy--his own **sinful self**. The friends and foes that you are dealing with today can help to prepare you to deal in the right way with the friends and foes that you will face in the future.

School

If you are a fourth grader, would you want to go into the 11th grade next September? _____
 Why not? _____ Each grade prepares you for the next. You need the 5th grade in order to be ready for the 6th grade. What you are doing now in school prepares you for what is ahead. The more you can get learn from your classes now, the more this will help you later. What is one subject that you have been studying in school? _____ What is one thing that you have learned about this subject recently? _____ How will learning this help you in the next year at school when you get into the next grade?

Going On And Growing Up

Every person needs to go forward and grow up. We cannot stay where we are. We cannot remain as children forever. See 1 Corinthians 13:11. When a person grows up, what must be put away? _____ Should a baby drink from a baby bottle all his life? _____ Should a baby wear diapers the rest of his life? _____ Should a baby say "Goo goo, gah gah" forever and never learn to talk? _____ The "goo goo" stage is meant to be followed by the talking stage. The crawling stage is meant to be followed by the walking stage. Each stage should prepare for the next. We should act our **age** at every **stage**.

The **person** that you see now in the mirror is not going to stay that way. Time marches on. We don't know the future, but if God allows us to live, there are certain things that we can know for sure. Read the following and circle the things we can know for sure (don't circle the things that you cannot know for sure):

- a. where I will live 10 years from now
- b. what job I will have 15 years from now
- c. what I will look like 30 years from now
- d. I will become an adult.
- e. I will be involved with people, with family.
- f. I will continue to live in this state I am now living in.
- g. I will continue to live in my body.
- h. God and His Word will always be the same.

I am going to carry with me the things which I have learned or failed to learn and they will either help me or hurt me.

Hebrews 6:1 says "Let us _____ unto perfection (perfection means maturity, growing up to be all that God wants me to be). In 2 Peter 3:18 we read "But _____ in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Yes, God commands us to **go on** and **grow up!** Go and grow! My going and growing **today** will help me in my going and growing **tomorrow**. I must never stop going and growing. I must never say, "I'll get ready later! I'll get ready to be an adult when I'm an adult!" No, the time to get ready is **right now!** **You are right now becoming the person that you will be then.** What kind of person are you becoming? Are you becoming God's kind of person?

Preventing Spiritual Malnutrition

