

If I Were Twenty-One Again

The age of discretion has been defined as that period of life when you're too young to die and too old to have any fun. I don't think any of this group besides myself has reached that age. Neither are you old enough to do much looking back to say, "No wonder if I had that to do over again, I'd do it differently". You're still young enough to look ahead and say, "Whenever I have to do that I'll not make the same mistake that fellow did." That's why I have written this talk for today. James L. Gordon, an eminent theologian, after he passed a certain milestone in his life, began to look back and wrote a treatise entitled "If I were 21 Again." It is too long to read to you but I have condensed it to cover the high points and I want to give them to you now. These comments are Mr. Gordon's but I may, if we have time, call on two or three of you ~~to read them~~ after I have read them to add your comments.

1. If I were 21 again I would give 20 minutes every day to special physical exercise. All things being equal, happiness depends on health, health depends on digestion, digestion depends on blood, the quality of blood depends on circulation and circulation depends on exercise. Health is life's first prize.

2. If I were 21 again I would study and strive to be an original thinker. The only real difference between a stupid man and the man who is original is the vital fact that one man thinks and the other does not. Do not take things for granted. Take them for what they are worth. Think your way through prejudice, precedent, custom, convention, style, fashion and all the forms of modern folly and get at the heart of things.

3. If I were 21 again I would steer my life by a few fundamental convictions. The great convictions of life are expressed in such words as God, Truth, Right, Love, Law and Immortality. One great

idea clearly defined and nobly enthroned is a blazing torch in the darkness.

4. If I were 21 again I should begin life with a clear conviction concerning the sovereign value of my soul in the presence of God.

I would not bring Jesus down to the level of our common humanity but I would bring humanity up to the splendid heights of Jesus.

5. If I were 21 again I would put quality into every thought, word and deed. A Christian is a person who does ordinary things in an extraordinary way.

6.3 If I were 21 again I would try to achieve one splendid success in some worthy realm of human effort. If you can't succeed here you won't succeed anywhere.

7.3 If I were 21 again I would ~~bring~~ crowd at least one kind act into every 24 hours. Kindness is the spring that keeps the door from slamming.

8. If I were 21 again I would live in the light of every grand experience. There are events which crowd an eternity into an hour. Live in the light of your experience.

9. If I were 21 again I would have two or three choice friends among the older people. They have learned the meaning of life. They would like to be of assistance to you in your plans and schemes.

10. If I were 21 I would read the Four Gospels over once every 12 months. Broad reading will lead to proper interpretation.

11. If I were 21 I would identify myself with some great unpopular cause. To be first in advocating a noble cause is to be lonely but to be thus lonely is to be lofty. I would rather stand alone for God than, moping, move with the multitude.

12. If I were 21 again I would spend a little time every day in the realm of The Beautiful. We all need it. A Beautiful poem, a sweet song, a lovely picture, a rare literary gem---the touch of the beautiful---once a day.

13. If I were 21 again I would give the flower of my youth to Jesus Christ. I would begin life with Him. For those who live right and walk circumspectly, youth is opportunity, manhood is achievement and old age an holy memory.