

# Mistakes of Life

By: Lenny Chapman

As we grow older each year there is much to be thankful for. Yes, there are some not-so-positive things we experience while growing old, such as the aches and pains that become more of life's everyday occurrences. However, if one takes a moment to consider the "good" things that are gained, it should be easy to see the gains outweigh the negatives. Important things like knowledge, wisdom, and experience are accumulated with each year that we live. These major character improvement areas are at the core of helping one overcome the later "Mistakes of Life."

It is easy to look back and see many of the mistakes that I have made in my life. Oh, I am sure there are some that I have totally forgotten about, but there are many others that will never completely be deleted from my memory bank. Crazy things like sledding in the snow filled winter of Ohio down a "great" hill directly into traffic along a fairly busy neighborhood road, or better yet, tobogganing at a state park down a huge hill across a half-frozen lake. How about the day we chose to play baseball in the small confined area of the side yard, and I hit the baseball through the neighbor's glass window, or the time all the boys decided that it would be a good thing to play tackle football on a great fast surface such as the asphalt street! These things seemed great at the time, but it was understood with each event, that wiser decisions would have to be made if I was going to live to see adulthood.



On the positive side, it seems for me as though more of life's mistakes were made much earlier in life and many of those mistakes have helped me to make better judgments today. I believe that life's experiences both good and bad helped me to become a better son to my parents, husband to my wife, father to my children, member to the church, laborer in the Lord's vineyard, and above all a better child to God the Father in Heaven. I have recognized the importance that spiritual things have over material things. I understand clearly that the BIGGEST mistake of life happens when one denies Christ as the Son of God and the Savior to mankind. The second biggest mistake of life comes from those who say they believe in Jesus, but do nothing about that claim. They fall short when it comes to baptism and repentance. Jesus himself encountered this type of an attitude when talking to a rich young ruler, "Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." (Mat. 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-24).

Today, just as in the days of the first century Christians, the word of God concerning Jesus is being preached throughout the world. Unfortunately, religious choice has become a matter of "What's in it for me," rather than "God, here I am, use me for your purpose!"

Jesus taught in Luke 17:10 that if we want a home in heaven our duty is to follow God's commandments, "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

Yes, we all make mistakes. However, as we gain knowledge through life's teachings and experiences, hopefully we begin to minimize our mistakes. For those who have heard of Jesus, and have chosen not to believe, or are delaying to respond to His invitation, you are making the "biggest mistake of your life!"