

# A Letter to My Younger Self

Sid Miedema

Dear younger me,

After nearly 40 years of life experience since I was a teenager, I would like to give you some advice you will greatly appreciate in the years ahead. Please take this advice and encouragement from me realizing that I really do know what will be important to you in the future, and how much your decisions and actions now will impact your life.

I want to emphasize to you the importance of living for the Lord right now. I know how hard it is to be “different” from friends and acquaintances, but to live for the Lord now is so much more fulfilling and will have a significant impact on your life. So be willing to be different for the Lord’s sake. When you do this, it will surprise you that some friends who now seem to enjoy and encourage living for the world will appreciate your stand for the Lord and even join you in it. It may not seem like that now, but you will find that to be true. Many of your friends are like yourself, and just need someone to be a godly leader and make the change.

What types of things am I talking about when I encourage you to be different? Turn off worldly music. I know how hard it is to turn it off, but I also can tell you from my own experience that if you turn it off and instead listen to God-glorifying music, you will be amazed at the impact this will have in your life. Instead of being influenced every day to live for the pleasures of this world, you will be influenced to live for the Lord. Music can control emotions and shape thoughts. God made it this way, so we should use it in the proper way. By simply committing yourself to listening to only godly music, you will find that first your thinking will change, and then your life will change. And what a positive experience this change was for me! I was brought

much closer to the Lord. It helped me make much better decisions. I was more able and willing to be a witness. I challenge you to try it for a month. I assure you that you will be amazed at the change.

Another important way to be different: Spend adequate time reading God's word and in prayer. I know you hear this all the time, and that you know you should do this more. What you don't know is the significance this will have on your life. When I finally started to do this regularly, God gave me much greater spiritual growth and enabled me to have godly discernment. What a blessing this was, not only when I made the change, but also as I grew older. Make this change now. God will use this to guide you to make good decisions. Bad decisions, made often without the influence of God's word and without prayer, have consequences, and I can tell you that these consequences go with you throughout your whole life. Yes, decisions made now and the consequences will go with you through your whole life. Consequences like being reminded of my sinful actions every time I see certain people. Now that I am older, when I see these people, I am embarrassed because of my sinful actions they know about. How can I talk to them about the Lord or about the importance of living for the Lord? This is a sad experience that repeats itself throughout my life.

Finally, look for that person who is lonely or made fun of or just rejected by others. Be kind to them. Be a friend to them. This is used by the Lord as a great encouragement for those who need it so much. You will be blessed by being kind also. I never realized how the seemingly insignificant things I said or did would impact a classmate so that many years later they would still remember and go out of their way to thank me for this.

There is much more I could talk to you about, so many things I would warn you about, or encourage you to do. But you know in your heart the right way so let me leave you with this; as I

said in the beginning of this letter, *live for the Lord now*. This will give you true joy. Trying to be popular by “going along with the crowd” will bring disappointment and even grief.

*Live for the Lord now*. This will bring you true happiness and peace.

*Live for the Lord now*. So you don't have to deal with feelings of shame later.

*Live for the Lord now*. I have observed that the witness of a godly young person is a most powerful witness. It is so unique, so radically different that the people of the world take notice. God uses this witness powerfully for his glory. You will have the rest of your life, and all of eternity too, to thank the Lord for this blessing of being a godly witness. How happy this will make you, both now and in the future. I can't come up with adequate words to describe the blessings of being a godly person in your youth, but by God's grace, you can experience it!

Don't wait. Pray about this now and ask God to give you the grace and strength to be different now—to be a godly young person living for the Lord. How thankful you will be!

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