

Reading: 1 Timothy 4: 11-13 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young"

Message

What can you do?

Ride a bike, play sport, listen to music, go to the movies without your parents?

Can you ski, or snowboard? Can you ride a farm motorbike?

Awesome! Okay - Can you legally drive a car, eat chocolate after 8pm, watch anything you like when you like?

What are you allowed to do? Are there things you would like to do but can't? I'm guessing there are!

Have you ever heard the words no you can't do that you're not old enough? Have you ever heard the words you are too young to watch that it's not appropriate?

I hope you have!! I heard those words plenty of times growing up. But those words are kind of annoying to hear aren't they - makes you wish you were a grownup already so you could do what you wanted when you wanted!

So let me ask you what do you think is the best age to be?

(Maybe get some students up and find out what they think and why?)

A few quotes from various places:

"For the rest of my life I'd like to be two different ages - physically I'd like to be 22 because I looked so good and the other age is 40 because that's when I had my life sorted."

"I'm 13. I want to be two again. My parents would carry me round so I don't have to walk. Everyday I will watch TV and wear my pyjamas. I will get lots of toys on my birthday and Christmas. And I don't have to go to school yet."

"18. The age when I'm already an adult but I still look like a teenager."

"Best age was five because I didn't have to do any exams but I did get smacked a lot so maybe not."

"Now in my mid-fifties and this is the best year yet!"

"Probably when I was two. Sitting in my footy pyjamas, eating soggy fruit loops, having a good time until I filled my nappy."

When I was at primary school I really looked forward to being at intermediate and then when I got to intermediate I really looked forward to going to college and then it was about being an adult and having the freedom to make my own decisions. And the truth is that being an adult is awesome - I do love it - most of the time.

But some would say that adulthood is not all it's cracked up to be - in fact here are some comments from people longing for their younger days:

1. When you are an adult the only mail you ever get is bills - when you are a kid the only mail you ever get is birthday invitations and money from your grandparents.
2. Sleep - being an adult and a parent means you don't get anywhere as much sleep as you would like - I think I was 12 the last time I was well rested.
3. Time - when you are a kid, you have nothing but time ahead of you. Everything is still to come. Your story is largely unwritten. Your choices are still to be made. As an adult, there are parts of your story you would like to rewrite! Decisions you wish you could make over again!
4. No extras with your food - Special prizes in your breakfast food, happy meal toys etc are all part of life when you are a kid. But as an adult - no! Do we get a bonus gift at the drive through? No! All we get is the option to buy something extra (like a Shrek Collectors Cup for \$5) and what do we do with that? We give it to the kids in the backseat!
5. Receding hairlines and having to watch what you eat. When I was kid my hair didn't fall out and I could eat whatever I wanted - now if I eat too much my pants feel tight the next day and I have to spend two weeks trying to lose the kilo I've just gained.

So what do you think - is it better to be a child or an adult or somewhere in between?

It can be easy to spend too much of our childhood years looking ahead and wishing we were older especially when we are told to stop being childish or to grow up, or that we can't do something because we are too young!

Adora Svitak an 11 year old published author has a thing or two to say about what children have to offer the world - listen to this....(2 minutes 30) Clip can be played from The Pressschools Website.

Paul said something similar to Timothy in the reading we heard earlier: Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young but instead be an example of what is possible!

...Timothy was by no means the first character to lead by example at a young age. The Bible has some great stories about young people who did amazing things - Joseph explained the meaning of dreams and ran a prison while he was a young man, Moses stood up for the rights of his people when he was quite young,

Samuel had a conversation with God as a young boy, David slew Goliath, Ruth left her homeland and travelled a great distance to help establish her people in a new land, Esther won the heart of a King and saved her people – they were all young just like you guys when God chose them to lead others.

Jesus had a pretty amazing view on children too and what they were capable of...he certainly saw their potential a whole lot better than the people around him – children were blocked from being part of his conversations but Jesus told the blockers off and said let the children come and talk to me – in fact one time when he was asked who the greatest in heaven would be he invited a child to come and stand with him and he said to all the adults – unless you change and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Now of course he didn't mean they literally had to start acting like children but rather that children have a unique perspective on things – a way of trusting and hoping that adults can learn from.

I wonder what you can do? I wonder what you will do with the talents you have? So what are you waiting for – don't wait until you are old and crusty – and bald like me to do something great – start coming up with ideas now for how you will impact the world.

Because while being an adult is something to look forward to it isn't something worth rushing towards – it seems too many people are feeling the need to grow up too fast – why would you want to do that(!) you are going to get there - it is inevitable and there is so much to enjoy about the age you are right now!

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young! Make a difference now! Let's finish with a motivational talk from the Kid President – he says it way better than I could! (Clip available on Pressschools website).