

Wise Words from a Comedian

Commentary for January 15, 2020 — “Something to Ponder” from George Carlin

The following is by George Carlin, a funny, often caustic, and sometimes crass comedian who died June 22, 2008. This bit of wisdom about life titled, “Something to Ponder.”

[Personal note: When I was 11 years old in the 5th grade I asked to do a 10-minute skit based on a comedy television routine by George Carlin. Even the teacher laughed out loud.]

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider Freeways, but narrower viewpoints.

We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less.

We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time.

We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values.

We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We’ve learned how to make a living, but not a life.

We’ve added years to life not life to years.

We’ve been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor.

We conquered outer space but not inner space.

We’ve done larger things, but not better things.

We’ve cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul.

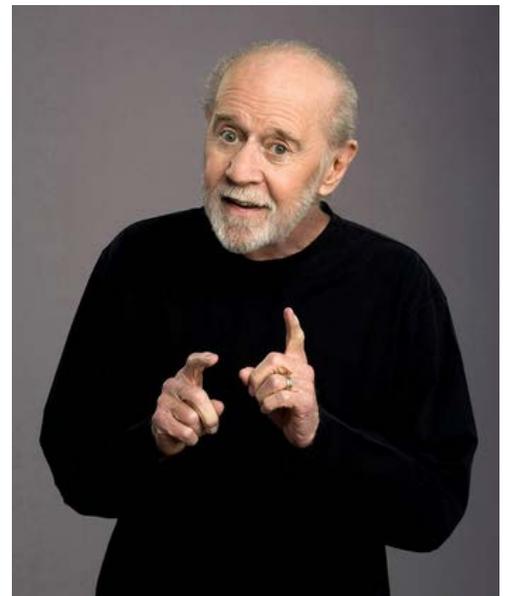
We’ve conquered the atom, but not our prejudice.

We write more, but learn less.

We plan more, but accomplish less.

We’ve learned to rush, but not to wait.

We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.



These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships.

These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes.

These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill.

It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom.

A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

Remember to spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever.

Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side.

Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent.

Remember to say "I love you" to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it.

A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you.

Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment, for someday that person will not be there again.

Give time to love, give time to speak!

And give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind.

And always remember, life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by those moments that take our breath away. — *George Carlin*

Thank you for reading this bit of wisdom. It would be an excellent lead-in to reading (or re-reading) the Book of Ecclesiastes written by King Solomon. Any modern translation would be good. For background on Ecclesiastes read Dr. Ernest Martin's 1977 article, "[The Book of Ecclesiastes](#)."

Reading aloud is always an excellent way to study Scripture. The more you read aloud, the better you understand. (After Ecclesiastes, read aloud 1 Corinthians chapter 15. Its message involves you directly as an individual.)

Listening to Ecclesiastes is a great way to learn. Listening while reading along is even better because it focuses your attention. There is an excellent audio of [Ecclesiastes](#) of the New King James Version (1982). Read by the English actor John Hurt, it modernizes the English of the 1600s era KJV, but retains much of its most familiar and best phrasing.