

had reached the point where there was nothing that I could do that would be of any help to him. But I have often wondered if on that occasion, instead of taking for granted that he was a solidly ~~g~~ rooted, thorough-going Christian as I had always considered him to be, but realizing that like all others there is the possibility of serious problems, and serious doubts and feeling that in ~~these~~ ^{that} two or three hours we were together I might have told him a little of the way the Lord had dealt with me during those ~~two~~ ^{two} or three years and have said something that would serve to warn him and admonish him, who knows but what the Lord might have used it to preserve him when the time of emotion and problems came later. We never know what effect our words may have.

I have heard stories of people hearing the gospel in their youth, memorizing verses in their youth, and then going on into an ~~indifferent~~ ^{indifferent} life of paying no attention to God and his duties, and in old age having the verse come back to ~~him~~ ^{them} or the witness someone had given 40 years before and having God use that for bringing them to the knowledge of the Lord. I don't know as that happens often, but I think that very often what we say to people has a delayed effect and this is ~~true~~ true both of witnessing to the Lord and admonishing and warning people for their growth in grace. Our words may have an effect far beyond what we realize. I remember when I was in college some of us used to enjoy arguing about all kinds of things and we would argue about these matters and the stronger the argument the other person put the more determined we seem to become in our own position and somebody said "What's the point of this arguing. Everyone just gets stronger in the way he feels already. It doesn't have any effect of anybody. Well I noticed that when I would argue so strongly with someone on a point and give any kind of a silly ~~argument~~ argument I might think of to try to maintain my point in the discussion, later on often his words would come back to my mind and I would think it over and I'd say "What a silly argument/I gave anyway. I guess he was right in the matter." And so we never know when our words are going to have an effect beyond what we see any apparent evidence of. And so to think how we can accomplish these purposes is very important.