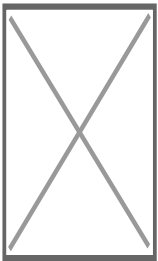


Snap, crackle and pop!

Body Builder

by Terry Camsey, Major –



Funny how stuff sticks in your mind, isn't it? For some reason, that phrase popped to the surface as I was thinking about this column, and it must be years since I first heard it. If I recall correctly it was (perhaps still is) the slogan for Rice Krispies.



It seems to me that, the older one gets, the easier it is to spend more time thinking about the past than the present and the future. I guess that's because the storehouse of memories gets greater and greater, and one of the blessings of memory is the ability to recall and relive in the mind experiences that have left an impact upon us. This may become problematic when a past experience was a unique moment in time that probably will never come again in the same way and we mourn its loss instead of getting on with life.

For example, I frequently meet Salvationists of my age, who would dearly like to see the kind of Army enjoyed in years past. Most of them are now starting to say that they feel blessed to have lived through an experience that today's generations may never see in quite the same way. They realize that the world moves on and that today's young Salvationists are creating their own treasured memories of these present times.

But back to "snap, crackle and pop." As I meditated on that profound phrase, my thinking turned to Joel 2:28 where Scripture talks of young men seeing visions and old men dreaming dreams. These days the words "vision" and "dream" are used interchangeably as referring to a future, as yet unseen, event. But I'm not so sure.

The tendency of the young is to look forward rather than back—to see visions of what, with God's help, can be, and such vision causes a sort of "snap." A spark is struck that can lead, if pursued, to what we might term a "crackle" as the spark of the visionary is fanned into flame when shared and a fire is lit in the belly. In no time at all, a "pop" occurs as the heat of escalating excitement toward the possibilities erupts into spontaneous combustion with a frenzy of activity, and before you know it, the vision explodes into life. "Snap, crackle and pop!"

But, as I have suggested, the tendency of the old is to look back reflectively. “Old men,” says Joel, “dream dreams.” Dreams of what has been, as they metaphorically sit in front of the fire; dream of times past. They can easily fall asleep (nap) enjoying the memories. In a group, old men can get caught up talking (having a cackle) about the good old days—critical of what things are coming to, but doing little to help the situation. The fire can dim as they look for castles in the dying flames and...“flop.” As members of that critical club die, so does the fire. “Nap, cackle and flop!”

So, I don't know about you, but despite my advancing years, I hope always to be identified as a visionary, not a dreamer

They tell us that future, retiring generations will be significantly different to their predecessors. Retirement, for them, does not mean waiting for death. Rather it signifies another potentially exciting third of life to be lived. No “senior citizens” they!

Robert H. Schuller, in his book *Ahead With Possibility Thinking*, tells of how a group, formerly known as “Senior Citizens” in his church, was renamed, “THE KEEN-AGERS” because of their keener eye for loving, helping, working—in their church, on their street, and in their community—sharpening old skills, learning new—with high hopes and exciting goals. Says Schuller: “*A man is not old until he has lost his vision. And a man is young as long as he sees possibilities around him.*”

So, what'll it be for you, my aged friends? Snap, crackle and pop? Or nap, cackle and flop?