

HOW ARE YOU? A common greeting of these days is, "How are you?" The stereotype reply is, "Fine, and how are you?" I frequently give this reply to my friends who would be dismayed and bored if I tried to tell them the truth, for the condition of this jalopy which I call my body is getting worse and worse, and my friends recognize it and make mental note, "He is slipping fast." No one comments on the obvious and colossal lie that it is.

This jalopy is getting into bad condition. The steering gear is so worn and wobbly that I have to use a cane to keep it from running off the road. The headlights are so dim that they show up only about a half or a third as much as they used to. The horn is a mere squawk. I only get about a tenth of the speed out of it that it gave a few years ago. And as for climbing hills, or even gentler slopes, the less said the better. It is clear that it is going to have to be junked one of these days.

But the real I who lives inside this jalopy is a different story. God is much more real and his truth shines more brightly. The companionship of Christ is more constant through His Holy Spirit, and He holds out a hope for a new model, after this jalopy is junked. This, I think, is what Paul had in mind when he spoke of the reward that God, the righteous judge, would give him on that day. I think it is also what he was writing to the Philippians about his own body which was in a hazardous state, "I rejoice and I intend to rejoice. I hope all of you will rejoice with me." Paul labeled his new model spiritual and eternal, as compared with our present model, physical and decaying.

This then is the lively hope that I can have. I know I do not deserve a new model, and if God, the righteous judge, determines that I should not have it, that is all right too. In any case, righteous judge is His middle name, sandwiched between His first and last names, both of which are LOVE.

So, I am fine, thank you. How are you?

I AM AN ETERNAL SPIRITUAL BEING—AGELESS AND INFINITE.

Happy
Birthday!

Whoever you are, wherever you are: "Happy Birthday!" Whether or not this is the actual date of your birth is unimportant. Today is the day to celebrate your spiritual rebirth into new life in Christ. Every day is appropriate for this celebration, for you are an eternal spiritual being, continually reborn into new life and love.

Whatever the number of your physical years, see it only as a number. Cancel any thought of encroaching years with a positive affirmation of Truth. You are ageless and infinite. You have achieved great wisdom and understanding in your life's journey and your soul is on a progressive spiritual path that cannot be divided into beginnings or endings. Every day is your spiritual birthday, an invitation to celebrate life with enthusiasm and joy. Happy spiritual birthday, dear friend!

You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.—I Pet. 1:23

Beatitudes for Friends of the Aged

"Blessed are they who understand
My faltering step and palsied hand.
Blessed are they who know that my
ears today
Must strain to catch the things they
say.

Blessed are they who seem to know
That my eyes are dim and my wits
are slow.

Blessed are they who looked away
When coffee spilled at table today.
Blessed are they with a cheery smile
Who stop to chat for a little while.
Blessed are they who never say,
You've told that story twice today.
Blessed are they who know the ways
To bring back memories of
yesterdays.

Blessed are they who make it known
That I'm loved, respected and not
alone.

To find the strength to carry the
Cross.

Blessed are they who know I'm at a
loss

Blessed are they who ease the days
On my journey Home in loving
ways."