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WILKES COLLEGE BRIEF

That The Years May Have Meaning

JANUARY, 1959

WILKES COLLEGE
WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA

Man has extended his years by mastering his environment. Unfortunately he has not always given meaning to these added years by mastering himself. Life of itself is not significant; it gains significance only when man, aspiring toward something greater than himself, becomes an instrument for human betterment.

To justify the extension of life which has been given by science and technology, man must somehow enrich his life and give it greater meaning. He must gain deeper insights into the nature of man and society; he must nurture his spiritual and intellectual resources so that he may be at peace with himself and with his neighbor.

As years of life have been expanded, men have found themselves unprepared to use these extra years. They have been cut off from their jobs, their usual activities, and their usual associates. They find that they have outlived their usefulness and their place in society. This is not good. Somehow men must find a way to make these added years both fruitful and satisfying.

To do this the individual must make the most of his early years but this early preparation for a fruitful life need not be pointed toward the later years of life. Perhaps the only way to prepare for the future is to live each day abundantly with faith that the work of the day, well done, prepares us for what-

ever tomorrow may bring. If the early years are empty and without meaning, it is almost inevitable that the later years also shall be empty and without meaning. If these early years are given to significant work, the effort to do this work will develop the inner resources of the individual and will prepare him for a more satisfying and more constructive period of fulfillment in the last years of life.

Each day is a part of the warp and woof of life, and each day lived to its fullest gives greater meaning and significance to our tomorrows. We cannot foresee the events that lie ahead, but we prepare ourselves for them by using to the full the latent resources of the spirit and the mind that are so seldom recognized and even less frequently nurtured.

Let each of us give added significance to our ever-lengthening years by doing each day something that is of worth to our community and our people. In so doing, we will find an answer to the meaning of life. We will discover those intangibles that give significance to life—a vision of something better, faith that this vision can become a reality if we strive intelligently and persistently to make it so, and courage to face obstacles and to undertake something of worth for ourselves and our neighbors.

Only these intangibles—vision, faith, courage, and perseverance—give greater significance to life, and are they not the inevitable by-products of constructive effort in our daily living?

