Times of our Lives

Making Sense Of: Growing Up & Growing Old

The world often treats aging as a slow fading, a diminishing of usefulness, beauty, strength, and relevance. Scripture, however, presents a radically different vision. In the Bible, aging is not a descent into weakness but an ascent into wisdom. It is not the closing of opportunity but the deepening of purpose. God never describes His people as "getting old" in the sense of becoming less valuable; instead, He describes them as **ripening**, **maturing**, and **bearing fruit in every season**. Psalm 92:12–14 declares that the righteous "shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing." That is not the language of decline—it is the language of divine development. God's people do not age out of usefulness; they age into it.

Aging in Scripture is consistently tied to **increasing spiritual strength**, not decreasing physical strength. Moses was 80 when God called him to lead Israel. Caleb was 85 when he said, "Give me this mountain." The Bible does not hide their age; it highlights it. Why? Because God wants His people to understand that **time does not weaken His calling**. Instead, time prepares His servants to walk in it more fully. When we say, "I'm not getting older, but better," we are aligning ourselves with God's perspective: the passing of years is not a loss but a gain, not a burden but a blessing, not a retreat but an advance.

This biblical vision confronts the cultural lie that aging is something to fear. Fear of aging is rooted in the belief that our value comes from youth, strength, or productivity. But Scripture teaches that our value comes from **God's presence, God's purpose, and God's work within us**. The believer who walks with God is not deteriorating; they are being refined. They are becoming more like Christ, more anchored in truth, more seasoned in wisdom, more stable in faith, and more fruitful in ministry. Aging is not God taking something away—it is God adding something precious.

One of the greatest gifts of aging is **wisdom**, something Scripture treasures more than gold. Proverbs 16:31 says, "The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness."

Notice the condition: wisdom is not automatic with age, but age gives the opportunity for wisdom to flourish. Wisdom is the fruit of walking with God through many seasons—joy and sorrow, victory and loss, clarity and confusion. Every year with God adds another layer of understanding, another testimony of His faithfulness, another reason to trust Him more deeply.

Wisdom is not simply knowledge; it is **God-shaped perspective**. It is the ability to see life through the lens of eternity. Younger believers may have passion, but seasoned believers have perspective. They have learned that God's timing is perfect, that His promises are sure, and that His grace is sufficient. They have learned that storms do not destroy faith—they strengthen it. They have learned that God's delays are not denials, and His discipline is not rejection. They have learned that prayer is not a last resort but a first response. This is why Scripture elevates the wisdom of the aged: it is a spiritual treasure that cannot be rushed or manufactured.

When we say, "I'm not getting older, but better," we are acknowledging that **God has been teaching us**, shaping us, pruning us, and preparing us. Every year adds depth to our testimony. Every trial adds weight to our words. Every answered prayer adds confidence to our faith. The believer who has walked with God for decades carries a spiritual authority that cannot be imitated. Their life becomes a living sermon, a visible reminder that God is faithful from generation to generation.

Aging in Christ also means **stronger faith**. Not weaker—stronger. Faith grows through testing, and testing grows through time. Peter writes that our trials refine our faith "like gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire" (1 Peter 1:7). A young believer may have sincere faith, but a seasoned believer has **tested faith**—faith that has walked through valleys, endured storms, and survived spiritual battles. Tested faith is not fragile; it is resilient. It does not panic easily. It does not quit quickly.

It does not collapse under pressure. It has learned that God can be trusted even when life cannot be understood.

This is why older believers often radiate a quiet confidence. They have seen God come through too many times to doubt Him now.

They have learned that God's grace is not theoretical—it is experiential. They have learned that God's presence is not occasional—it is constant. They have learned that God's promises are not poetic—they are practical. Their faith is not based on emotion but on experience. They know God because they have walked with Him.

This is what makes the believer "better" with time. Not better in the sense of superiority, but better in the sense of **spiritual maturity, stability, and depth**. Better at trusting God. Better at hearing His voice. Better at discerning His will. Better at loving others. Better at forgiving quickly. Better at letting go of offenses. Better at choosing peace over panic. Better at resting in God's sovereignty. Time with God does not make us bitter—it makes us better.

Psalm 92 gives one of the most beautiful promises in Scripture: the righteous "shall still bear fruit in old age." God does not retire His servants. He reassigns them. He does not shelf them. He strengthens them. Fruitfulness is not tied to age; it is tied to abiding in Christ. Jesus said, "He who abides in Me… bears much fruit" (John 15:5). That promise does not expire at 40, 60, 80, or 100. As long as a believer abides, they bear fruit.

The fruit may look different in different seasons. In youth, fruit may look like energy, activity, and outward ministry. In later years, fruit may look like wisdom, intercession, mentoring, encouragement, and spiritual influence. But it is still fruit—real, lasting, kingdom-impacting fruit. Some of the most powerful ministries in Scripture were carried out by older believers. Abraham became the father of nations in his old age. Daniel received visions in his old age. John wrote Revelation in his old age. Paul wrote some of his most profound letters near the end of his life. God does not measure fruitfulness by physical strength but by spiritual surrender.

When we say, “I’m not getting older, but better,” we are declaring that **God is not finished with us**. We are not winding down; we are being refined. We are not losing purpose; we are stepping into deeper purpose. We are not becoming less useful; we are becoming more strategic.

The older believer becomes a spiritual anchor for the church, a stabilizing presence, a source of wisdom, a model of endurance, and a testimony of God’s faithfulness.

Finally, aging in Christ means **growing in hope**. The world fears aging because it believes the best days are behind us. Scripture teaches the opposite: for the believer, the best is always ahead. Proverbs 4:18 says, “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, shining brighter and brighter until full day.” That means the believer’s life does not dim with age—it brightens. Every step brings us closer to glory, closer to Christ, closer to the fullness of God’s promise.

Hope is not wishful thinking; it is confident expectation. It is the assurance that God is not done writing our story. It is the conviction that every season has purpose. It is the joy of knowing that eternity is drawing nearer. The believer who ages with hope becomes a beacon of encouragement to others. They show that life with God is not a downward slope but an upward climb. They show that joy does not fade with time—it deepens. They show that peace does not weaken with age—it strengthens. They show that purpose does not expire—it expands.

To say, “I’m not getting older, but better,” is to embrace the biblical truth that **God is transforming us from glory to glory** (2 Corinthians 3:18). It is to recognize that aging is not the enemy of purpose but the servant of purpose. It is to celebrate the work of God in every season of life. It is to declare that the God who began a good work in us will complete it. And it is to live with the confidence that the best days for the child of God are never behind them—they are always ahead.

Aging: Respecting and Understanding Old Age

As most subjects we study, you will find out how much human viewpoint we really have on the subject matter of old age that needs to be corrected by God's Word.

Seven Areas Dealing With Aging

I. The pattern of old age in the life of Caleb (***Numbers 13***)

II. The prayer offered in old age (***Psalms 71***)

III. The support that God offers for old age (***Isaiah 46***)

IV. The fruit that ought to be produced in old age (***Psalm 92***)

V. The danger of old age (***Ecclesiastes 4:13***)

VI. The secret of long days (***Proverbs 10:27***)

VII. The termination of old age (death). We will look at some of the ways people died in the Word of God.

I. The Pattern for Old Age—Caleb

We are all in the process of determining what old age will be like. Some are planning for retirement, which usually starts at an early age. We prepare **physically** but we fail to prepare **spiritually and emotionally**.

Decisions of our youth determine the quality of our old age!

1. Caleb's decision of his youth was that he would not question God's Word.

   He decided to respond to God's Word by believing it. Definitely a rare decision! Remember that only two people in Israel decided that they could indeed take the land.

   Numbers 13, God tells them that it is theirs to take. It flows with milk and honey and He promises to give the land to Israel.

   <u>There will be resistance</u> but the land will be yours. Out of 2 million people, only two were positive to God's statement.

   Numbers 13:1-2 (NASB)
   1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses saying,2 "Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers' tribes, every one a leader among them."

Numbers 13:25-28 (NASB)
25 When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days,
26 they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 Thus they told him, and said, "We went in to the land where you sent us; ***and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit****. 28 "Nevertheless,* ***the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large****; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there.*

Verse 27 (a glowing picture)
Verse 28 (an introduction to a problem)

When given a promise and a problem where will the typical human mind focus? On the problem, verse 28.

Everybody but Caleb and Joshua focused on the problem.

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2. Things about his decision: 1) given a promise from God and; 2) given a problem because of man. The question for us is, "What are we focusing on?"

   Caleb is 40 years old now and at 85 we will find him focusing on the promises of God and not the problems of life.

   Point of Doctrine: It is impossible to look at both promises and problems at the same time.

   If you take your eyes off of ***a promise*** and focus on ***the problem***, your self-image goes downhill ("*The Grasshopper Complex*" - ***Numbers 13:33***).

   Numbers 13:33 (NASB)
   33 "There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

   Nephilim – and that is the problem. "*We become like grasshoppers in our own sight.*" What a beautiful self-image: I'm a grasshopper! All those who believed that they were grasshoppers died before the promise was revealed. They missed out on the very best that God had for them.

3. Two things were attempted to sway the opinion of Caleb. One was to draw him away from the promise and the other was to focus on the problem.

   A. The first one was public opinion

Numbers 14:1 (NASB)
[1] Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.

Two (2) million people did not persuade Caleb. The people were weeping because they saw a problem, but Caleb did not see a problem. He lived a long time, maintained his strength, and had a fruitful life.

B. The second one was leadership opinion

Numbers 13:31 (NASB)
[31] But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us."

Official Opinion: We are the leaders of the tribes, we have seen it, we have been there, and we cannot take the land because the problem is too big.

Caleb disagreed with the official opinion and instead focused on the promise of God.

Caleb's focus on the promise of God was the strength of his youth!

This introduces a theme throughout all the passages in the Bible, without exception, on the subject of old-age. The theme is:

The quality of our old age is determined by the decisions and commitment of youth.

When you were young/younger, you probably never thought about getting old. I'm going to be around till at least 100 years of age (it's my story and I'm going to stick with it).

4. Caleb's viewpoint on youth

A. First: Caleb addresses two things that they could look at:

1. The Problem
2. The Promise

Numbers 14:7-9 (NASB)
[7] and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. [8] "If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey. [9] "Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be

our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."

Looking at the promise in verse 8:

He believed that success is directly linked to a relationship to God.

"*if the Lord is pleased with us*" (i.e. Caleb knows that if their relationship with God was correct, they would take the land no matter how many giants were in it.)

Question: Who controls Caleb's thinking: leadership, the inhabitants of Canaan, or the weeping Israelites? None of them. God does!

Our own will and volition do not age. What is the difference from a young will versus an old will? Nothing. It is the same as when you were 16.

Volition does not change. As long as Caleb relates to the Lord, (His plan, His will, and His purpose) he will be successful in youth and in his senior years.

B. Second: Caleb's confidence

Numbers 14:24 (NASB)
24 "But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.

The second platform in his belief system is if you fear man and not God, you are rebelling against God.

<u>You could not shake Caleb</u> because was not afraid of the giants. Why? God had already made it clear that they would take the land.

<u>Caleb's confidence is in the Lord</u> and he would not rebel against God's Word.

"*different spirit*"- different mental attitude based on divine viewpoint thinking.

"*he has followed me fully*" – the key to his life

Caleb has aged 45 years. He is now 85 years old. What is his attitude at 85? It is the same as it was at 45!

5. The strength of his senior years

Joshua 14:7-8 (NASB)
7 "I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought word back to him as it was in my heart. 8 "Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear; but I followed the LORD my God fully.

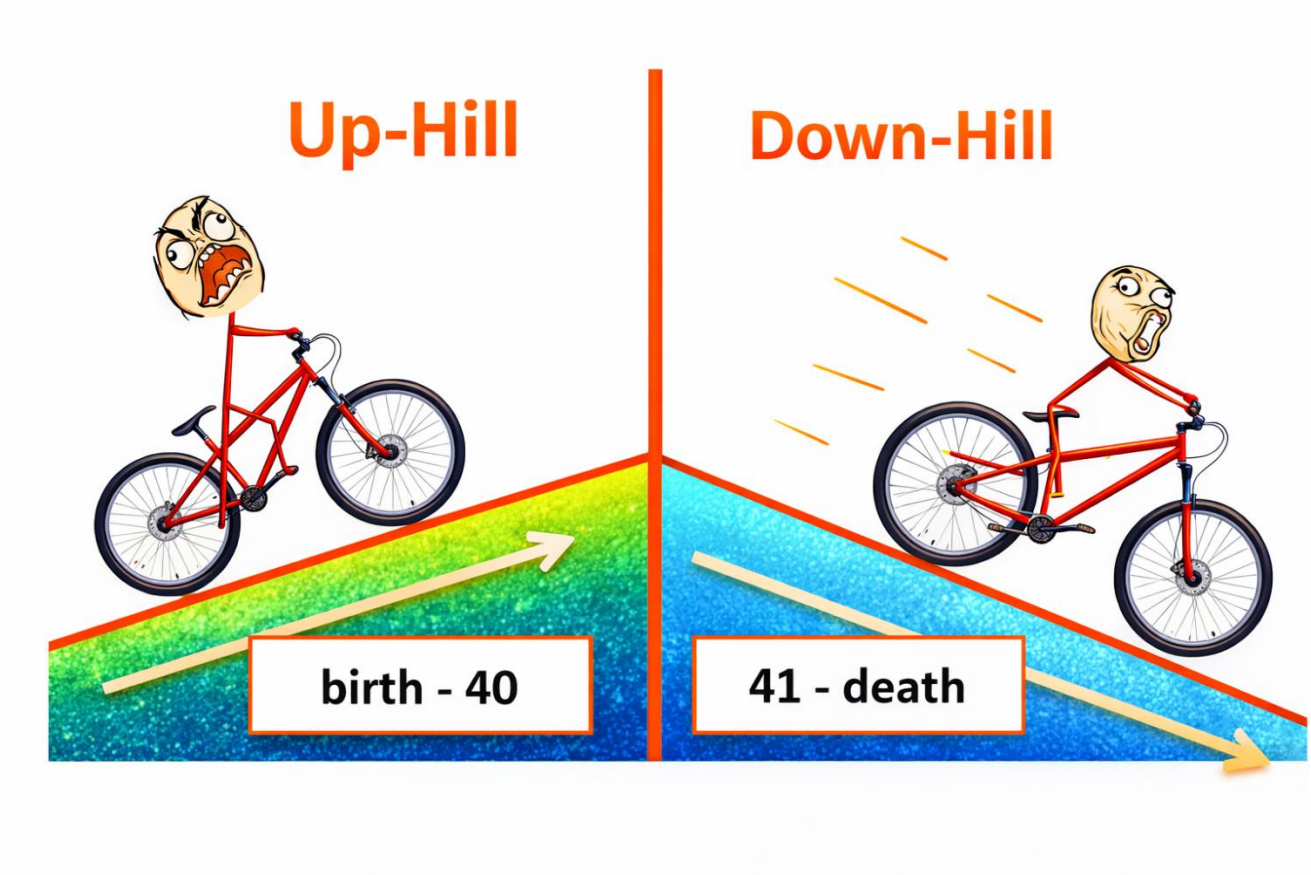
His mental attitude has not changed. His victory was not due to physical accomplishments but rather is was due to what he thought.

Joshua 14:10-11 (NASB)
10 "Now behold, the LORD has let me live, just as He spoke, these forty-five years, from the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, when Israel walked in the wilderness; and now behold, I am eighty-five years old today. 11 "I am still as strong today as I was in the day Moses sent me; as my strength was then, so my strength is now, for war and for going out and coming in.

Verse 10 & 11 – Does this sound like Caleb was declining in his senior years? **No!** Was it all downhill? **No!** He is accomplishing just as much at age 85, as when he was 40 years old.

Joshua 14:12 (NASB) *"Now then, give me this hill country about which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day that Anakim were there, with great fortified cities; perhaps the LORD will be with me, and I will drive them out as the LORD has spoken."*

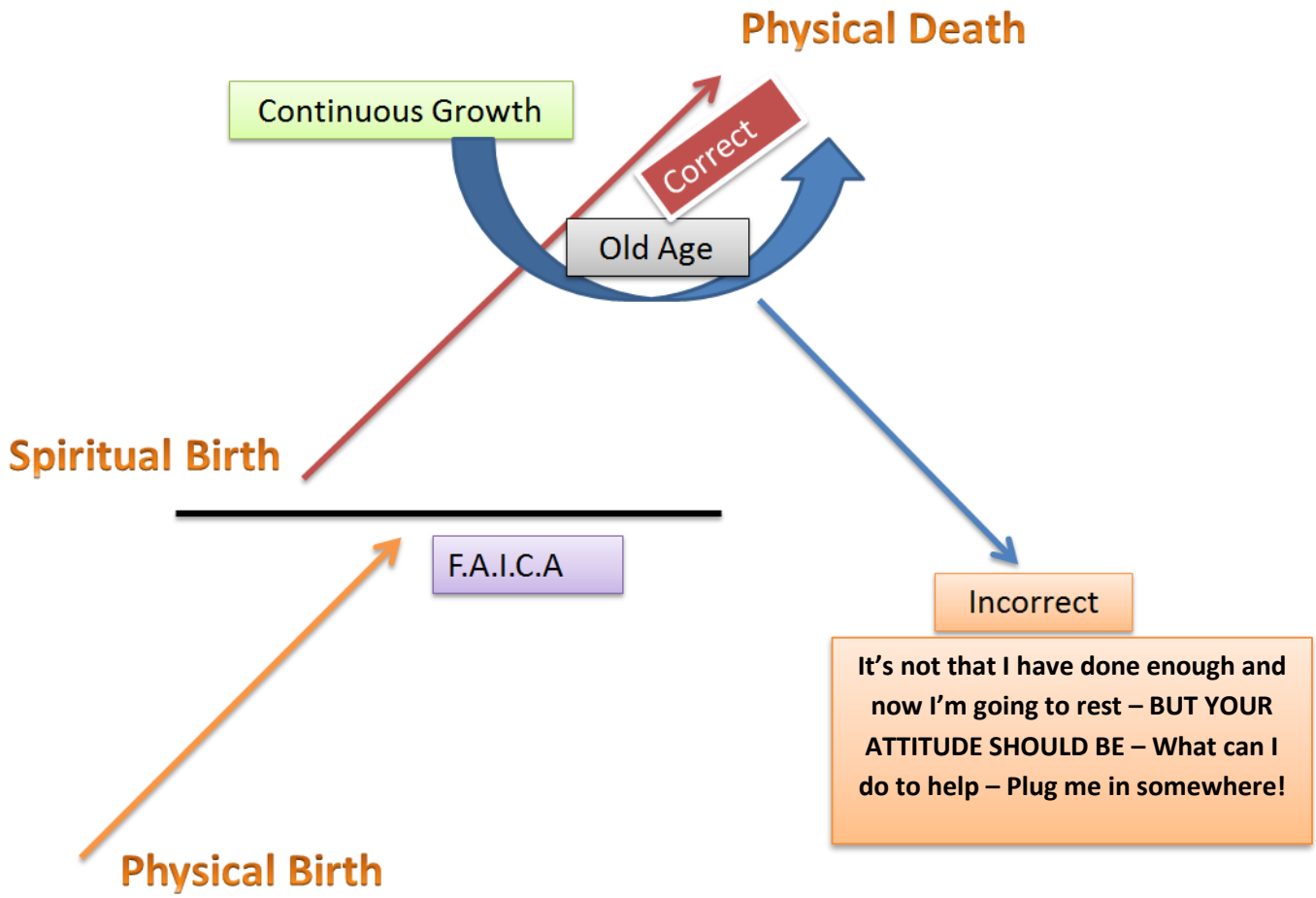
Verse 12 – Caleb's life continues to mature with no break until his last breath. This is the same for our Christian Way of Life. We continue with no break until our last breath.



Both scripture and experience tells us that life, no matter how long we live, is brief when compared to eternity. In fact, Scripture compares life to a vapor in James 4:14 and Job 8:9**:**

James 4:14 - "Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away."

Job 8:9 - "For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, Because our days on earth are as a shadow**.**



II. The Prayer of Old Age—Psalm 71

A. His Past

Psalm 71:5-6 (NASB)
5 For You are my hope; O Lord GOD, You are my confidence from my youth.
6 By You I have been sustained from my birth; You are He who took me from my mother's womb; My praise is continually of You.

1. "*For you are*" (present tense) - in old age you are my hope and confidence as opposed to my surrounding conditions.

2. The first part of verse five says, this is where I am now. The second part is how did I get there? I built a foundation and I'm reaping the rewards of my foundation.

   "*Hope*" - absolute confidence; "*confidence*" – security
   You have been my security from my youth.

B. His Present

Psalm 71:9-10 (NASB)
9 Do not cast me off in the time of old age; Do not forsake me when my strength fails. 10 For my enemies have spoken against me; And those who watch for my life have consulted together,

<u>There are two emotional problems to deal with:</u>

1. **The First Problem: Being Alone** "*Do not cast me off in time of old age*". There is a time to be old. This is as normal as anything else. Notice he used the words "**Old Age"** not golden years or senior citizens. He is old and has to face it. It's real.

2. **The Second Problem: Being Victimized -** "*his strength fails*". You can't change that, there's going to be physical limitations. He's alone and is afraid of being victimized by crime, of having poor health, not having enough money to live, and being lonely. (Remember, there are no spiritual limitations.)

   Accept the potential of these things, but do not let them control your mental attitude or the decisions you make in life.

   <u>Questions to ask yourself</u>: What can you do to deal with the problems? What action can be taken?

<u>Three things you can do because choices are still available to you</u>.

1. Continue to Hope

   Psalm 71:14 (NASB)
   14 But as for me, I will hope continually, And will praise You yet more and more.

   The key word is continue – you can continue to hope – if you give up you are "doomed to misery" attitude.

   You must answer the question, "What does any physical problem have to do with hope, financial issues, or any other problem?" (ANSWER – NOTHING)

2. Continue to grow "more and more".
3. Continue to witness to God's character.

   Psalm 71:15 (NASB)
   15 My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness And of Your salvation all day long; For I do not know the sum of them.

Summary: Hope, Grow, and Witness (that's enough to keep anybody busy)

C. His Future

Psalm 71:17 (NASB)
17 O God, You have taught me from my youth, And I still declare Your wondrous s deeds.

Why is he able to do all these things? Two reasons!

1. Volition does not grow old. Your will does not age.
2. Due to his background from his youth, he was prepared for old-age

III. The Support that God Offers for Old Age—Isaiah 46

Isaiah 46:3-4 (NASB)
3 "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, And all the remnant of the house of Israel, You who have been borne by Me from birth And have been carried from the womb; 4 Even to your old age I will be the same, And even to your graying years I will bear you! I have done it, and I will carry you; And I will bear you and I will deliver you.

One of the key features of old age is change, namely, physical change. You probably take more naps and are limited in some areas.

Reaching Out

If you are lonely you cannot wait for someone to rescue you. You have to be willing to make a move yourself. The truth is, we all need supportive relationships.

<u>So how do you deal with change?</u>

You need something in your environment that doesn't change. Your spouse dies, your friends die, etc.

Verses 3 & 4 teach us about the preparation for old-age. (Dual support)

What does not change is a lifelong relationship with God. He cares for you and never changes even when everything else around you is changing.

The Faithfulness of God

The faithfulness of God to the believer is expressed in many ways in the Bible.

1. The faithfulness of God to forgive sin. ***1 John 1:9***
2. The faithfulness of God in keeping us saved. ***2 Tim. 2:13, 2 Thess. 3:3***
3. The faithfulness of God in times of pressure. ***1 Cor. 10:13***
4. The faithfulness of God in keeping His promises to us. ***Heb. 10:23***
5. The faithfulness of God in times of suffering. ***1 Pet. 4:19***

6. The faithfulness of God in providing for the believer's eternal future.
   1 Thess. 5:24

IV. The Fruit of Old Age — Psalm 92:12–15

Psalm 92:12-15 (NASB)
12 The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13 Planted in the house of the LORD, They will flourish in the courts of our God. 14 They will still yield fruit in old age; They shall be full of sap and very green, 15 To declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

These verses teach that quality of old-age is determined by your commitment.

Verses 12 & 13 is a picture of what a life lived in fellowship with the Lord will look like. Verse 14 "*they*" is the kind of person who has lived a life in fellowship.

"***Palm tree***" - teaches three things:

1. A date palm is not designed for beauty but to produce fruit. (Consistency)
2. A date palm can produce 600 pounds of dates in one season.
3. It stays green in winter and summer providing for stability and fruit bearing.

"*Cedar in Lebanon*"

1. They wanted the finest wood they could find for building the Temple.
2. In verse 13, the secret is where the tree rooted. It is planted in the house of the Lord (*our soul*). HOW? Through the Word of God (*fellowship with the Holy Spirit*) in the presence of God.
3. The air – "*they flourish in the courts of our God.*"

<u>Application of Old-Age:</u> Still produce fruit. Fruit bearing never comes to an end. It is not lessened by age. Age has nothing to do with it. Age may only lessen the activities.

Verse 14 is an opportunity to witness to the dependability of God and to His righteousness.

Verse 15 "*rock*" - dependability

Verse 15 "*no unrighteousness*" – prefect righteousness of the Lord (holy)

<u>Point Of Doctrine</u>: We should be producing as much fruit in our old-age as we did when we were young.

V. The Danger of Old Age —Ecclesiastes 4:13

Ecclesiastes 4:13 (NASB)
*13 A poor yet wise lad is better than an **old and foolish** king who no longer knows how to receive instruction.*

Three things describe the person in this verse:

1. He is old and not mature. The passing of time does nothing but bring wrinkles if you fail to have a relationship with God.

   The passing of time gives us an opportunity to grow to maturity but it does not bring maturity.

   We must take opportunity over the years to prepare ourselves.

2. He is a foolish old man. In the book of Proverbs the word fool is used 51 times. The fool is one of the major characters in the book.

   A fool is someone who does not relate the Word of God to their life.

3. He is prominent. He is a king. What can we say about him? We have a king who is a prominent old fool.

   How do we become a prominent old fool?

   1. It takes practice. It has to do with your decisions.
   2. You have to make the decisions that make you an old fool.
   3. Verse 13 – "[The prominent old fool] no longer knows how to receive instructions".
   4. "No longer" implies that he stopped doing something he used to do.
   5. He was once teachable but then decided he was not going to be taught anymore. He retired intellectually and spiritually.
   6. There is no merit in us, in fact, the Bible condemns human merit.

   How NOT to become a prominent old fool!!

   The Bible is clear; keep it up - don't quit studying and praying, don't give up your service and Christian walk (even in old age).

VI. The Secret of Old Age—Proverbs 10:27

Proverbs 10:27 (NASB)
27 The fear of the LORD prolongs life, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.

The single most important issue in our lives is our relationship with the Lord.

"*Fear of the Lord*" - refers to respect for God's authority. If you want to have a dramatic effect on your years, respect the authority of the Lord.

He is not promising you quantity of years (not how much but what kind; quality of life) not calendar years.

VII. Determination in Old Age

A. Only God Knows When it is Time for a Person to Die

Psalm 68:20 (NASB)
20 God is to us a God of deliverances; And to GOD the Lord belong escapes from death.

This is the special relationship with the Lord until death. How many times have you escaped death? Who knows? Your time was not up.

Psalm 116:15 (NASB)
15 Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His godly ones.

God does not allow death to grasp us away from Him.

"*Precious*" are things of great value, such as jewels; as being heavy or weighty; useful things of great splendor as in ***Job 31***. The idea is enormous value.

Hezekiah prayed for his life to be prolonged. He was allowed 15 more years and in those15 years, his life was nothing but misery.

We do not need to pray for more years, we simply need to pray that we would be effective in what God has called us to do during the years that He gives us. It starts at birth and goes down to death.

B. Abraham

Genesis 25:8 (NASB)
8 Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people.

1. Calm dignity—it is time to die (your given number of days are up). The idea here is completion. Abraham dies with dignity.
2. "*satisfied with life*" - Peace in death. He rested on a well spent life. He spent his life on something worthwhile.
3. "*He was gathered to his people*" - Death joins us with other believers that have gone before us.

   The idea here is that it is not a big deal, it is only a reality.

C. Isaac

Genesis 35:29 (NASB)
29 Isaac breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

The same description as Abraham with one exception, the presence of his family. He died with his family present.

D. Moses

Deuteronomy 31:27-29 (NASB)
27 "For I know your rebellion and your stubbornness; behold, while I am still alive with you today, you have been rebellious against the LORD; how much more, then, after my death? 28 "Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call the heavens and the earth to witness against them. 29 "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

Chapter 32 is Moses' final speech before death, and it's in the context of a finished job.

We need a generation of old people to communicate to the younger generation the value of doctrine and the greatness of God.

God's Words to Moses reveal that Moses had to die so that young people could enter the land and take on leadership responsibilities.

Only God knows when your given amount of days are up, and no amount of medicine or doctors will be able to stop God's plan for your life.

E. King David

1 Chronicles 29:28 (NASB)
28 Then he died in a ripe old age, full of days, riches and honor; and his son Solomon reigned in his place.

"*Ripe old* age" – His given amount of days are over and it is time to die.

F. Peter

2 Peter 1:12-15 (NASB)
12 Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present

with you. [13] I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, [14] knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. [15] And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

When is he going to stop helping other believers? "*As long as I'm in this earthly dwelling, until I have no breath left.*"

"*Imminent*" – His days are completed and it is time to die.

G. Paul

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (NASB)
[6] For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.[7] I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. [8] Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Paul was successful in handling his imminent death because he could look back to something (his life) and he could also look forward to something (eternity).

The reasons why he could handle it so well:

1. Verse 7 - Because of the way he spent his life: "*I fought the good fight,*" (picture of the Greek wrestler) "*I have finished the course*" (racetrack-Runner).

2. "*I kept the faith*" which carries the idea of the Roman soldier; just like the Roman soldier was doing his job, Paul had finished his.

3. Because of his relationship with eternity he knows where he's going.

4. Verse 8 - He realizes he will stand before the *Bema* (Judgment seat of Christ).

5. Death is the door to the coronation room; the door to eternity; the door to spend eternity with Jesus.

6. He realizes that God has saved the best for the last.

7. It does not bother him that Nero will have him killed by beheading him.

8. Paul's thinking, "I may stand before a wicked judge, Nero, but I will stand before the righteous Judge, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Conclusion: The only thing that comes to us without hard work is old age.

1. Accept aging and death as unchangeable and make the best use of each day.
2. God does not owe us a long, healthy life.
3. The purpose of life is to fulfill God's design (His plan, purpose, will).
4. Fear of death is conquered by life in Christ.
5. Pain and suffering are a part of life.
6. The body is sacred and should always be treated with respect. Do your very best to stay healthy and be very active in the church.
7. In sickness, trust the Lord and depend upon Him. (Remember to pray and study the Word of God, part of your Christian Way of Life).
8. God has established a right way to live (Divine Viewpoint thinking NOT human viewpoint thinking).

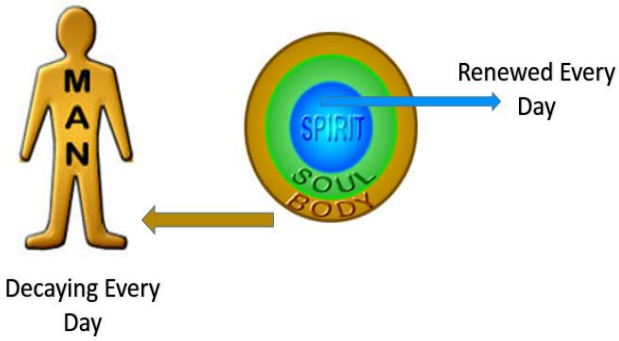
Isaiah 55:8 (NASB)
8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.

You Know You're Getting Old When:

1. All the names in your little black book end with M.D.
2. You try and straighten the wrinkles in your socks and find out you're not wearing any.
3. Your knees buckle but your belt won't.

The Body Is Getting Older
The Inner Man Is Renewed Every Day

2 Corinthians 4:16 (NASB)
16 1Therefore we do not lose heart, 2but though our outer man is decaying, 3yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.



1. The outward circumstances of life do not cause us to despair. We despair because we decide to be discouraged. No one can make us despair. We have to do this to ourselves. But we do not despair, when we realize and remember all God has done for us in grace.

2. The outer man is decaying due to sin.

3. The inner man is being renewed by God the Holy Spirit day by day. The spiritual life should be about pleasing God.

Paul concedes the fact that we all grow old and this sometimes causes despair for people who are active in life and want to continue to be able to do the things they have done in the past. However, the believer that is growing old and approaching closer and closer to death does not despair.

The reason why is answered in the final clause of this verse, "**yet our inner man is being renewed day after day.**"

Although our human body is decaying and being destroyed, our inner being or human soul continues to grow in grace every day.

- Our inner man refers to the immaterial part of the human being, that is, our human soul and human spirit.
- The inner man is renewed by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- The inner man is renewed by the filling of the Holy Spirit.
- The inner man is renewed by being conformed to the image of God's Son.
- The inner man is renewed on a daily basis; not once a week, or twice a week, or even three times a week, but daily.

We cannot afford to go one day without having our souls refreshed by the ministry of God the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit refreshes our soul and spirit by filling us and teaching us about God the Father and God the Son.

The Holy Spirit regenerates us once at salvation, but renews us daily through the word of God being implanted in our souls.

The daily renewal of our human soul and spirit gives us the motivation to continue to live and advance in the spiritual life of the Church Age.

This daily renewal protects us from despair.

As strangers and aliens in Satan's world, it is easy to become discouraged and despair. However, we have the solution provided on a daily basis by our Mentor, God the Holy Spirit.

The renewal of the soul and spirit through Bible doctrine metabolized on a daily basis keeps us from despair. It is the only protection we have.

When we become discouraged it is time to check on our volitional attitude toward doctrine. As goes our attitude toward doctrine, so goes our encouragement or despair.

Christian at Ease

If we worry, we cannot trust.

If we trust, we cannot worry.

I. A moment -by- Moment

a. Psa. 37:7
b. Prov. 3:5-6

II. The Choice is Yours

a. Psa. 27:5
b. 1 Thess. 5:18
c. Psa. 119:71,75

III. Don't Miss It!

Heb. 4:1-3

IV. Let the Lord Do It

a. 1 Peter 5:7
b. Psa. 37:4-5

V. Depend On the Lord

a. Isa. 40:29
b. Exo.14:14

VI. It Pays To Wait

a. Isa. 40:31
b. Heb. 11:6

Worry Won't Help

The Bible helps us live rich lives whatever our chronological age. One help that it gives us is the admonition to stop worrying. Worrying is probably one of the most damaging problems of our time.

The English word "worry" comes from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "to strangle" or "to choke".

A worrier, then, is one who strangles and chokes his spiritual resources. God's promise to Christians is the same as His promise centuries ago to the Israelites:

> *"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (**Isaiah 41:10**).*

Jesus promised His followers all the necessities of life, so long as they put the kingdom first in all things (Matthew 6:33).

Wisdom on Old Age

Old Age is an Essential Part of a Healthy Community, Church or Society

You can divide our lives into four stages:

1. ***Childhood***
2. ***Youth***
3. ***Adulthood***
4. ***Old Age***

Our childhood is said to be a time of instruction (that's when we learn). Adulthood is said to be a time of intelligence but old age is a time of wisdom, wisdom that comes from innocence. It is a willingness to be led by the Lord. But why is wisdom associated with the final years of our lives?

First of all, we are told that true wisdom is not just a matter of learning but a matter of life. True wisdom is in the heart. It comes from the life-long journey of walking hand in hand with the Lord (studying and applying the Scriptures). It is the life-long journey of discovering who the Lord is. It is a journey of finding that we can trust Him to be with us every step of the way - the wisdom of old age. True wisdom is the life-long journey of seeing the truths of the Lord's Word down here in all the activities of our lives. In that process of bringing truth into our lives over a life time, we make that truth our own.

In old age, we look back over our life and see that the Lord has been there the entire time. In the last stage of our life, the Lord allows the things of our bodies to gradually grow dim. We find that our physical bodies are not what they used to be. The Lord does this on purpose so that during the last stages of our lives, our minds can be elevated toward more internal things. The Lord, in His wisdom provides a gradual giving up of the things of this world as a preparation for the eternity of heaven.

We are told that the body grows old but the spirit itself does not age. The body may feel older, but the person inside that body is still the same. We still feel just as young as we ever did. The things of this world are not as important as they once seemed. Our values change and are uplifted. Old age need not be a time of decreasing usefulness. If anything, as age advances, the usefulness of life can become higher and more heavenly in their form.

Senior adulthood is also a time of reflection; reflection on life in the light of the Word of God. Every age has blessings. It also has its challenges and hardships, and this can be especially true with old age. It can be a time of physical decline and extreme loneliness. It can be a time of seeing life-long friends pass on and apparently leave. It can be a time of loneliness when a spouse has passed away.

It can be a time of depression, physical pain, and a time of wondering, "What is my use in this world? Am I merely a burden on society?"

Finally, the wisdom of old age is the magnificent realization that we can't do it alone, the realization that without the Lord, we are nothing. The Psalmist said, *"Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength fails"* (***Psalm 71:9***).

Old Age

A Closer Look at Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

I. Old Age is a Mental Attitude

II. The older one becomes as a believer, the better life should become: Old Age is last because it is best.

a. You should now have maturity: Spiritual Maturity
b. You should now have only a few years or less until your promotion into glory

III. Happiness in old age is often dependent upon *REMEMBERING YOUR CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF YOUR YOUTH: Ecclesiastes 12:1*

IV. A Description of Old Age: *Ecclesiastes 12:3-7* - This was written about 1,000 years before Christ was born. See if this description of old age tallies with old age.

a. "*When the keepers of the house shall tremble*" - the arms of the body being shaky, trembling. v. 3

b. "*the house*" - The body: the arms groom the body--feed it, etc. v. 3

c. "*the strong men*": the legs "shall bow themselves "-- are unable to support the weight of the body. v. 3

d. "*the grinders*" - the teeth "cease because they are few" - Lack of teeth. No false teeth in those days. v. 3

e. "*those that look out of the windows*" - the eyes "be darkened." They become blind. No glasses in those days. v. 3

f. "*the doors*" - the mouth and the ears, "shall be shut" - unable to speak or hear. v. 4

g. "*the sound of the grinding*" - the gums, "is low" - The sound of gums chewing rather than teeth. v. 4

h. "*he shall rise up at the sound of a bird*" - insomnia v. 4

i. "*and all the daughters of music shall be brought low*" - he has a problem with his hearing. v. 4

j. "*They shall be afraid of that which is high*" - altitude bothers older people. They dislike going up stairs, escalators, they get dizzy at times standing on the edge of a cliff. v. 5

k. "*and fears shall be in the way*" - very uncertain of themselves, fear loss of health, loss of job, and what to do in retirement. v. 5

l. "*and the almond tree shall flourish*" - once a beautiful head of hair, but the hair has fallen out like almonds fall off a tree. Baldness. v. 5

m. "*and the grasshopper shall be a burden*" - the least weight is a burden to carry, is in a weakened physical condition, has a bad back. v. 5

n. "*and desire shall fail*" - the appetites and passions shall subside, little initiative, they want to die, the mourners are going about the streets. v. 5

o. "*or ever the silver cord be loosed*"- the spinal cord deteriorates, causes loss of faculties, resulting in death. It affects the nervous system, also the respiratory system has problems. v. 6

p. "*or the golden bowl be broken*" - speaking of an injury to the head caused by falling, or milder problems such as headaches, the inability to concentrate. v. 6

q. "*or the pitcher*" – heart, "be broken at the fountain" - heart attack. The heart failing to function properly. The fountain deals with circulation of blood. v. 6

r. "*or the wheel broken at the cistern*" - lung problems. Shortness of breath, panting, not enough residual air to properly function. v. 6

s. "*then shall the dust return to the earth as it was*" - the dust (body) returns to earth in death and goes back to what it once was. v. 7

t. "*the breath shall return to God*" - talking about death. v. 7

V. The Answer to Old Age: *Ecclesiastes 12:9-14*

a. Come into old age as a believer, having already been saved.

You may have been a hard worker, and lived comfortably. You may have been kind and helpful, a good neighbor. You may have been a stable and dependable man—BUT ALL IS FOR NOTHING if you have never believed in Jesus Christ, receiving Him as personal Savior.

b. Come into old age as a mature believer -***12:9***

You have functioned under the fellowship with the Holy Spirit. You have lived by the Word of God. You therefore have an Edification Complex of the Soul. You have spent minimum time under Emotional Revolt.

Time Utilization: *Filling Your Days Wisely*

I. The Principle of Planned Time: *James 4:13-17*
(Five steps in the selfish planning of time)

a. v. 13 "*Today or tomorrow*" - The selfish believer plans his time in regard to the world only he can see. NO PLANNING IS MADE FOR DAILY BIBLE INTAKE, the inhaling of Bible Doctrine.

b. v. 13 "*Such a city*" - He selects his own location. He goes where the climate is best, the dollar easiest to make. There is NO GEOGRAPHICAL PLANNING to be in the geographical will of God.

c. v. 13 "*Continue there a year*" - NO TIME PLANNING FACTOR FOR SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT.

1. You may have your mind crammed with how you are going to spend your time in one year or two. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WORD? SO WHAT? They say, "It will fit in somewhere."

2. There is no concept of God's will indicated here.

d. v. 13 "*Buy and sell*" - He plans his own activities but NO PLANNING FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

e. v. 13 "*get gain*" - He plans his business to get gain for a profit -- no problem here, but NO PLANNING FOR SPIRITUAL PRODUCTION IN TIME, the building of an edification structure and so on.

The believer's problem is his ignorance of Bible Doctrine. He may even substitute the phrase "Lord willing" for really knowing and believing the Word.

II. The Principle of Redeemed Time: *Ephesians 5:16-18*
This is the answer to planned time.

a. The Doctrine of the filling of the Holy Spirit: An understanding of spirituality.

b. The result of fellowship with the Holy Spirit is "buying up the time" allotted for us to spend on this earth.

III. The Principle of Utilized Time: *1 Corinthians 7:29-31*
"*Use*" in v. 31 means to EMPLOY OR TO UTILIZE.

a. Principle #1 - TIME IS SHORT. Time keeps on getting shorter the older you get, the faster goes the time.

b. Principle #2: BEWARE THAT LEGITIMATE LIVING DOES NOT HINDER THE REDEMPTION OF TIME. ***1 Corinthians 7:30***

1. Sorrow
2. Happiness
3. Pursuit of Pleasure

c. Principle #3: DO NOT MISUSE TIME BY ABUSING TIME.

Taking it One Day at a Time

1. God has designed the Christian way of life to be lived one day at a time. ***Psalm 90:10***.

2. The believer oriented to the grace of God regards every day alike: **A gift from God** (***Romans 14:5-6***)

3. Every day is a gracious gift from the Lord to be redeemed for the Lord. ***Ephesians 5:16-17*** -"Redeeming the time" is purchasing time, being filled with the Holy Spirit.

4. The only time we have to glorify God on earth is the number of days in His plan for us. God's Plan for you is NOT numbered by years, but by days. ***James 4:13-15***

5. The Christian way of life exists:

   a. to grow to maturity
   b. to be productive (maximum). Divine good.

6. God provides the capital (grace) to make each day count for Him under the concept of more grace. ***James 4:6***

7. Every day is a special day in the Christian way of life. One day is no holier than another day. Sunday is special only in the sense of assembly for worship. ***Galatians 4:10, Romans 14:5-6***

8. Each day the believer is to avoid the mental attitude sins which produce self-induced misery.

   Psalm 27:1 (Emotional revolt). Mental attitude sins come in clusters, here is a list:

Jealousy	*Fear*
Envy	*Worry*
Vindictiveness	*Anxiety*
Pride	*Hatred*
Implacability	*Hostility*
Guilt Complex	*Antagonism*

9. Each day the believer is to take in doctrine.
   2 Corinthians 4:6, Hebrews 10:25

10. Only in the days of time can God demonstrate His love to us in suffering.

    "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassion's fail not. They are new every-morning: great is thy faithfulness."
    Lamentations 3:22-23 (cf. Psalm 102:1-2)

Using Your Time Well

Determining Your Purpose	Developing a Schedule	Diversifying Your Interests
Evaluate your skills and interests.	**Schedule your time productively or else it will slip through your fingers. Loving life and using time well go together.**	**Do not depend on your family or job for a sense of identity. They are only part of who you are.**
Look for open doors of opportunity. Be open for new challenges and responsibilities.	**Plan on doing something interesting and productive**	**Everyday experiences can take on new meaning because there is more time to savor them.**
Growing older does not mean you have to quit, but it does allow for finding new opportunities.	**Allow more time to complete tasks than you did when you were younger.**	**Enjoy living!**

Scripture Relating to Old Age

Old age is generally held in honor and the aged in society are to be respected. Attaining old age is regarded as a blessing from God, often as a reward for obedience. The physical weakness brought on by old age is recognized; so too is God's ability to strengthen and sustain the aged. Old age is often accompanied by a growth in wisdom and discernment. Because of the wisdom associated with their advancing years, elders had an important role of authority and guidance in Israelite society and the New Testament speaks of the leadership of elders within the church.

I. Old Age is to be held in honor

1. Respect for the aged

a) **Leviticus 19:32; 1 Peter 5:5**
b) See also **Job 29:8; Proverbs 16:31; 20:29; 1 Timothy 5:1**

2. **Respect for parents**

   a) **Leviticus 19:3; Proverbs 23:22**
   b) See also **Exodus 20:12; 21:17 ; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 27:16; Proverbs 30:17; Matthew 15:4; Ephesians 6:1–3; Colossians 3:20**

II. **Old Age is associated with wisdom**

1. **Deferring to the wisdom of the aged**

   a) **Job 32:6–7**
   b) See also ***1 Kings 12:6–8*** Rehoboam rejected the advice of elders and rebellion ensued; ***Job 12:12; Job 15:10; Philemon 9.*** Paul refers to his age to add authority to his words.

2. **Learning from the previous generation**

   a) **Psalm 71:17-18**
   b) See also **Job 8:8; Psalm 37:25–26**

3. **Old age does not necessarily bring superior wisdom**

   a) **Ecclesiastes 4:13**
   b) See also **Job 32:9; Psalms 105:22**

4. **Self-control should accompany old age**

   a) **Job 12:12**

5. **Showing disrespect for the elderly is a sign of evil day**

   a) **Isaiah 3:5**

III. **Life expectancy in the OT**

1. **Before the flood**

   a) **Genesis 5:5; Genesis 5:8; Genesis 5:11; Genesis 5:27** Methuselah died in the year of the flood; **Genesis 9:29**

2. **After the flood**

   a) **Genesis 6:3**
   b) See also **Genesis 11:10–25** Following the flood, the span of life gradually reduces; **Genesis 25:7–8** Abraham's death at 175 is considered "a good old age"
   c)

3. **In later generations**

   a) **Psalm 90:10**
   b) See also **2 Samuel 5:4–5; 2 Samuel 19:34–35**

IV. Attaining old age is a blessing from God

1. **Long life as a reward for obedience**

   a) **Deuteronomy 5:33**
   b) See also **Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 4:40; Proverbs 3:1–2; 16:31; Ecclesiastes 8:13**

2. **Reaching old age is a mark of God's favor**

   a) **Genesis 15:15**
   b) See also **Genesis 24:1; 35:29** (Isaac); **Judges 8:32** (Gideon); **1 Chronicles 29:28** (David, like Abraham and Gideon is described as dying at "a good old age"); **2 Chronicles 24:15** (Jehoiada); **Job 42:17** (Job)

3. **People reaching old age indicates God's blessing on society**

   a) **Zechariah 8:4**
   b) See also **Isaiah 65:20**

4. **Seeing grandchildren is a sign of blessing**

   a) **Proverbs 17:6**
   b) See also **Genesis 48:11; 50:22–23; Ruth 4:15; Job 42:16; Psalm 128:5–6; Isaiah 53:10**

5. **Failure to reach old age is a result of God's judgment**
   a) **1 Samuel 2:31–33**

V. The disabilities of old age

1. **Its frailties**

   a) **Psalm 71:9**
   b) See also **Genesis 27:1; 48:10; 1 Kings 1:1; 15:23; Ecclesiastes 12:2–7** an allegory portraying physical decline

2. **The progressive inability to have children**

   a) **Genesis 18:11–13**
   b) See also **Genesis 17:17; 37:3** Children born in old age were rare and therefore special; **2 Kings 4:14; Luke 1:18**

3. **The approach of death**

   a) **Genesis 27:2; 1 Kings 1:15; 1 Chronicles 23:1**

VI. God's provision for the aged

1. **God strengthens and sustains them**

   a) **Isaiah 46:3-4**
   b) See also **Deuteronomy 34:7; Joshua 14:10–11; Job 5:26; Psalm 92:14**

2. **God gives them children**

   a) **Genesis 21:7** (Abraham and Sarah); **2 Kings 4:16–17** (the Shunammite woman); **Luke 1:36** (Elizabeth)

Seven Problems You Can Face in Old Age if You Fail to Study and Apply the Word of God

1. **Old people who lack doctrine, lose the power of thinking and concentration, have no capacity for life, no mental sharpness, tend to doze off and daydream, which means they are unable to focus.**
2. **Old people who lack doctrine have no capacity for love, receive no blessings, happiness, or grace. They let these things pass by and become indifferent to life.**
3. **Old people who lack doctrine have an intensification of mental attitude sins, cannot be satisfied, become gossips, angry, jealous, etc. (Galatians 5:19-25)**
4. **Old people who lack doctrine lack of sense of security (Ecclesiastes 2:3-4), live in fear, worry about health, money, family, etc. They lack motivation.**
5. **Old people who lack doctrine are thoughtless, selfish, and demand attention. They basically want everything to be centered on themselves.**

6. **Old people who lack doctrine, if not careful, can easily get to a point they become un-teachable and set in their ways (Ecclesiastes 4:1).**

7. **Old people who lack doctrine are being defeated by time, are bored, feel like they cannot contribute anything in life, and may easily become troublemakers.**