

“The blessings that come with age”

One thing the elderly observe when they get older is that their bodies begin to slow down. They may not like to admit it at first, but it doesn't take all that long and they realise it is true.

It's not just that things are going 'south' when they look in the mirror, but they cannot perform like they did thirty years ago. It's part of the struggle that comes with age. As they say, “the mind is still willing, but more often than not, the body just cannot do it or if it can, it does it a whole lot slower.”

However, the frailty of age doesn't have to be a reason for feeling useless and that you are just waiting around to die. Nor should it be an excuse to always question God's purpose for you or His nearness and love for you. God is faithful and remains firmly fixed on the throne and is working all things for His glory and the benefit of the elect. Peter reminds us that God cares for us (1 Pet 5:7). Paul reminds us that our sufferings produces perseverance and that builds character and hope which does not disappoint (Rom 5:3ff). Paul also reminds us that God has promised to carry the good work He began in us to completion (Phil 1:6). And again, the Scriptures remind us that there isn't anything in all creation which can separate us from His love, which includes our age (Rom 8:31ff).

In light of those promises, let's think a little differently about ageing. Did you know that the frailty of age can be a blessing from the Lord? Just imagine if we didn't get tired or feel the frailty that comes with age? Then we may not feel the need for God or His gift of salvation in our lives. That would be disastrous.

We could dare to be thankful for the blessing of many years with which He has already given us. Not everyone is blessed with a long life.

The frailty of age is also the process whereby the Lord brings us to the realisation that this isn't our finally resting place, and that is also a blessing. The frailty of age reminds us that we are pilgrims on a journey to the heavenly city whose builder and architect is God himself (Heb 11:10). This same frailty reminds us that we are close to entering the place which God has in store for us who believe, the beauty of which we cannot even begin to fathom (1 Cor 2:9).

It is also true that the Lord opens other doors of service with the frailty of age that we didn't have time for when we were younger. We may not be able to do eight hours of strenuous labour, but we may be able to help out for an hour at the nearby nursing home, assisting with the feeding of those who struggle to feed themselves.

We may not be able to drive more than fifteen kilometres in one hit, but we could possible walk to a nearby lonely brother or sister and give them a word of encouragement and share with them the joy we have together in the Lord.

We may not be able to concentrate long enough to encourage other saints at a Bible Study, but we could possible send someone a birthday card or just a little note to say we are thinking of them and praying for them. We can do all these things and much more, this side of glory.

So feeling the frailty of age is not all bad. Indeed, with the right thinking it can be very positive, seeing it as an opportunity to serve the Lord to His glory and to be a blessing to others.

One day, unless He returns before hand, the Lord will call us into His eternal presence. So let's not allow age to be an excuse for doing nothing, but see it as an opportunity to serve the Lord and his people. JZ.