

What Older Christians Need To Know

Introduction. Some people get old and others grow old. While some grow more saintly in many wonderful virtues, others grow sour and bitter near the end of their earthly existence. Those who grow in these wonderful virtues have sunset years that are among the most beautiful in their long lives.

Many things change across the years, but our need to know remains constant. Older people are unique in many ways; therefore, they have special needs. One must remember that age is neither a disease nor a disaster (Psalm 71:9). The lines and wrinkles in our faces are lines and marks of service -- they take on a distinguishing beauty (Leviticus 19:32; Proverbs 16:31).

I. ***Older Christians Need To Know Who They Are***

- A. Everyone needs to examine themselves from time to time, including those who are older (2 Corinthians 13:5). Paul encouraged the Philippians to imitate what they had "learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me" (Philippians 4:9). That is the pattern for fidelity, no matter what age!
- B. It is entirely possible to grow old without growing up (Ephesians 3:16-19). Churches are prone to problems when they have older Christians who act more like five year-olds.
- C. Older Christians need to make sure they know the Lord (1 John 1:7). It is quite possible to be deceived (Galatians 6:7; Proverbs 14:12).

II. ***Older Christians Need To Know How To Get Along With Others***

- A. You cannot control everything and everybody (Romans 14:19). You need to be positive, active and enthusiastic instead of being negative and participating in gossip and evil speaking (Psalm 34:13; Proverbs 17:9; 25:23).
- B. You do not have to be difficult, crabby and cantankerous (Romans 12:18). Most older people are sweet, kind and gentle, but some can be rude and unloving.

III. ***Older Christians Need To Know That Worry Is Futile***

- A. Henry Ward Beecher said, "It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Worry is rust upon the blade."
- B. If it is futile to worry about small matters we cannot control, it is even more futile to worry about the larger matters that lies further beyond our control (Luke 12:25-26).
- C. The cure for worry is to put your trust in the Lord (Psalm 37:5; 55:22) and pray (Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7).

IV. ***Older Christians Need To Know That They Can Still Work***

- A. The psalmist said that the righteous can bring forth fruit in old age (Psalm 92:12-14). Joshua and Caleb were in their eighties and were strong and active (Joshua 14:8-11).
- B. Do not grow bitter in your older age, but rejoice in your opportunity to serve the Almighty God.
- C. Our recent history shows that many people have accomplished great deeds even when they were advanced in age.
 - 1. Ted Williams, at age 42, slammed a home run in his last official time at bat.
 - 2. Golda Meir was 71 when she became Prime Minister of Israel.
 - 3. George Bernard Shaw was 94 when one of his plays was first produced.
 - 4. Benjamin Franklin helped frame the Constitution when he was 81.

V. ***Older Christians Need To Know That This World Is Not Their Home***

- A. The outward man will perish while the inward man is renewed day by day. Those who are older especially await that heavenly tabernacle (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1).
- B. Hope constitutes one of the seven unities set forth in Ephesians 4:4-6. Hope looks toward eternal life and will ultimately find its full fruition in heaven (Titus 1:2; Romans 8:24-25). It reaches into heaven for its power of support (Hebrews 6:19-20).

Conclusion. Having a godly home is the real secret of growing old in the Lord. When older couples and individuals lift up Christ and the Bible, Christ and the Bible will greatly help them to grow old gracefully. All of us who labor in Christ should count this labor as an extreme honor and blessing. God has placed upon every individual an obligation to be faithful to Him. Life is filled with differing circumstances. One must learn to keep focus upon God, His will for our lives and also to the exercise of a godly influence.