

Growing Older with Grace

Author Unknown

“Lord, keep me from the tedious habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from the craving to straighten out everyone else’s affairs.

Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my store of experience and wisdom that comes with age, it seems a pity not to use it all. However, You know Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and the love of reciting them to others is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others but help me to listen to them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory but instead a growing humility and lessening in brash confidence when my memory seems to clash with the memory of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be “saintly”; some of them are hard to live with; but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the Adversary.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. Give me the grace to tell them so. Amen.”

Growing old can be a frightening thing. We worry about what we will be like in the years ahead. We hope to be wise and gentle and kind and loving. The only way to be like that as an older person, though, is to begin living like that every day as a younger person. “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, ‘I have no pleasure in them’ (Ecc. 12:1).

Melting Mountains of Ice

“Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.’ But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not” (Jer. 20:9).

William Lloyd Garrison, who wrote the anti-slavery paper called the Abolitionist and was probably the leader in that cause, was so hot to get rid of the slavery cancer upon our society that he angered many, many people. One of his friends, Samuel May, said one day to him, “Oh my friend, do try to moderate your indignation and keep more cool, why you’re all on fire.” To which Garrison replied, “My friend, I have need to be all on fire, for I have mountains of ice around me to melt.” (From John Maxwell) May God’s word be as a burning fire in our hearts so that we can melt the mountains of ice around us.

Day by Day Needs

“Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. ‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I hope in Him!’” (Lam. 3:22-24).

While studying the book of Exodus, a Bible teacher was asked by one of the students, “Why didn’t the Lord furnish enough manna to Israel for a year all at one time?” The teacher answered, “Once there was a king who had a son to whom he gave a yearly allowance, paying him the entire sum on the fixed date. It soon happened that the day on which the allowance was due was the only day of the year when the father saw his son. So the king changed his plan and

gave his son day-by-day that which was sufficient for the day; and then the son visited his father every morning.”

We need our heavenly Father's unbroken love, companionship, and mercy. As the Psalmist said, “Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily” (Psalm 86:3). Again, “Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, the God of our salvation!” (Psalm 68:19).

The Power of Life

When Miriam Weiss was in her eighties, she decided to move to Israel. As part of the preparations, she went to see her doctor and get all of her medical records and charts and to get a physical exam to clear her for travel. The doctor asked her how she was doing, so she gave him a litany of complaints... this hurts, that's stiff, I'm tired and slowing down, etc., etc.

He responded with, “Mrs. Weiss, you have to expect things to start showing signs of age as you get older. After all, who wants to live to 100?”

Miriam looked him straight in the eye and replied, “Anyone who's 99.”

It's true. No matter how old we are, we have the desire to live at another year. Even Christians who look forward to being with the heavenly Father sometimes have a hard time letting go of life in this world. But Jesus' death and resurrection truly makes all the difference in the world.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death -- that is, the devil -- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Heb. 2:14-15). Satan holds the “power of death,” but praise be to the One who gives us hope because He holds the “power of life!”

All I Need To Know About Life I Learned From Trees Author Unknown

- It's important to have roots.
- In today's complex world, it pays to branch out.
- Don't pine away over old flames.
- If you really believe in something, don't be afraid to go out on a limb.
- Be flexible so you don't break when a harsh wind blows.
- Sometimes you have to shed your old bark in order to grow.
- If you want to maintain accurate records, keep a log.
- Grow where you're planted.
- It's perfectly okay to be a late bloomer.
- Know that there will always be people who would like to cut you down.
- You can't hide your true colors as you approach the autumn of your life.
- It's more important to be honest than popular.

Those are good lessons. They remind us of other lessons taught in Psalm 1: “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper” (Psalm 1:1-3).

The godly man, like a tree, is planted: he has his roots down deep; he's fortified, stable. Second, he bears fruit: he develops godlike qualities in his character and life. Third, he doesn't wither: he is able to survive under all circumstances, even days of difficulty. If you look closely at a tree you'll notice its knots and dead branches, just like our bodies and spirits. What we learn is that beauty and the effects of time and trials go together wonderfully. May our spiritual lives take on the qualities of trees!