

Aging Gracefully

- Possibility
- Principles
- Practice

The lesson is entitled, "**Aging Gracefully**".

Most young people do not think about,

A. Growing Old

For they have yet to experience the **REALITY**, of "growing old" in the sense of **declining**, in one's **physical strength** and **mental capabilities**.

For the young, getting **OLDER**, has always meant getting **BETTER**, **AS** they draw closer to the **PEAK**, of their physical **MATURITY**.

If the Younger Generation talk about "growing old", it is Sometimes with disdain, for the **WAY** some people spend their, golden years...

- Discontented with life...
- Set in their ways...
- And Bitter towards many people...

Someone has stated,

- "Some old women and old men, grow bitter with age. The more their teeth drop out, the more biting they get." 😊

This has prompted some of the Younger Generation to say...

B. When I Get Old

..."I will never be like that".

Growing old GRACEFULLY, does **NOT** happen by **ACCIDENT**.

Unless one understands, and applies certain principles, while they are young, the chances are great, that he or she will become like the elderly, they sometimes look down upon.

Think carefully about this statement:

- "Some spend the **FIRST** half of their lives, making the **SECOND** half **Miserable**."

How did we **SPEND**, the **FIRST** half of our **Life**?

And how are we **SPENDING**, the **LAST** half of our **Life**?

Will we, or are we, Growing old GRACEFULLY?

Before we consider certain principles, which aid in Graceful aging, we need to consider the...

I. Possibility, of Aging Gracefully

Which can be,

A. Illustrated by Biblical Examples

The Bible says of Moses,

- He “was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.” ([Deut.34:7](#))

Bar-zill-ai, the Gilead-ite, showed gracious hospitality at age eighty.

- [2Sam.19:31-32](#) reads, “Bar-zill-ai the Gilead-ite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan.
³² Now **Bar-zill-ai was a very AGED man**, even fourscore years old (or 80): and he had provided the king of sustenance, while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man.”

The Bible says that Dorcas, helped the poor and widows.

[Acts 9:36-39](#) reads,

- “Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this **woman was FULL of GOOD works and almsdeeds which she DID.**
³⁷ And it came to pass in those days, that **she was Sick, and Died:**

whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

³⁸ And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

³⁹ Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the **coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.**” (that’s [Acts 9:36-39](#))

Notice the Graceful manner, in which Paul faced death.

- He said, “For I am now **READY** to be offered, and the **TIME** of my departure is at hand.
⁷ I have **FOUGHT** a good fight, I have **FINISHED** my course, I have **KEPT** the faith:
⁸ henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also, that love His appearing.” ([2Tim.4:6-8](#))

Peter aged Gracefully, through his service as an elder.

- Peter wrote, “The elders which are among you, I exhort, **who am also, an elder,** and a **WITNESS** of the sufferings of Christ, and also a **PARTAKER** of the glory that shall be **REVEALED**:
² **FEED** the flock of God which is among you, **TAKING** the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but **WILLINGLY**; not for filthy lucre, but of a **READY** mind;” ([1Pet.5:1-2](#))

Peter Remained diligent, as death approached.

- He said, “Yea, I think it meet, **AS** long as I am **IN** this **Tabernacle** (or fleshly body), to **STIR you UP, by putting you in REMEMBRANCE**; ¹⁴ knowing that shortly I must **PUT OFF** this, my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. ¹⁵ Moreover I will **ENDEAVOUR,** that ye may be **ABLE, after my DECEASE, to HAVE** these things always in REMEMBRANCE.” ([2Pet.1:13-15](#))

Peter was also forgiving, toward those who rightly rebuked him.

- The Bible says, that Paul “withstood (Peter) to the face, because he was to be blamed.” ([Gal.2:11](#))
- But later Peter wrote, “our beloved brother Paul” ([2Pet.3:15](#)), which clearly indicates, no harboring of ill will.

Yes, Growing old Gracefully, is POSSIBLE!

Someone has said,

- “When **GRACE** is joined with **WRINKLES**, it is Adorable.
There is an unspeakable dawn, in **HAPPY** old age.”

Unfortunately, too often, Wrinkles are **NOT** joined with Grace.

- **How** can the **YOUNG** live today, so as to **Grow old Gracefully**, and **NOT** pathetically?
- **How** can those who are **OLD**, Be **Graceful** in their old age?

There are several principles, that when applied, can ensure that growing old, will be a Graceful experience...

Notice with me some,

II. Principles of Aging Gracefully

A. We Shall Reap, What We Sow

The Bible says,

- “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man **SOWETH**, that shall he also **REAP**.
⁸ For he that soweth to his **FLESH**, shall of the flesh reap **CORRUPTION**;
but he that soweth to the **SPIRIT**, shall of the Spirit reap **LIFE EVERLASTING**.” ([Gal.6:7-8](#))

This is true, in all areas of life.

For example, in the physical realm

- If we sow corn, we’ll reap corn.
- If we take good care of our physical body, we’ll enjoy reasonably good health.
- If we disregard healthy habits, our body will suffer for it.

This is especially so, in the spiritual realm.

- “Even as I have seen, they that **PLOW** iniquity,
and **SOW** wickedness, **REAP** the same.” ([Job 4:8](#))

Much of the bitterness, discontentment, and anger,
which characterizes some older people in society, is the **RESULT**, of “**Sowing to the Flesh**”.

Note the Spiritual Consequences, for Sowing to the Works of the Flesh.

- “Now the **WORKS OF THE FLESH** are manifest, which are **THESE**;
Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations,
wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and **SUCH LIKE**:
of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past,
that **they which DO** such things, shall **NOT** inherit the kingdom of God.” ([Gal.5:19-21](#))

In Contrast, notice the Fruit of those, who Sow to the Spirit.

- “But the **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
²³ meekness, temperance: **AGAINST** such, there is **NO law**.” ([Gal.5:22-23](#))

How much better to do, as Hosea says...

- “**SOW** to yourselves in righteousness, **REAP** in mercy.” ([Hosea 10:12a](#))

The young , sometimes, and very often say:

- “I want to sow my wild oats, while I am still young”.

The Younger Generation, **FAIL** to realize, the **HARVEST** of physical trouble, they will **REAP** later in life.

- If they Abuse their body, their health will be ruined.
- If they Engage in sexual immorality, they will ruin their reputation, and make it difficult to have a normal family life, and the joy, it ought to bring.

Samuel Johnson said,

- “He that **WOULD** pass the latter part of life, with honor and decency, must when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old...”

Principles of “*Aging Gracefully*”,

B. “Man Shall NOT Live, By Bread ALONE,

- but by every Word, that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” ([Matt.4:4](#))

Let’s focus our attention on two words:

- **Bread** — which involves more than just dough; it includes all things of a material nature.
- **Live** — which involves more than simple existence; it includes living life in its fullest sense; IN Christ, it is an abundant life.

We must realize, one does not find the good life, in seeking and acquiring material things...

- The Bible says, “Take **HEED**, and **BEWARE** of covetousness: for a man’s **LIFE** consisteth **NOT** in the abundance of the **THINGS** which he possesseth.” ([Lk.12:15](#))

If we don’t LEARN this while we’re young, and REMEMBER it when we are old, we will waste much of our life pursuing the wrong things, and hate ourselves for it, when we face death’s door.

- Solomon came to this realization (recorded for us in [Ecc.2:17-23](#)).

A French philosopher (Rosseau), saw the ungraceful way many old people live out their later years, as the result of learning this truth, **TOO LATE**, he said:

- “Old men grasp more at life, than babies, and leave it, with a much worse grace, than young people. It is because, all their labors having been for this life, they perceive at last, their trouble lost.”

**There is more to life, than material things;
to grow old gracefully, we must realize this, and find, that which makes life, full and abundant!**

Fortunately, Jesus came to help us.

- “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am **COME**, that they might **Have LIFE**, and that they might **HAVE** it, more **ABUNDANTLY**.” ([Jn.10:10](#))

He is the true and living Way!

- Jesus said, “I am the **WAY**, the **TRUTH**, and the **LIFE**: **NO** man cometh unto the Father, but by **ME**.” ([Jn.14:6](#))

And it is the Word of God, that shows us the way to Christ .

- “You examine the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is those very Scriptures that testify about Me;” ([Jn.5:39](#) - NASB)

The Word of God reveals Christ to us, who in turn shows us how to really live, for **He is the Life!**

What a **SHAME** to go through Life, only to find at the **LAST**, that our labors were of **NO** lasting **VALUE**...

- “For **WHAT** is a man advantaged, if he **GAIN** the whole world, and **LOSE** himself, or be **CAST AWAY?**” ([Lk. 9:25](#))
- Jesus said, “**Take HEED**, and **BEWARE** of covetousness: for a man’s life, consisteth **NOT**, in the abundance of the **THINGS**, which he **Posseseth**.”

¹⁶ And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:
¹⁷ and he **thought within himself**, saying, **What shall I do**, because I have no room where to bestow **MY fruits**? ¹⁸ And he said, **This will I DO**:

I will pull down **MY** barns, and build greater; and there will **I bestow** all **MY fruits** and **MY goods**.
¹⁹ And **I will say to MY soul**, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

²⁰ But God said unto him, Thou **FOOL**, this night thy soul shall be **REQUIRED** of thee: then whose shall those things be, which **THOU hast provided**?

²¹ So is he that **layeth up treasure for HIMSELF**, and is **NOT rich TOWARD God**.” ([Lk.12:15-21](#))

Principles of “Aging Gracefully”...

C. The Importance of Wisdom

Wisdom is insight and understanding, which **ENABLES** one to make the **BEST USE**, of his or her talents and circumstances, **AVOIDING** the mistakes and pitfalls of Life.

The Value of Wisdom, is Beautifully Proclaimed in [Prov.3:13-18](#)

- “**HAPPY** is the man that **Findeth WISDOM**, and the man that **Getteth UNDERSTANDING**.”

¹⁴ For the **MERCHANDISE** of it, is better than the merchandise of silver, and the **GAIN** thereof, than fine gold.

¹⁵ She (that is, Wisdom and Understanding) is more **PRECIOUS** than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her.

¹⁶ Length of days, is in her right hand; and in her left hand, riches and honour.

¹⁷ Her ways (that is, Wisdom and Understanding) are ways of **PLEASANTNESS**, and all her paths are **PEACE**.

¹⁸ She (that is, Wisdom and Understanding) is a **Tree of LIFE** to them, that **LAY HOLD** upon her: and **HAPPY** is every one that **RETAINETH** her.”

The Value of Wisdom is Illustrated in [Eph.5:15-16](#)

- “See then that ye **WALK** circumspectly, **NOT** as fools, but as **WISE**,
¹⁶ **REDEEMING** the Time, because the days are evil.”

The days are evil (the time is short) — [Jas.4:13-14](#)

Wisdom helps one to utilize to the fullest, what little time we have, instead of wasting our precious time.

Spiritual Wisdom can only be acquired, by God, through His Word...

- “For **the Lord** giveth **WISDOM**:
out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” ([Prov.2:6](#))

What better source, than from He, Who by wisdom, created the universe...

- “The Lord, by **WISDOM**, hath founded the earth; by understanding, hath He established the heavens.
²⁰ By His knowledge, the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.” ([Prov.3:19-20](#))

With such Wisdom, especially at an early age...

Our Journey through life, will be more Pleasant and Graceful...

The wisdom of Proverbs says,

- “My son, let not them depart from thine eyes:
keep Sound **WISDOM** and discretion:
²² so shall they be **LIFE** unto thy soul, and **GRACE** to thy neck.

²³ Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

²⁴ When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid:
yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

²⁵ Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.

²⁶ For the Lord, shall **BE** thy confidence, and shall **KEEP** thy foot from being taken.” ([Prov.3:21-26](#))

We can get a head start, and soon pass those of this world...

The Psalmist declared,

- “O how **love, I thy law!** **it is my meditation all the day.**
⁹⁸ **Thou, through Thy commandments, hast made me WISER than mine enemies:**
for they (that is, God’s Instructions) are ever with me.

⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers: for **Thy testimonies are my meditation.**
¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the ancients, because **I keep Thy precepts.**” ([Psa.119:97-100](#))

Principles of “Aging Gracefully”...

**D. With the wisdom, found in God’s Word,
it is POSSIBLE, to Grow old GRACEFULLY, and BE graceful in old age.**

To help us apply these principles, consider some practical steps, based upon Paul's exhortation, to the young preacher, Timothy...

III. To Practice Aging Gracefully

We need to,

A. Be An Example, To Others

- "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation (or conduct), in charity (that is, Love), in spirit, in faith, in purity." ([1Tim.4:12](#))

There is no way, one can avoid being an example to others.

- One will, either be a Good example,
- Or one will, be an example of what NOT to be.

DETERMINE to be an example, of those who believe, and this will **SET** one, on the **RIGHT track**, to Being **GRACEFUL** in old age.

We need to,

B. Commit Ourselves to the Word of God

- "Till I come, **GIVE attendance**, **TO** reading, **TO** exhortation, **TO** doctrine." (Paul said, in [1Tim.4:13](#))

We need to,

- Commit ourselves, to studying and teaching the Word of God to others.

This will assure that we have an open line, to God's wisdom.

We need to,

- Study the Bible daily, and share what we learn with others!

We should,

C. Cultivate Our Talents

- "Do not neglect the gift that is in you..." (reads [1Tim.4:14](#))

The **DEGREE** to which we reap, will be based upon the **ABILITY** with which we can sow. If we want to **REAP** a large harvest of **GOOD** in this life, we need to **DEVELOP** our talents!

We should,

D. Apply Diligence To Our Efforts

- "**MEDITATE** upon these things; **GIVE** thyself wholly to them; that thy **PROFITTING** may appear to all. ¹⁶ **Take HEED** unto thyself, and unto the doctrine (or teaching); **CONTINUE** in them: for in **DOING** this, thou shalt both **SAVE** thyself, and them that, **HEAR** thee." ([1Tim.4:15-16](#))

Growing old gracefully, like many good things, does not happen by accident, It takes concentrated effort, so be diligent and persevere until the end!

IV. IN-CLOSING

One man said,

- A. “To **KEEP** the heart unwrinkled,
To **BE** hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverent, is to **TRIUMPH** over old age.”
— Thomas Bailey Aldrich
- B. Is it possible to triumph over old age, to grow old gracefully?
- **Yes!**
- C. But those of us who are young, must realize the experience is reserved for those who...
- Follow the wisdom of God.
 - Understand the abundant life, is not found in worldly things.
 - Sow in such a way, as to bear fruit and reap a harvest, leading to eternal life.
- D. Such a person will be like those described in...

[Psa.92:12-15](#), which reads,

- “The **Righteous** shall **FLOURISH** like the palm tree:
he shall **GROW** like a cedar in Lebanon.

¹³ Those that be **PLANTED** in the house of the Lord
shall **FLOURISH** in the courts of our God.

¹⁴ They shall still, bring forth fruit, in **OLD AGE**;
they shall be fat and flourishing;

¹⁵ to shew that the Lord is upright:
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.” (that’s [Psa.92:12-15](#))

Don’t we wish to be like that? **By the grace of God, we CAN!**

In Christ Jesus, we can become a new creature ([2Cor.5:17](#)),
made possible by the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit ([1Tim.3:5](#)).

The **SOONER** this new life **BEGINS**,
the **LESS** “baggage” from the old life, we will have to Contend with,
and the **MORE** we can Do for the Lord...

If you have a spiritual need, COME

Believing ([Heb.11:6](#)), **Repenting** ([Lk.13:3](#)), **Confessing** ([Acts 8:37](#)), and Be **Baptized** INTO Christ ([Gal.3:26-27](#))

While together, we stand and sing.