

Bearing fruit in old age, Psalm 92:12-15

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Intro.

1. Florida is full of retirees: after a life-time of saving and planning retire to play golf, shuffle-board, fish ... idleness... finally rocking on the front porch watching the active drive by.
2. Do we retire in the kingdom of God? Ephesians 4:1-3 We have a vocation, profession in Christ. One retires from a job as soon as he can, but if he loves his profession, he does not quit until his strength completely fails him.
3. Text of **Psalm 92:12-15**.
 - a. The righteous are like palm trees or cedar trees flourishing in the courts of God.
 - b. **v. 14** "Shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing"

I. God used many older people in the Bible

A. Moses and Aaron

1. (aged 80 and 83), **Ex. 7:7**
2. Moses wrote, **Psalm 90:10** that he was already past the normal life span.

B. Joshua and Caleb

1. Joshua captained Israel in the last 30 years of his life span, after being captain for 40 years!
2. Lived to age 110, **Josh. 14:6-11**

C. Daniel

1. In his youth, **Daniel 1:21**, served God until 70 years later and beyond!
2. Had to be in his eighties when the Persians were in power, **Daniel 6:1-3**
 - a. **v. 4-27** thrown into lions' denouncement
 - b. **v. 28** prospered in the reigns of Darius and Cyrus the Persian.
 - c. Received his visions in **chapters 8-12**.

D. Zacarias and Elizabeth

1. Parents of John the Baptist
2. "Both well advanced in years" **Luke 1:7**
3. He was serving in the temple and she gave birth to John!

E. Simeon and Anna

1. God chose the elderly saints to bear witness to the baby Jesus, **Luke 2:25-38**
2. Anna was at least 84, and had been serving God "with fastings and prayers night and day"

F. Paul, the aged...

1. **Philemon 9**
2. Yet writing letters while in prison, traveling, visiting churches to encourage them and build them up when released.

G. There are many inspiring examples in the Bible of the saints still bearing fruit into their old age.

II. God uses the older brethren today.

A. Special emphasis on the oversight of elders in the churches: **Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5-9**

1. Who were the elders? boys barely out of high school?
2. Overseers and examples to the flock: **1 Peter 5:1-4**
3. Many seem to retire from the sacred service precisely when they are the most qualified to lead and give counsel. When they are not so encumbered by the burden of making a living, they have more free time... if they are still healthy.

B. Great need for the service of **older women in the church.**

1. **Titus 2:3-5** teachers of good things
2. Our customs seem to silence our most competent teachers and counselors, our grandmothers!

C. **Great works that beg to be done:**

1. Hospitality and benevolence
2. Edification and evangelism
3. Send cards and make phone calls
4. Spend time in prayer and fasting, **Luke 2:37; 1 Timothy 5:5 (Sister Stallings!)**

D. **Psalm 92:15** "To declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

1. **Psalm 71:17-18** to proclaim God's strength to the next generation
2. **Psalm 78:1-8** to recount God's mighty works to the next generation -- Grandparents telling the old stories to their grandchildren and great-grandchildren...

Conclusion:

A. **2 Corinthians 4:16** outward man may be decaying but our inward man is being **renewed** day by day

B. Native American tradition left the elderly behind to be eaten by wild animals when they could not do the physical work and keep up with the others.

C. Our youth-worshiping culture is equally short-sighted. What of the wisdom and experience that we can learn from? Is it useless?

D. **Paul the aged wrote Philippians 3:12-15.** Until the end he still reached forward toward the goal of the high calling of God.