**TITLE: Getting Older**

**TEXT:** Isa. 46:4; Ps. 37:25; Duet. 20:4; Heb. 13:5;

Gen. 15:6; Acts 13:22; Pr. 3:5-6; 2 Co. 4:6-9

**INTRODUCTION:** One thing that we all have in common here this morning is that we are all getting older. No matter what our current age every day we get up we are older than we were when we went to bed the night before.

 Some here this morning have more days left than they have already lived and some have lived more days than they have left but all are in the process of aging.

 So we all have different perspectives on life formulated largely by what stage of life we are now in.

—Saint-Evremond is quoted to have once said:

*I have lost all inclination to vice without knowing whether I owe this change to the weakness of an outworn body or the moderation of a mind that has grown wiser than it was before. At my age it is hard to tell whether the passions one no longer feels are extinguished or overcome.*

A poem I ran across titled--**Off Her Rocker**

In the dim and distant past

When life’s tempo wasn’t fast,

Grandma used to rock and knit,

Crochet, tat, and baby-sit.

When the kids were in a jam,

They could always count on Gram.

In an age of gracious living,

Grandma was the gal for giving.

Grandma now is at the gym

Exercising to keep slim.

She’s off touring with a bunch,

Taking clients out to lunch.

Driving north to ski or curl,

All her days are in a whirl.

Nothing seems to stop or block her,

Now that Grandma’s off her rocker.

Jeanne Calment is the oldest living human whose age can be verified. On her 120th birthday, she was asked to describe her vision for the future. “Very brief,” she said.

Another woman was asked the benefits of living to the age of 102. After a pause, she answered, “No peer pressure!”

John Fetterman, rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, Wisconsin, told of an elderly woman who died. Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers. In her instructions for her memorial service, she wrote, “They wouldn’t take me out while I was alive; I don’t want them to take me out when I’m dead.”

The older that we get it seems the more challenges that we may encounter.

 I believe that is why Scripture has so much to say about the aging process.

 Much that it has to say are words of encouragement such as**:. Isaiah 46:4 (NIV) 4 (NIV)  Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.**

Henry Moorhouse, when engaged in a work that seemed to call upon him for a more than the usual exercise of his faith, received what seems like a most tender answer from God.

His little daughter, who was a paralytic, was sitting in her chair as he entered the house with a package in his hand for his wife. Going up to her and kissing her, he asked, “Where is Mother?” “Mother is upstairs.” “Well, I have a package for her.” “Let me carry the package to Mother.” “Why, Minnie, dear, how can you carry the package? You cannot carry yourself.” With a smile on her face, Minnie said, “Oh, no, Papa; but you give me the package, and I will carry the package, and you will carry me.” Taking her up in his arms, he carried her upstairs—little Minnie and the package, too.

And then it came to him that this was just his position in the work in which he was engaged. He was carrying his burden, but was not God carrying him? “

 **Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.**

The Hebrew word for sustain is:

 ***nacah*, naw-saw'; , a primitive root; to lift, in a great variety of applications, literal and figurative,:- accept, advance, bear (-er, up), bring (forth), carry (away), ease, exalt , forgive, furnish, give, help, hold up, magnify..**

**Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you!**

 Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will lift you up, will advance you, will furnish you with all that you need!

God says: **I have made you and I will carry you…**

The Hebrew word for Carryis:

 **sābal**

**a primitive root; to *carry* (literal or figurative), or to bear , be strong to labour.**

God has made us. As our “maker” He knows all there is to know about us. He knows our weaknesses and our strengths. He knows our hearts in times of great sorrow or great joy.

 He knows us in our times of great need and has promised to carry us in those times.

 This is illustrated in a neat way to us in a poem by Mary Stevenson written when she was 14 years old in 1939 titled:

 *FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND
One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord.
Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.
In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.
Sometimes there were two sets of footprints,
other times there were one set of footprints.*

 *This bothered me because I noticed
that during the low periods of my life,
when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or defeat,
I could see only one set of footprints.*

 *So I said to the Lord,
“You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always.
But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there have only been one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you most, you have not been there for me?”*

 *The Lord replied,
“The times when you have seen only one set of footprints in the sand, is when I carried you.”*

 God said**: I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.**

 Hebrew for Rescue**= mālaṭ**

**a primitive root; properly to *be smooth*, i.e. (by implication) to *escape* - to *release* or *rescue*; specifically to *bring forth* young, *-*deliver (self), preserve, save**

 So God has promised to Carry us, sustain us and ultimately He will deliver us…

 Deliver us in and through the trials and temptations of this life and deliver us safely to eternity in His Kingdom when this life is over.

No one understood this more than King David…

**Psalm 37:25 (NIV)**
**25 (NIV)  I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their seed begging for bread.**

 David said I was once young but now I am old, I have lived a lot of years and through my life experiences I have discovered a mighty truth. That the righteous, those who have placed their faith and trust in the Lord, will never be forsaken or their children begging for bread.

 God will always be there for His children. He will either deliver us from our trial or He will walk with us through it or even carry us if need be, but we will come through it victoriously one way or the other.

We sang a Hymn this morning that spoke of Victory

*O Victory in Jesus, my Savior forever! He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood; He loved me ere I knew Him and all my love is due Him—He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.*

 Several years ago I was at the bedside of a Christian woman dying of cancer. Her family was gathered around and we were all praying. It was silent for a long time. As I was praying a word kept coming to my mind that I believe was a word from the Lord and it was the word victory.

 I felt I was to give that word to her grieving husband so I simply wrote it on a piece of paper and handed it to him as I was leaving.

 A couple days later the man called me and said he had a very vivid dream the night before. In the dream there was a great stadium in Heaven and his wife was running around that stadium with a sign above her head that said victory and the multitudes in the crowd were all cheering for her.

 Later that week his wife died. He said what a comfort for him to know that even then she was taking her victory lap in heaven.

 *He loved me ere I knew Him and all my love is due Him—He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.*

How many this morning are living consistent lives of victory in your walk with the Lord?

 If not –why not?

 I think that most of the time is because we try to stand in our own strength instead of in the strength of the Lord.

**Duet 20:4 For the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.”**

 God has promised to never leave us or forsake us…

**Hebrews 13:5 (NIV)
5 (NIV)  Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."**

 If God has said that He will never leave us or forsake us then why do we so often walk around in fear, anxiety or discouragement?

 There is really only one possible reason—we don’t really believe Him!

 What made Abraham such a great man of faith was that he simply believed God..

**Genesis 15:6 (NIV)
6 (NIV)  Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.**

The Hebrew word used for believe here is

 **ʾāman**

**it is translated as believe, as faithful, trust, steadfast, surely.**

Abraham believed God, he trusted Him, relied upon His faithfulness…and God accredited it to him as righteousness…

 God said much the same thing about David when He said that that David was a man after His own heart.

**Acts 13:22 (NIV) 22 (NIV)  After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'**

 Question? Did Abraham always believe God?

Was David always a man after God’s own heart? Did both men always walk in righteousness before God?

 NO! In fear of his own life Abraham passed his wife Sarah off as his sister on two separate occasions….

 David committed adultery with Bathsheba and was complicit in her husband’s killing to try to cover up his sin.

 Were they then really righteous men? Yes and no…

 In and of themselves no. they both proved to succumb to fear at a time in their lives and did not trust God in those moments.

 Yet, in their relationship with God both were declared righteous.

 They, as we are, were both sinners. But they believed God. They believed in His sovereignty, they believed in His power, they believed in His forgiveness.

 Even though neither man was perfect in this life they both were men who were being perfected.

Both men lived their lives with a basic understanding of what David’s son Solomon would go on to write in..

  **Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)
5 (NIV)  Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
6  in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**

**Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding…**

Why is it often dangerous to lean upon our own understanding of things?

 Because we all have a sinful nature and our nature is very flawed and very prone to seeking to do things that are ultimately destructive..

 Abraham leaned upon his own understanding and passed his wife off as his sister because he reasoned that the kings of the land he was passing through might want to kill him to get to his very beautiful wife.

 David leaned up his own understanding when he once placed himself in a place he should not have been, sees a beautiful woman bathing, convinces himself that no one will ever know, and then commits adultery with the wife of another.

 Through error both men learned the hard way to **Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding…**

**6  in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**

 It seems some lessons can only be learned with the passing of time.

Some lessons might need to be taught over and over again for the stubborn of heart and the hard headed like myself.

 David was an old man when he wrote Psalm 37:25
**25 (NIV)  I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken…**

I am sure that included his own personal experience..

 David was never forsaken by God!

 Even though he was not a perfect man, even though he messed up at times and sometimes greatly, the lord never forsook him.

Forsaken= **ʿāzab [aw-zab'](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=58&wave=H5800) a primitive root; to *loosen*, i.e. *relinquish,* forsake, help, leave destitute, to refuse.**

David may have forsaken the Lord at times but the Lord never forsook him.

 God has said the same to each and all of us today when He said:. **"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."**

Never is a long time isn’t it? Especially when the one speaking is eternal!

So how are we to process this great true of Scripture?

 Paul understood this great truth of Scripture and it literally transformed his life. He found that with a personal relationship with Christ, the God who would never leave or forsake him, he could in fact do anything and endure everything this life might throw at him.

**2 Corinthians 4:6-9 (NIV)
6 (NIV)  For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
7  But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.
8  We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;
9  persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.**

 In other words we are always victorious in Christ! There will always be victory in Jesus!

All that we have to learn to do is: **Trust in the LORD with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding;
6  in all our ways acknowledge him, and he will make our paths straight.**

When we do we will find that we will one day also take our victory lap in Heaven with Heaven’s host cheering us on.

 There is nothing better than getting older when we are getting older in Christ….

Even though we may have aches and pains we have not had before, even though our hair may be turning grey or falling out, even though we may find ourselves facing new trial and tribulation brought on by our getting older we can rejoice that one day we will take that victory lap in Heaven with a new body no longer subject to the imperfections and frailties of this one. One day we will be with Jesus receiving our eternal reward…

What is that old saying? “You’re not getting older you’re getting better!”

That is certainly true when we have a personal saving relationship with Jesus Christ….

 The older we get the more like Jesus we will become!

So, are you living your life today in the victory that already has been secured for you? The promise of daily victories now as we place all our trust in the Lord and leaning not on our own understanding---And living life anticipating the total and complete victory that awaits us in eternity?

Close with Victory in Jesus!!!