TITLE: GETTING OLDER IS A GOOD THING

TEXT: Pr. 20:29; 1 Ki. 1:1-2; Ps. 71:9; Ps. 37:23-25;

Heb. 13:8; Josh. 1:5-9; Is. 46:4

INTRODUCTION: You know you’re getting older when: thieves break into your car and steal your cd player, but left your cd’s behind.

 How many of you here this morning have felt the effects of getting older--daily feel the effects of the aging process?

 For me, At 68 jumping out of bed in the morning, totally energized for the day is something that is a faint memory. Getting out of bed in the morning and taking a hot shower was something that I used to do just to get clean---now it has become more like physical therapy.

 Two elderly women in church were discussing the problems of growing older.

 One commented, "The worst thing is when your memory starts to go. I've known you all my life, and I can't think of your name. What is it?"

 The second lady thought for a moment and said, "Do you need an answer right now?

 Pam and I had some friends that are a few years older than us... The wife couldn’t see very well and the husband can see but he can’t hear...

 They were out walking one summer evening and someone on a bicycle passed them and said hello.... The husband asks his wife, what did they say---she responds---who was that?

 Getting older, you got to love it! God does have a sense of humor.

 The fact is, one thing that we all have in common today is that we are all getting older, we are all aging.

 And that is a good thing!

The only alternative to the aging process is death.....

The second that we are conceived the aging process starts.

 Getting older is not always fun or easy, but it is necessary...

 The other side of it is that if I were given the choice to go back and start life all over...regardless of the aches and pains that I sometimes feel now there is no way that I would want to go back and start life all over again....

 It was a miracle that I made it through adolescence the first time through...... I wouldn’t want to tempt fate by having to do it all over again! And God wouldn’t want us to either!

 Because with the aging process come many God given blessings.... Maybe the most precious of those blessings is the wisdom and knowledge and insight that we have gained in life. Especially if we are a Christian.

 God has a special love for those who have grown old in Him.

 The gray haired ones of the faith…

**Prov 20:29 (NIV) The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old.**

Gray hair signifies a life of experiences, knowledge and wisdom gained, and especially for the Christian, experiences of Gods sustaining Grace.

 We have many examples in Scripture of Gods sustaining grace in the lives of his saints as they grew old in their faith and relationship with Him....

 Abraham was pushing 100 when God fulfilled his promise of a son. Sarah was 90 when she gave birth to her firstborn.... Talk about the sustaining grace of God! Think about starting to raise a teenager when you are 113 and your wife is 103!

 God called Moses to go into full time ministry and commissioned him to go back into Egypt to deliver His people from the bandages of slavery when Moses was 80 years old!

 Moses led a rebellious, grumbling, complaining people around the wilderness of Sinai for the next 40 years!

 I am sure that there where mornings when Moses didn’t feel like getting out of bed! That when he did he moved very slowly until all his machinery got warmed up!

 I imagine that when Isaac wanted his 110 year old dad to go out and throw a goat skinned ball around, that there were days when Abraham’s old body simply didn’t feel up to the task!

 We probably have no better example of ones growing old in the Lord then with King David.

 Scripture chronicles the life of David from his start of being a young shepherd boy who killed a lion with his bare hands and then faced down and killed the giant Goliath and then became the great warrior of Israel, to being the old king of Israel.

 1 Kings 1:1 speaks of King David just prior to his appointing his son Solomon as King...

**1Kin 1:1 (NIV) When King David was old and well advanced in years, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him.**

**2 So his servants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin to attend the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm."**

David’s circulation was not what it used to be! He couldn’t pile enough covers on at night to keep warm and because electric blankets had not been invented yet they find a young virgin to lie with David at night to keep him warm....

Old age had caught up with David.

He had experienced the strength and vigor of youth and now he was experiencing the frailty of old age...

 One thing that remained consistent throughout David’s life was his faith and trust in God and Gods sustaining grace.

 The same God that was with him when he faced the lion and when he faced Goliath and when we faced the philistine armies was with him now as his body was starting to wear out and shut down.

 And From the testimony of his life experiences we all can receive hope today...

 The hope that God is not just the God of our youth but God is also the God of our old age!

 His sustaining grace is just as sufficient for us today as it has ever been!

 It must have been as David was starting to experience and feel the effects of the aging process that he cried out to God in....

**Psal 71:9 (NIV) Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone.**

Later on, when David is an old man, after he has experienced the grace of God that has sustained him in his older years, he makes this statement....

**Psal 37:23 (NIV) If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm;**

**24 though he stumble, he will not fall,**

**for the LORD upholds him with his hand.**

**25 I was young and now I am old,**

**yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken**

**or their children begging bread.**

The perspective of a man that has grown old in the Lord...

A man who has lived a life of relationship with God...

**25 I was young and now I am old,**

**yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken**

**or their children begging bread.**

I was a young man and now I am an old man, I have experienced all of live, and one thing that I can testify about life for the child of God is that God will never forsake you or your children!

Regardless of what stage of life we are in God will never **forsake** us!

**05800 `azab {aw-zab'}**

**1a1) to depart from, leave behind, leave alone**

**1a2) abandon, neglect, to be deserted**

 God will never depart from us! He will never leave us behind or leave us alone! He will never abandon us, desert us nor neglect us!

**Hebr 13:8 (NIV) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**

God is immutable! He doesn’t change!

 Just as God is faithful and His grace is sustaining in our youth, He will be faithful and His Grace sustaining in our middle age! And just as He is faithful and His grace is sustaining in our middle age so He will remain faithful and His grace sustaining in our old age!

 God has these words to say to Joshua as Joshua was about to lead the Israelites from the Sinai desert that they had been wandering around in for 40 years, into the promised land, A land that was a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of great bounty, but also a hostile land with many enemies of God and Gods people...

**Josh 1:5 (NIV) No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.**

**6 "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.**

**7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.**

**8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.**

**9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."**

 This promise is just as true for us today as it was for Joshua back then because it is the same unchangeable God that made the promise!

 **Josh 1:5 (NIV) No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.**

 Regardless of the trials and tribulations of this life God will always be there with us!

 So, because He is with us....

"Be strong and courageous, because we will one day --inherit the land He has sworn --to give us.

As Christians God has sworn to give us a land as an eternal inheritance. He has promised us the citizenship of Heaven!

 As a Christian, This life is the only thing that separates us from that eternal possession! And God is with us, He will never leave us or forsake us until we safely cross over into that land of promise.

 So we are to...

**7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all (His) law; not to turn from it to the right or to the left, that we may be successful wherever we go.**

**8 we are to not let this Book of the Law (the Word of God) depart from our mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that we may be careful to do everything written in it. Then we will be prosperous and successful.**

Because of Gods faithfulness to never leave us or forsake us we are to be **strong** and **courageous**, strong and very courageous!

 Strong....

**02388 chazaq {khaw-zak'}**

**1) to strengthen, prevail, be firm, grow firm**

Because God will never leave us or forsake us we are to resolve to stand firm even in, especially in, the face of the trials and tribulations of this life.

 We are not to just resolve to stand firm, to be strong but we are to be courageous!

**0553 'amats {aw-mats'}**

**1, courageous, brave, stout, bold, solid,**

**exhibit strength, be strong!**

 God says....

**9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."**

We can be strong; we can be courageous in facing all of what life has in store, even the frailty and uncertainly of growing older because the Lord is with us wherever we go!

 And even in those times when our strength is no longer sufficient, His strength always remains sufficient!

 His strength and sufficiency will prove not to just be enough, but His strength and sufficiency will always prove to be more than enough as we come to rely upon Him…

 The sustaining Grace of God is an awesome thing to behold. It is an awesome thing to witness and to experience.

 Gods promise to each and every one of us as His Children is: **I will never leave you or forsake you!**

 Again, one thing that all of us have in common this morning is that we are all growing older, we are all aging.

 In that sense none of us are what we used to be....

 We may be changing but the God we serve is not!

 He is forever the same! His love is forever the same! His Grace is forever the same!

 His sufficiency is forever the same!

 Because of that fact we can be strong and courageous in any of the trials and tribulations that we may face in this life...Because our God is forever sufficient!

 **Isai 46:4 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.**

 This is a promise for the child of God, for everyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord and savior of their life....

 Have you made God your God? Have made Jesus your Lord?

 If you have then, regardless of how young or old that you are, hear Him encourage you with these words this morning:

**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.**

Close with song

Never seen the righteous forsaken, Dallas Holms

Prayer--

Never seen the righteous forsaken, Dallas Holms

O, I know you may get weary,
And the times they may get rough.
You may not have all you want,
But you'll always have enough.
And when your darkest hour comes,
Just remember what I say:
I've never seen the righteous forsaken,
Or their seed begging for bread!

O, I know it seems so hopeless,
And you don't know what to pray.
You've done all you know to do,

And it seems there's just no way.
And when you feel you're at the end,
Just remember what I say:
I've never seen the righteous forsaken,
Or their seed begging for bread!

I've never seen God's people
With a need that He could not meet!
I know that He cares for His own,
And His promises He'll keep.

So just hold on a little longer
The answer's soon to come.
The endless waiting's almost over,
The vict'ry's almost won.
And when again you feel His joy,
You'll remember what I said:
I've never seen the righteous forsaken,
Or their seed begging for bread!

I've never seen the righteous forsaken,
I've never seen the righteous forsaken,
I've never seen the righteous forsaken,
Or their seed begging for bread.