

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

activated

Vol 10 • Issue 7



YEAR BY YEAR, DAY BY DAY

How to be happy at any age

Your Turn to Love

5 ways to give back to seniors

Age, a State of Mind

How young are you?



PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Odd, isn't it, how our perceptions change as we age. When I was very small, my brother, who was all of 18 months older, defined "big." When I was in 1st grade, I thought 4th graders were a higher life form, but by the 6th grade

I was old enough and wise enough to realize that the new batch of 4th graders were in fact little kids.

My parents surely knew everything there was to know until I was a teenager, when they became clueless practically overnight. I could never imagine them as children, but now it's hard to believe that my own children are parents. My grandparents always seemed old, but now I'm a grandparent myself, and I don't feel old at all. Why should I? My mother-in-law doesn't look or act old to me, and she has great-grandchildren. Age, I'm finding out, is more an attitude than a matter of years.

Robert Browning revealed the secret to aging gracefully when he wrote:

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.¹

If I'd read that 30 or 20 or even 10 years ago, that wisdom would have been lost on me, but now the prospect of new experiences and perspectives as I grow older excites me. Others around my age who bemoan each birthday and complain about a few wrinkles should take to heart the next lines from Browning's poem:

Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Faith in God and His loving plan for our lives changes everything. The longer I live in His love and the closer I try to conform to His plan, the surer I am that "the best is yet to be."

Keith Phillips
For *Activated*

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¹Robert Browning, "Rabbi Ben Ezra," 1864

New start at 80

■ BY RUBY DAVIS

BRENDA WAS NEARLY 80 when her husband died and she was left alone in a large house in a mid-sized city with a fairly high crime rate. Her two sons lived an hour away, but her daughter, who didn't, wondered how her mother would cope and prayed for her often.

Months passed. One day Brenda was reading obituaries in the newspaper and came across a name she recognized from many years before—Nick, with whom she had become close friends when they were both teenage counselors at a summer camp for children. The obituary was for Nick's wife. Memories flooded Brenda's mind. She wrote Nick a condolence card, and he responded with a thank-you that also expressed his delight at hearing from her again. They continued to write each other, then spoke on the phone, and eventually he visited.

It had been 62 years since their last meeting. When Nick was a young soldier on leave, he had crossed the country in order to see Brenda. They had been fond of each other back then, but their paths had led in different directions, and eventually they had both married other people. For most of those 62 years they had lived in the same area and even had some common friends and interests, but somehow had never run into each other again.

Brenda and Nick found that they had much to talk about, and they began exchanging visits. When

When two individuals meet, so do two private worlds. None of our private worlds is big enough for us to live a wholesome life in. We belong together. Love is what we need—to love and to be loved.—A. Powell Davies

they were apart, Brenda received a card from Nick almost every day. Their friendship filled the voids that had been created by the deaths of their spouses.

After a year or so of visits back and forth and many phone calls, during which time they both turned 80, Brenda sold her house and they got married.

As unlikely as this story may seem, I know it's true because Brenda is my mom, and I'm the praying daughter. Mom never imagined that this would happen to her at this point in her life, but the Bible tells us that "with God all things are possible."¹ "It's a miracle!" she told me during one of my visits. For me, this amazing turn of events is a direct answer to my prayers; for Mom and Nick it is a new start at age 80!

RUBY DAVIS IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN CANADA. ☛

¹Mark 10:27

Year by year, Day by day

BY VIRGINIA BRANDT BERG



Old age can also
be a glorious
adventure,
especially for
those who
have a personal
relationship
with Jesus.

SOMEONE ASKED ME THE OTHER DAY, “Why do you so often tell your age?” Well, I think it’s wonderful how God has kept me through so many years. I’ll tell it again.—I’m in my 80th year [in 1966]!

I wouldn’t fear old age, if I were you. Some people think that old age brings on all sorts of troubles and inconveniences. There is some of that, of course, but old age can also be a glorious adventure, especially for those who have a personal relationship with Jesus. Without Jesus, I imagine my life would have been humdrum and filled with disappointments and failures, and I’ve talked to many people who are like that—people who are haunted by a sense of emptiness and futility because they don’t have faith or a living relationship with a living Jesus.

How many people do you know, especially older people, who have radiant, joyful faces? So many of the faces of old people we pass on the street are unhappy and ridden with fear, and the reason for that is their lack of faith. They don’t have an anchor in times of storm; they don’t have Jesus to depend on. There is no joy on their faces because there is no joy in their hearts. But it doesn’t have to be that way. One of my friends described the face of one lady he knew as “an old cathedral lit up for evening worship.”

I’ve met other older people who talk about what a wonderful life they are experiencing in their old age, and inevitably that positive

Age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress;
And as the evening twilight fades away,
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882)

outlook and those positive outcomes are because they have strong faith. They say, “The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?”¹ or, “I don’t fear the years! Come what may, I’m in God’s hands,” or, “God is a loving Father, and I know that all things will work together for my good because I love Him.”² What a glorious standard to live by!

A lot of people get bogged down with the cares of this life; they worry about whether or not their physical and material needs will be met in the future. “O you of little faith,” Jesus chided some of those people in His day. “Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”³ We have this assurance: “God shall supply all [our] need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”⁴ When the years come upon us, God understands our needs just as well as He does when we are young, and He is just as capable of meeting them.

The Bible tells us that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”⁵ He and His promises don’t change with the years. They are just as true and just as much for us when we are old as when we were young. “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes”⁶ will work just as well when we are 80 as it did when we were 18. “So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear.’”⁷

“[God] Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”⁸—He will not fail us in our old age, in other words. That’s the God I know. That’s the God who has proven Himself to me year after year under all conditions, and He’s standing ready at this moment to meet your needs also, whatever they may be. No matter what your age and no matter what your need, you are a unique concern of His at this very moment and always.

VIRGINIA BRANDT BERG (1886–1968), WAS A FOREMOST EVANGELIST OF HER TIME AND MOTHER OF DAVID BRANDT BERG (1919–1994), FOUNDER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL. 🌻



THE BEST TIME OF LIFE

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

Old age should be the greatest time of life. If you’ve filled your days with love, lived a good life, and done your best to please God, it’s a time when you can see the good fruit of your labors. That should give you a feeling of genuine permanent accomplishment, and you can look forward to eternal rewards.⁹

It’s really sad that so many people view old age as a terrible time of life, when really things should be getting better and better. Old age only becomes a disappointment if we find ourselves growing older in years without growing closer to God. That’s like walking in a circle; it’s motion without progress. But God didn’t give us the gift of life intending the first half to be the best. What God begins, He completes and brings to perfection.¹⁰ So neither fear old age nor fight it, but take hold of this stage of life and make something beautiful out of it.

¹Psalms 27:1

²Romans 8:28

³Matthew 6:32,26

⁴Philippians 4:19

⁵Hebrews 13:8

⁶Mark 9:23

⁷Hebrews 13:6

⁸Hebrews 13:5

⁹Revelation 22:12

¹⁰Psalms 138:8; Philippians 1:6



GOD AT THE WHEEL

BY CHRISTINA ANDREASSEN

I CAN STILL REMEMBER WHEN IT WAS JUST ME—self-assured, confident, and proud of my ability to maneuver my car along life’s road. I was master of my fate. I loved those solitary hours on the highway, watching the sun sink below the horizon. I loved the feel of the wheels gripping the road. I loved being able to go anywhere at a whim, wherever my fancy would take me at the moment. Life was all mine to enjoy, and I did my best to live it up.

Sure, there were hard times too—lonely, dark stretches of road in the night that seemed to almost swallow me up, times when I had to lie flat on my back in the mud, trying to find a mechanical problem or stop an oil leak, times when I had to replace

a blown tire in scorching sun or pouring rain, moments of confusion and frustration attempting to reverse out of dead ends. No, being alone wasn’t all fun and games, but I always managed to brush off those unfortunate incidents and set out again in search of new adventures.

Then one day You hitched a ride. When I asked where You were going, You said, “Wherever you’re going,” and I soon discovered a wonderful friendship. You were always there to hold the map and to give directions when I was lost. Somehow all the routes were known to You. You were there too in the darkness of those long night drives, to hold my hand when I was afraid and lonely. Somehow Your presence always made the darkness bright.

You were there to push when I needed to get back onto the road after my quest for adventure would land me in a ditch. Somehow You understood my disappointment, and You never said, “I told you so.” You were even there to embrace and forgive after I foolishly argued with You and told You to get out of my life. Somehow You kept loving me and having faith in me. But still I insisted on driving. “After all, it’s *my* car,” I would remind You. And although I was thankful for Your advice and directions, the final decision always rested with me. “After all, it’s *my* life.”

Miles and miles flew by, and still I insisted on remaining in the driver’s seat, ignoring Your offers to take control—that is, until the day I totaled my



“I have something far better up ahead.”

car. Humiliated and heartbroken, my dream car in pieces, I finally handed You the car keys. With a smile of relief, You rolled up Your sleeves and went to work making repairs. In no time we were back on the road, with You as the driver and me as the passenger.

Relinquishing control was far more difficult than I had expected. “Hey!” I would yell, lunging at the steering wheel. “What are You doing? I thought we’d agreed to go *that* way!” Immediately You would brake and patiently wait until I had stopped struggling to regain control. Then You would turn to me and say with all the tenderness of a father explaining to his child, “Trust Me. I know what I am doing.” Reluctantly I would surrender and sit, chafing in my seat until we turned the next corner. Suddenly it would become abundantly clear that You *did* know where You were taking me, and I would turn to You with a look of amazement at Your wisdom and foresight.

But that was a lesson I would soon forget, and before long I’d be at it again. We would pass an amusement, and I would whine, “Hey, why didn’t You stop?” You would smile knowingly and say, “Trust Me. I have something far better up ahead.” And sure enough, there *was* always something far better.

After a while I grew accustomed to Your driving. I learned to sit on my hands and bite my tongue when Your ways ran contrary to mine, forcing

myself to patiently wait until the next bend in the road revealed the surprise behind that mysterious smile of Yours. Blowouts and wrong turns became a thing of the past too, as were my frantic searches for happiness and excitement. There never seemed to be a dull moment with You in the driver’s seat.

That’s not to say there weren’t momentary disappointments, like the times You turned down lonely, dusty roads, and it was just the two of us for miles. But those lonely routes led to some of the most breathtaking views, panoramas full of hidden, mysterious beauty that You had reserved for us alone. There were also times when You chose routes that led through places I had always dreaded—dark, sunless valleys and canyons. *Why here?* I would silently protest—but You could always tell what I was thinking and would ask, “Have I ever failed you before?” As I forced my soul to be still and trust, I found strength and courage that I had not known I had.

Since the day that You took the wheel, I’ve been taken to breathtaking heights and to valleys with a beauty all their own; I’ve experienced the thrill of adventure, incredible happiness, and love without measure. You were right. I would never regret a life spent with You at the wheel.

CHRISTINA ANDREASSEN IS A FULL-TIME MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ✨



YOUR TURN TO LOVE

DO YOU HAVE parents, grandparents, or other loved ones who are suffering from any of the long-term troubles that occur naturally in old age? Here are five ways that you can return their love and support:

GREATER LOVE

Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."¹

Greater love means taking the initiative to reach out; to feel what the other person is feeling; to dry their tears; to bear their burdens; to feel their afflictions; to minister to those who are sick and nurse them back to health; to listen with a loving, open ear to those who need to pour out; to be a caring and understanding friend to those who need a friend; to pray for those in need; to let their heartaches be your heartaches; to make their hopes and dreams your hopes and dreams.

1. Empathize.

Put yourself in their place. You may think you have problems, but if you stop to think about what it might be like to be their age, that would probably give you a much greater appreciation for what some elderly go through.

Many seniors no longer have the physical capacity to do some things they've always done, which can be discouraging and lead to feelings of uselessness. Some are not able to see or hear or even to eat or walk on their own, so they feel ashamed, humiliated, stripped of their dignity. Others are in almost continual pain or discomfort. Due to their weakened immune system, even minor ailments can turn into serious problems. Their bones are more fragile and their organs more delicate, and when those are broken or damaged, they require more time to heal.


Depending on their circumstances, they may worry about what will happen if their condition worsens and they don't have anyone to take care of them, or they may dread becoming a burden to others.

Understanding and sympathy go a long way in easing those hardships and alleviating those fears.

2. Take an interest.

Some seniors may not be as strong or sharp as they once were, but the intangibles that matter most, those personal qualities that make them the unique people they are, have not diminished. In fact, it is often in the later years that qualities such as love, thoughtfulness, loyalty, humility, humor, optimism, and wisdom come to full fruition.

That makes seniors some of the most fascinating people in the world. So does the fact that they have lived through times that those who are younger can never experience firsthand. Take the time to unearth their latent treasures, and you'll be surprised at what you'll find. They may even surprise themselves.



**Knowing that
you're loved gives
you hope and faith.
It cheers up your
whole outlook!**

—David Brandt Berg

3. Show love and appreciation.

Sometimes simply knowing that we are loved can make all the difference in how we view and deal with our present circumstances. Knowing that they are appreciated for past efforts can also help seniors put their lives in perspective and counter feelings of regret over failures and shortcomings, both real and imagined.

Some of the saddest words ever spoken are heard at funerals: “I hope he knew how much he meant to me,” or, “I wish I’d told her more often how much I loved her.” Show love and appreciation while you can.

4. Help them stay active.

Numerous studies have shown that physical activity slows the aging process, which results in both prolonged life and improved quality of life. Conversely, a sedentary lifestyle increases the chances of age-related disease and premature death. Even a short walk in the fresh air is beneficial. (Recommendations vary, but a sensible approach is to start low and gradually increase the duration and frequency of exercise to at least 20 minutes, five days a week.)

Other studies have shown that intellectual stimulation can bolster the mind and stave off memory loss in the same way that physical exercise strengthens and protects the body.

Asked why they aren’t more active physically and intellectually, many seniors say it’s because they don’t

have anyone with whom they can exercise or engage in mentally challenging activities. Help them stay active, and you will be investing in your own future at the same time.

5. Pray for them.


It has been said that praying for others is not the least we can do for them, but the most. Prayer moves the heart and hand of God to take action according to our requests, to do things that we couldn’t possibly do ourselves. “Things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”²

Prayer opens a two-way channel of communication between us and God, and it works both ways. When we’re asking God for His ear, it’s easier for Him to get ours. Some of His most immediate answers to our prayers come when He is able to involve us.

The very fact that you pray for others shows that you’re concerned about their happiness and well-being, and this puts you in a position to better understand His loving plan for their lives and how you can help bring it to pass. When you pray for someone to not be lonely, for example, God may give you some ideas as to how you can help alleviate that loneliness—perhaps a visit or an afternoon out together, or a phone call, email, or card. ✝

¹John 15:13

²Luke 18:27



SHE GOES WITH GRACE

BY HANNAH AVELLINO

My mother
didn't fear death
and was very
thankful for the
life she had lived.

WHILE GOING THROUGH my mother's personal belongings after she died, I found a bookmark that has meant a lot to me since. On it is a picture of an elderly Native American woman in a long flowing dress. There are mountains in the distance, and the moon is high in the sky above them. The woman's eyes are closed. Below the picture are the words, "She goes with grace."

I had heard or read a few accounts of how God has given people "dying grace" at the moment of their passing, or similar grace to others who have lost loved ones. I found this so true in my dear mother's passing—that the Lord's grace was more than sufficient. In answer

I leaned over to be in her line of sight, but it was as though she was looking right through me.

to my prayers He even put His special touches of love upon what would normally have been a very difficult experience.

It reminded me of the answer the evangelist Dwight L. Moody gave two women who asked him if he had dying grace. “No,” he answered, “I’m not dying yet.” God gives that special grace at the moment it’s needed, not before.

My mother and grandmother were both Quakers, and I was raised a Quaker with loving values. My mother lived these values throughout her life, and it was largely her example of freely giving of herself for others that influenced me as a young woman to dedicate my life to full-time Christian service—a decision I have never regretted.

I had planned to make a trans-Atlantic trip to be with her for a scheduled joint-replacement surgery and to help during her recovery, but three weeks before my travel date my sister phoned to let me know that our mother had been hospitalized and knew she was not going to recover. I caught the next available flight and was at her side twelve hours later.

My sister, brother, and I gathered around our mother’s hospital bed, spending her last hours reminiscing about our happy family life and talking about how much she meant to us. Though my mother was heavily sedated, she was very much with us in spirit. It was a precious,

bonding experience for the three of us siblings, which now strengthens our ties.

My mother didn’t fear death and was very thankful for the life she had lived, for she had lived it to the full.

At one point I whispered to her my deep appreciation for the unconditional love and moral support she had always given me, despite the fact that my chosen vocation had meant that she wasn’t able to see me or my two children very often, and now her three great-grandchildren were growing up on foreign fields of service as well. After I had thanked her, I asked if she would continue to help me from the “other side,” to which she nodded yes.

Just a few minutes before her passing, she opened her eyes and looked across the room toward

the ceiling. I was sitting on the side of her bed, holding her hand, but she looked right past me. I leaned over to be in her line of sight, but it was as though she was looking right through me. That’s when I realized that she was seeing someone or something that the rest of us couldn’t see. I asked her who or what she was seeing, but she couldn’t answer. Instead, she closed her eyes, a peaceful expression came across her face, and she was gone.

I miss her, of course, but I’m very thankful that she passed on so peacefully and painlessly. The Lord gave me the grace to say goodbye to one of the dearest people in my life, until we are together again forever.

HANNAH AVELLINO IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN ROMANIA. ✝

Death for a Christian is not really death at all. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”¹

If you haven’t yet received Jesus and His gift of eternal life, you can right now by praying the following:

Jesus, please forgive me for all my sins. I believe that You gave Your life for me. I open the door of my heart and ask You to please come in and give me Your gift of eternal life. Amen.

¹John 11:25–26



SMILING AT A TREE

By JOYCE SUTTIN

EIGHTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD Eloise sits in her nursing home room with Stage Six Alzheimer's. She remembers her name but frequently doesn't recognize her granddaughter. She is sweet and kind to all the nurses and has a special impact on them, although they appear in her room every morning as strangers. It is easy for them to be patient with Eloise; other Alzheimer's patients sometimes act stubborn and cantankerous. In spite of losing her memory and spending most of her time alone, she is happy because she looks out her window and sees a tree.

Until a few years ago, Eloise was an accomplished landscape artist, and one of her specialties was painting trees. Once she had an extraordinary gift; now she is handed a crayon and draws lines like a two-year-old—lines that possibly represent tree trunks and branches.

I share her appreciation of trees. Growing up on a farm in upstate New York, I spent a good deal of time climbing trees and wandering among them, admiring God's artistry. In the pasture across the road from our home, there was one especially majestic tree. One day my father explained that its symmetry was a mirror image of its underground root system. If there had been an impediment to the development of the roots, it would have been reflected in the part of the tree that was visible above the ground. The tree was beautiful because it had a well-functioning root system.

I have often thought about how trees parallel our lives. We go through cycles much like the seasons—bright new beginnings, like springtime's pale green buds; flourishing times, like summer's lush and gorgeous trees; resplendent times, like autumn trees flamboyant with color; and bleak times, like the stark beauty of branches shrouded by winter's snow, which will eventually give way to spring and new life again.

We too need an invisible system of roots in the spiritual realm. Our connection with God is what feeds us and helps us to bear fruit in our lives. He nurtures us while we're green and growing and fruitful, helps us yield to the loss of our leaves in the fall, and keeps us alive within through seemingly endless winters, so we'll bring forth the miracle of new buds in the spring. When our spirits are firmly rooted in God and we are nourished by His Word, it shows in the branches of our lives.

I can understand why Eloise seems content to sit and smile at her tree as she waits for the eternal spring—heaven. She has lived a full, rich, loving, fruitful life, firmly connected to God through her personal relationship with Jesus, so even as her memories fade and her communication skills fail, her deeply rooted love and faith sustain her.

JOYCE SUTTIN IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THE U.S. ☘

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

**AT MIDLIFE, IS
THIS AS GOOD
AS IT GETS?**

Q: I thought that after my children were grown and gone I would finally have time to do some things I've always wanted to do, but now I find that I'm worn out by the end of the day and tired when the weekend comes around. Is it all downhill from here?

A: MIDLIFE REQUIRES some adjustments, but no, it's not all downhill.

The decline in physical stamina is natural and part of God's plan. He uses these and other challenges of midlife to slow us down and get us to take stock of our lives and our priorities. He's hoping, of course, that we will turn to Him in the process so He can be the ever-present help He wants to be.¹

As at every other stage, God wants to equip you to meet these new challenges. He promises, "As your days, so shall your strength be."² The strength He provides at midlife is the maturity that you

have gained through experience. He wants you to further develop that strength of spirit and character, and you do that by involving Him more in your thoughts and daily activities. As for goals and priorities, He will help you sort those out too. If you will look to Him for guidance, He will give it to you.³ He may even help you find ways to do some of those things you've always wanted to do, and strengthen you accordingly.

If you aren't in the habit of taking your problems to Him in prayer and receiving His solutions and strength in return, you may feel like you don't know where to

God wants to equip you to meet these new challenges.

start, but it's really quite simple: Tell God you're making room for Him, and He will meet you there.⁴ Talk with Him, as you would with a friend. Then, like a muscle, your relationship with Him will grow stronger through daily use.

Midlife done that way can be the happiest and most fulfilling stage of life that you have yet experienced! ✂



One bedrock Bible promise that makes a wonderful point of reference during midlife is found in Romans 8:28: "All things work together for good to those who love God." If you love God and know how much He loves you, then you can be sure that He has your best interests at heart and wants to use even the challenges that come with midlife to help you make positive changes. You will then be able to see midlife through the eyes of faith, looking not at the difficulties, but at the new possibilities you know He will open to you.—*Maria Fontaine*

¹Psalm 46:1

²Deuteronomy 33:25

³Proverbs 3:5–6; James 1:5

⁴James 4:8



LOOKING FOR THE SUNRISE

Sunrise, Sunset

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

THE SKY THIS EVENING WAS BEAUTIFUL—a cathedral in the heavens, glowing with light. It was almost like catching a glimpse of heaven. The sun is gone now, swallowed up by the darkness, but it's sure to rise again. Sometimes the dawn is even more beautiful than the sunset.

The light slowly fades to darkness, but then comes the sunrise. “The Sun of Righteousness”—Jesus—“shall arise”¹ and set everything straight. Before I can see the sun itself when it begins to rise, I can see its effects as it lights up everything—like the light of God's Word drives away the darkness.

I wonder why we old people sleep so little and wake up so early? Maybe it's because we appreciate time more and don't want to waste any. I think it's also because Jesus wants us to spend more time alone with Him, without all the distractions of the day, thinking about our lives, getting our priorities straight and realizing what's important and what isn't, taking account of what we accomplished, thinking about whether or not we're using our time wisely, and praying about how we could do better. It's easier to hear His voice when we're alone, particularly in the early morning.

It's wonderful when the sunset of a life can be as beautiful as the sunsets of God's creation, when we pass over to the next life as quietly and as gracefully as the day comes to a close. Soon there will be no more sunsets for us; in heaven there will only be sunrise! ✠

I'm not looking for the sunset,
As the swift years come and go;
I am looking for the sunrise,
And the golden morning glow,
Where the light of heaven's glory
Will break forth upon my sight,
In the land that knows no sunset,
Nor the darkness of the night.

I'm not going down the pathway
Toward the setting of the sun,
Where the shadows ever deepen
When the day at last is done;
I am walking up the hillside
Where the sunshine lights the way,
To the glory of the sunrise
Of God's never-ending day.

I'm not going down, but upward,
And the path is never dim,
For the day grows ever brighter
As I journey on with Him.
So my eyes are on the hilltops,
Waiting for the sun to rise,
Waiting for His invitation
To the home beyond the skies.

—Albert Simpson Reitz

¹Malachi 4:2

POINTS TO PONDER

Age, a State of Mind

Growing old is no more than a bad habit which a busy person has no time to form.—*André Maurois*

If wrinkles must be written upon your brow, let them not be written upon your heart. The spirit should not grow old.—*James Garfield*

Hardening of the heart ages people more quickly than hardening of the arteries.—*Franklin Field*

The heart that loves is always young.—*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Growing old isn't so bad when you consider the alternative.—*W.C. Fields*

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up interest

wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear, and despair—these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.—*Samuel Ullman*

What matters is not to add years to your life but to add life to your years.—*Alexis Carrel*

A man's age is something impressive; it sums up his life: maturity reached slowly and against many obstacles, illnesses cured, griefs and despairs overcome, and unconscious risks taken; maturity formed through so many desires, hopes, regrets, forgotten things, loves. A man's age represents a fine cargo of experiences and memories.—*Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

A PRAYER FOR AGING GRACEFULLY

Jesus, You promised, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."¹ Please help me to stay young in heart and spirit, even as I grow older in body. Help me to remember to thank You for the times I'm in good health, and give me the grace to cheerfully accept the difficulties and disappointments that come with aging. Amen.

FEEDING READING Ages and Stages

Each age has its special beauty.

Proverbs 16:31

Proverbs 20:29

We shouldn't be sad about the passing of our youth.

Ecclesiastes 11:10

God promises to help us in our old age.

Isaiah 46:4

Psalms 91:14,16

Psalms 103:5

The passing of years should bring wisdom.

Job 12:12

Job 32:7

Psalms 71:17

God can use us, no matter how old we are.

Psalms 92:13–14

Acts 2:17

Our life span is in God's hands.

Psalms 31:15a

Psalms 48:14

How to obtain the blessing of longevity.

Deuteronomy 5:33

Deuteronomy 30:20

Psalms 34:12–14

Proverbs 10:27

¹2 Corinthians 12:9

FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

the tapestry

Each event in a person's life, each thought, each decision, each bit of love, and each interaction with someone else is like a thread in a tapestry. Day after day, dark threads and bright threads are woven together, often, it seems, without rhyme or reason, but in the end they form a picture.

I'm looking at the tapestry of your life now, and it's beautiful! All the good things—the happiness and fulfillment, the love you gave and received, the lives that were better because of you—these are bright threads. The dark threads are the difficulties and disappointments, the trials and the tears. These are also necessary

because they make the bright threads look all the brighter and help give your tapestry its rich, warm glow.

No one else has ever woven a tapestry quite like yours, and no one could have. Your life is unique.

