Readers Outline

Growing Older

I. Fears of Growing Older

A. Loneliness due to death of spouse and family or friends

B. Failing health.

C. Financial insecurity.

II. Response to death of spouse and family or friends

A. Death is God-ordained because of man's disobedience.

B. We must acknowledge the reality of grief.

C. Grief (in some way or other) must take place if there is to

be a healing of the wounded.

1. tears
2. talk
3. time

III. Response to Failing Health

A. Count on God's grace, he gives it as needed.

B. Develop an accepting attitude toward natural life processes.

C. Plan ahead sensibly.

IV. Financial Insecurity.

A. Philippians 4:11-12, 19

B. Be prepared - have some alternatives in mind, then seek God's leadership.

Growing Older

1. How do you personally feel about growing older? Are you afraid to do so?

2. What scriptures have lessons for us on the subject of growing older?

3. Name several examples of how and when the Lord used older people in His work (give the scriptures where the examples occur).

4. Should (and will) our service for the Lord differ as we grow older?

5. Titus 2:3-5 says aged women should teach young women many things. Discuss how we can teach young women these scriptural roles and characteristics when we become the aged women of the church.

1. I'm not really afraid to grow older, except I do wonder what will happen to me when I might reach the point of senility or being an invalid. Also, I think about the possibility of my husband dying and me being left alone. Too, as I grow older I realize my parents will likely die before I do and I will miss them tremendously.

I feel I can accept whatever the aging process brings because I am saved & serving the Lord. He will not leave me whatever old age I may become.

2. Scriptures that teach us about growing older:

<u>Psalm 37:25</u>

David realizes that throughout his life the Lord has never forsaken the righteous and has not left His people in poverty.

Psalm 71:18

Though the writer of this psalm is considered unnamed, he asks the Lord to be with him in his present old age. This writer realized he still had work to do for the Lord — he had the responsibility of showing God's strength and power to those around him and to the younger ones, too.

Psalm 71:9

This writer acknowledged that a time was coming (or possibly had already come) when his personal strength would fail. He asks for God's continual care even in old age.

Psalm 78:4-8

This writer speaks of the importance of passing belief on to the children — making sure they know of the "praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works." He stresses the importance of passing the Lord's

teachings down from one generation to the next, so that each group will "set their hope in God."

Psalm 92:12-14 ✓

These verses point out the worthy service performed by the righteous and stress their strength and well-being in their faithful service. These types of Christians will still be serving in old age.

Isaiah 46:4 ✓

Here the Lord declares that the Lord continues to be God - to carry and deliver us, even in our older years.

Psalm 145:4 ✓

Here we see our responsibility to praise the Lord to the younger generations and to tell them of God's "mighty acts."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2A ✓

These verses teach us there is a time to die.

Job 12:12 ✓

Older age gives us wisdom and understanding that we do not (and cannot) have as young people.

Psalm 148:12-13 ✓

These verses teach that, regardless of age, we should praise the Lord.

Proverbs 16:31 ✓

This verse teaches that older age can be a crown of glory to us.

Proverbs 20:29 ✓

Here we see there is a beauty in older age.

Luke 2:37-38 ✓

Though this widow was older, she "served God with fastings and prayers night and day." She witnessed too!

3. Older people used in the Lord's work:

Noah

Genesis 7:5-7 tells that Noah was 600 years old at the time of the flood. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8) and God made a covenant with him. (Genesis 6:18).

After the flood, Noah was used by the Lord when his family was instructed to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." (Genesis 9:1).

At this time the Lord established his covenant to no longer destroy the earth by flood. The covenant was made with Noah and his sons. (Genesis 9:8-11).

Abraham

When Abraham was ninety-nine, the Lord made a covenant with him concerning Abraham being the father of many nations. (Genesis 17:1-8)

Isaac was born when Abraham was "in his old age." (Genesis 21:2)

Joshua ✓

Joshua 13:1-7 states that "Joshua was old and stricken in years," yet the Lord tells him there still remains work to be done. God acknowledges Joshua's old age and then gives him something more to do.

In Joshua's old age he gave the people a rousing challenge, recorded in Joshua 24:14-15. He also covenanted with them regarding their willingness to serve the Lord, Joshua 24:22-27.

Samuel

The Lord used Samuel when he was old (I Samuel 12:2) to remind the people of the importance of serving the Lord. (I Samuel 12:20-24).

Anna

Luke 2:36-38 tells of Anna who served God continually through prayers and witnessing. She is said to be "of a great age."

Paul ✓

In Philemon 9, Paul referred to himself as "the aged." He was always serving the Lord, regardless of circumstance.

Peter ✓

generally felt he wrote I and II Peter not long before his death.

4. Our service to the Lord should differ as we grow older in the sense that we should be more mature in our studies, our prayer life, our daily faith, and our service. As we grow older, we should be the ones giving encouragement, guidance, and worthy examples for younger Christians.

Therefore, our service for the Lord should grow greater as we grow older, not become less and less.

As we become very old, our bodies will likely lose the ability to function as well as when we were young. As a result, our type of service may have to change, but as long as we are mentally sound and able to talk, we can always witness though we may no longer be able to clean or build or walk or visit as we once did. Due to failing health we may be unable to attend church services regularly but we can be faithful to pray for the services. God can always use us!

4. We must begin these practices, these roles as young women, then when we are "aged women" we can teach the young women by our faithful example.