

## THEY SHALL BEAR FRUIT IN OLD AGE (Isa 40:27-31)

### A. **We have only a short time on this earth to be of service to the Lord (Jas 4:14).**

1. Our main objective as servants ought to be to help others achieve salvation (2 Cor 5:8-10, 13-14, 17-18).

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**Luke 8:2-3** – Mary Magdalene, Joanna & Susanna, & many others...**provided for [Jesus] from their substance**

**1 Tim 5:9-10** – [**the widow indeed: beginning in her married life**] **well reported for good works**: if she has **brought up children**, if she has **lodged strangers**, if she has **washed the saints' feet**, if she has **relieved the afflicted**, if she has **diligently followed every good work**.

**Rom 16:1** – I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is **a servant of the church** which is at Cenchræa:

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### B. **But as the years pass-by we may think “I’ve done enough; I’ve done all I can do; Let someone else take over”.**

1. But there is no retirement from the Lord’s service until we lay down this earthly house.

[**In fact**, the Scriptures teach us that the older we get the more effective & productive our service can be to the Lord.]

## I. THE OLD CAN BE YOUNG AGAIN!

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**Psa 92:12** – The righteous shall flourish like a *palm* tree, he shall grow like a *cedar* in Lebanon.

***Evergreens:*** describe those who actively serve the Lord, but read on...

**Psa 92:13-14** – Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. 14 **They shall still bear fruit in old age**; they shall be fresh & flourishing.

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**A. Translating into our own time, older Christians can be “fresh & flourishing”, they can continue to “grow & bear fruit” for God’s use.**

1. But they must be “planted in the house of the Lord”; they must be serving in the “courts of God”.
2. They ***must*** take an active interest in the work of the Lord’s church (Bible study, teaching, comforting, visiting, exhorting, restoring, rejoicing & weeping).
  - a. The alternative is not good (Jn 15:2, 6).

### B. Examples:

1. ***Moses*** was 80, & his brother ***Aaron*** was 83 before they began to flourish (Exo 7:7).

- a. We would say they were past the age of usefulness, but they continued to serve God's purposes for 40 more years.
2. **Joshua** was 110 when he died, & he had faithfully led God's people in conquest for 30 years.
    - a. Age did not hinder these men or their wives from serving God's people.
3. We think of **Daniel** as always being a young man.
    - a. But he was over seventy year old when he was cast into the den of lions.
    - b. And he was still serving God when Israel went back to the land of her nativity.
4. **Zacharias** & **Elizabeth** were "well advanced in years" (Luke 1:7) when they were chosen to raise the forerunner of Christ.
5. **Simeon** & **Anna** were very old, but still waiting at the Temple, teaching, serving, fasting & praying (Luke 2:25-38).

6. **Paul** was an old man when he wrote several epistles or letters in our Bibles.

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**Philemon 9** – yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you -- **being such a one as Paul, the aged, & now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.**

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- a. While in a Roman prison he also wrote *Ephesians, Philippians & Colossians.*
- b. When he was released from his first imprisonment, he went back on the road visiting the churches where he had been.

[**Age** is really not a factor when it comes to effectively serving God. **In fact**, as we grow older, we often have more time to give our specific role of service to the Lord.]

## II. WHAT SERVICE CAN THEY PROVIDE?

### A. Spiritual Oversight

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**Acts 14:23** – So when they had appointed **elders** in every church, & prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

**Acts 20:28** – Therefore **take heed** to yourselves & **to all the flock**, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, **to shepherd [feed (KJV) implying teaching] the church of God** which He purchased with His own blood.

**Titus 1:9** – holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, **by sound doctrine, both to exhort & convict those who contradict.**

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1. How many young men have made this a goal in life; how many are being prepared for it?
  - a. No, most will think of retirement as a time of freedom & pleasure rather than service.

## B. Exemplify Godly Living

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**Titus 2:2-3** – that the **OLDER MEN** be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience [**perseverance**]; 3 the **OLDER WOMEN** *likewise*, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine [**no bad habits**]....

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## C. Teaching Good Things

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**Titus 2:3-5** – **OLDER WOMEN...teachers of good things** -- 4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed [dishonored].

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1. Older Christians are simply better equipped than others to do certain types of work.
  - a. *Calls, cards & visits* are especially meaningful when they come from seasoned saints who know the pitfalls of life.
  - b. *Hospitality & financial gifts* are sometimes easier to offer when obligations to children have run their course.

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**Psalms 71:17-21** – O God, You have taught me from my youth; & to this day I declare Your wondrous works. 18 **Now also when I am old & grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, your power to everyone who is to come.** 19 Also Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You? 20 You, who have shown me great & severe troubles, shall revive me again, & bring me up again from the depths of the earth. 21 You shall increase my greatness, & comfort me on every side (see also **Psa 78:1-7**).

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1. Who better to prepare the next generation than one who has walked with the Lord through the ups & downs of life?
  
2. We have servants in this congregation; who know time is fleeting, duty is clear & death is certain.

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**Psa 90:10** – **The days of our lives** are seventy years; & if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet **their boast is only labor & sorrow; for it is soon cut off, & we fly away.**

**2 Cor 4:16-18** – Therefore we do not lose heart. **Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.** 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory, 18 while **we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.** For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

**The outward man is always bending back toward the earth, & as it gets closer it will drop its seed for the next generation.**

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## CLOSING

**A. There is no retirement age in the kingdom; the work goes on as long as we are physically able.**

1. We will give an accounting of work to Christ (**2 Cor 5:18-11**). May we do all that we can do that heaven might be our home.