

*Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. Isaiah 46:4*

**INTRODUCTION:**

**Six Decisions to make “Loving Your Aging Parents” more fulfilling and spiritual**

(1) Honor Your Parents; (2) Accept Change; (3) Share the Load; (4) Balance Your Life; (5) Expect to Grow; (6) Trust in God

"Old" Americans over the age of eighty-five are the fastest-growing age group in our population, and persons over seventy-five make up the next fastest-growing group.

**THE BIBLE SHOWS US GOD'S PROMISES OF HONOR TO THE AGING PERSON!**

A. Long Life: 1 Kings 3:14 *And if you walk in my ways and obey my statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.*

B. The Assurance of Salvation: Psalms 91:16 *With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.*

C. Respect and Relaxation: Zechariah 8:4 *Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age.*

**DECISION #5: EXPECT TO \_\_\_\_\_.**

- *“You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well developed, not deficient in any way.” James 1:3*
- How you can grow
  - (1) Establishing contact with a parent or \_\_\_\_\_ with a parent.
  - (2) You'll get more \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (3) Being a part of a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (4) With the help of a \_\_\_\_\_.

**DECISION #6: YOU \_\_\_\_\_ IN GOD.**

- *“Come to Me all of you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28*

When you hit that wall...you have two choices:

1. Run away from it
2. Recognize the reality of it and trust in God's help

**CONCLUSION:** Here's God's \_\_\_\_\_ *“When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire, you will not be burned; the hard trials that come will not hurt you.” Isaiah 43:2*

## **STUDY GUIDE: FINISHING WELL WITH YOUR PARENTS**

**MONDAY** - Two weeks ago we learned about the Hebrew word, “Corban” which referred to a gift particularly designated for the Lord, and so forbidden for any other use (*Mark 7:11*). Jesus referred to some persons who mistakenly and deliberately avoided giving needed care to their parents by declaring as “corban” any money or goods that could otherwise be used to provide such care. Thus what began as a religious act of offering eventually functioned as a curse, denying benefit to one’s own parents. This practice made Jesus angry because it was a way of “getting around” the responsibility we have for our aging parents. The OT carried even harsher words about people and governments for not taking care of the elderly, *Deut 21:18; Ezekiel 22:7* Can you think of other ways people try to avoid these responsibilities?

**TUESDAY** - God wants our parents lives to “finish well” with long life, *1 Kings 3:14*; with vigor all the way to the grave, *Job 5:26*; with the understanding that old age is a remarkable accomplishment, *Proverbs 16:3*; with the assurance of salvation, *Psalms 91:16*; and certainly with the knowledge that God is ever present in our aging years, *Isaiah 46:4*. While ‘loving your aging parents,’ look for concrete, specific ways to let them know about your love for them, and God’s!

**WEDNESDAY** – Today we look at a central truth...our aging parents want to continue to be productive and to be proud of their accomplishments. *Isaiah 65:22*; Yet there is a time to sit back and reflect and relax. The prophet Zechariah used this understanding to lift up the promises of that glorious day when Jerusalem –long destroyed by invaders— would be restored to its rightful place, and the aged would not have to be fearful: “Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age.” *Zechariah 8:4*. This incredible good news of value and worth in the older years is proclaimed by the Psalmist in *Psalms 92:14*

**THURSDAY** – The importance of respect for and reverence to the aging has sustained some cracks in recent generations. In the OT book of the law, we are told to “*rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly*”...*Leviticus 19:32*. Rising is not a passive act. Respect is more than a state of ‘being’ respectful, it is doing respectful acts. As much as possible include your young children in the things you do to show respect and honor toward your aging parents.

**FRIDAY** – Today we look at words of encouragement and hope as we think about growing old to remember that God does not leave us in our old age; the Lord carries us, sustains us, and rescues us. *Isaiah 46*. Read also *Psalms 18:2; Isaiah 41:13; Isaiah 40:31 and Psalm 121:2*