

Facing Old Age

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Introduction

- When I first prepared this talk, I had just passed my 50th birthday.
- Now I am somewhat past my 66th, so I have even more experience with old age!
- Back then, I noted some old-age symptoms:
 - Decreased energy, high blood pressure, bifocals.
- Now I can add:
 - Diabetes, triple-bypass, arthritis!

Introduction

- All of us will face old age.
- I want to provide some encouragement for those experiencing old age already.
- I want to provide some preparation for those who haven't yet, but will if they live so long.
- In any case, perhaps this will be helpful in counseling others.

Why Old Age?

- A result of the fall of mankind
- A reminder that death is coming
- The last lap in a long race



A Result of the Fall

- Genesis 2:17 (NIV) but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.
- Genesis 3:17-19 (NIV) To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

A Result of the Fall

- The fall of mankind really did happen, and it has left clear marks.
- Even for believers the effects continue in this life.
- Lesson: Sin has real consequences, even after it has been forgiven.

A Reminder of Death

Ecclesiastes 12:1 (NIV) Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, "I find no pleasure in them"— 2 before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds return after the rain; 3 when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men stoop, when the grinders cease because they are few, and those looking through the windows grow dim; 4 when the doors to the street are closed and the sound of grinding fades; when men rise up at the sound of birds, but all their songs grow faint; 5 when men are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets; when the almond tree blossoms and the grasshopper drags himself along and desire no longer is stirred. Then man goes to his eternal home and mourners go about the streets. 6 Remember him—before the silver cord is severed, or the golden bowl is broken; before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, or the wheel broken at the well, 7 and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

A Reminder of Death

- A reminder we will not live forever, but one day will give up our bodies, return to God, and answer to Him.
- Our ultimate dependence is on Him, whether we acknowledge it or not.
- A warning to unbelievers to repent
 - Ezekiel 18:23 (NIV) Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?

The Last Lap

- Hebrews 12:1-3, 12-13 pictures life as a long-distance race. So old age is the final lap.
- The book of Job (chapters 1-2) gives us a hint here also, with its picture of what is going on behind the scenes.
- Our last challenge is to finish our race well, though this challenge may be invisible to most other people.
- Yet the angels are watching!

Conclusion

- Psalm 23 begins with the figure of God as our shepherd, we as the sheep.
- It ends with God as our royal host, we as his lifelong guest.
 - Psalm 23:4-6 (NIV) Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Conclusion

- Paul's advice:
 - 1Corinthians 15:58 (NIV) Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
- If we know Jesus as our savior, we need not fear even death, for it will take us to be with Him forever.

The End

...of your life is approaching, are you
getting ready for it?