

“How to Stay Young!”

Isaiah 40:28-31

Intro. – There isn’t a person here who isn’t living proof that there are absolutes! Isaiah the prophet is used by God to bring us face to face with one of these absolutes – “...*even youths grow tired and weary.*” In short, Isaiah confesses that the passing of years saps us of some things we would rather retain. Our eyes lose their sharpness, our hands lose their grip. However beautiful we may be, time will drain away that beauty and strength. The Miss America or Mr. Universe of today will not be the Miss America or Mr. Universe of tomorrow. Our quickness of pace will more than slacken. All in all if you and I live long enough, all of us are going to grow older and slower.

To many, this thought strikes terror into their hearts. Many modern day poets have added to this sobering state of affairs by writing such things as the following:

“You live, you die,
So what, good bye!”

In our text, this sunny faced prophet of God tells us the only old age to really dread is that of the heart. The loss of beauty and strength is no major problem if only the soul keeps young. The test of age is not how many birthdays one has had. Some of the oldest people you and I have met are by worldly standards I the “prime of their life.” Some of the youngest you and I have met are those knocking on the century mark. You see, those who have grown old in heart are old whether they are nineteen or ninety!

Purpose: to better understand waiting on the Lord leads to staying young

Old age is not a matter of the almanac; instead, it is a matter of one’s inner life. Are you young or are you an aged, infirmed person? To answer this, we turn to this text and see its answers to 2 vital matters:

I The Marks of GROWING OLD

- note: not talking about a few hard earned wrinkles or gray hairs...

A. Tripping Over Trifles

1. Ecclesiastes 12:5 “*Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street.*”
2. The habit of tripping over little matters is not peculiar to one age group:
 - a. those young and older who get wrapped up in things... whining and complaining when they don’t get their way or disappointments hit...
 - b. others with many times the burdens... “run the race” without any complaints...
 - c. let me simply commend those who fail to complain = exerting energy on higher matters...
3. If we are tripping over trifles, i.e. making mountains out of molehills, we are old no matter what our birth certificate may say.

B. Fearing the Heights

1. Ecclesiastes 12:5 “*Furthermore, men are afraid of high places...*” i.e. the spirit of adventure is dead and is replaced with a timid spirit.
2. Illus. – “The American Magazine” – article “*Why Should I be Honest?*” About a young man asking people on the street why he should be concerned about being honest. Proceeded to shut out any honorable or affirmative answers and summarized his convictions by saying, “I do not wish to be heroic, I only wish to be comfortable.” = perfect example of *old man in a young body*.
3. In stark contrast turn to a Bible example of an older man who was young:
 - a. 85 years old “*saw 85 winters*”; yet, he said he kept *springtime* in his heart. = Caleb
 - b. one of two good spies... at 85 volunteered for most difficult task in his life... Joshua 14:10-12
4. Here is the point: if you can’t stand the heights (challenges of today), if you have lost your daring and your supreme goal is to be *comfortable* you are old even if by the world you are young!

C. Living in the Past

1. There are those who glory/live in the past at the expense of the present and future...
2. J.K. Jerome – *“People have been looking back to the good old days of 50 years ago ever since Adam’s 51st birthday.”*
3. All of which reminds me of a poem that Shakespeare did not write:

“The lightening bug is brilliant,
But he has not a mind,
He blunders through existence,
With his headlight on behind.”
4. In other words, if our faces are toward the past, if all we care about are “the good old days” we are old no matter what our age!

These are but a few of the marks of old age according to God’s Word

II The Marks of STAYING YOUNG

- we all must face the fact there is no avoiding the aging process of these bodies...
 - we need to take proper care of these bodies (they’re on loan from God)... BUT no amount of face lifting, cosmetics, proper food and exercise will keep them from getting old!
 - there is however, a way to avoid the only aging process that is eternally harmful and deadly:
- A. Accept Your Age
 1. If you’re fifty, be willing to act like a 50 year old etc.
 2. Few matters age an individual as rapidly as that of trying to stay physically young.
 3. We need to relax and accept the inevitable gracefully.
 4. Choice is yours: 1) grow older in such a way you are a pain in the neck... 2) grow older in such a way as to be a blessing used of God...
 - B. Keep Your Interests High
 1. Nothing more deadening than the loss interest...
 - a. there are those in their youth facing life with “yawns”... everything is “boring”... no enthusiasm or excitement is evident....
 - b. there are those in their older years frightened by troubles of the day and rightfully so...; but, fear paralyzes them from doing what they could to make these days better...
 2. We fling away our youth and rob those about us when we lose interest in the present.
 3. No one grows old in the presence of God who FIGHTS for the here and now to worship and serve their Lord and Savior...
 4. What Isaiah meant in 40:29 *“He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power.”* –These are tough times, but they are also thrilling... may our interest be high unto the glory of our Lord!
 - C. Wait (Hope) in the Lord
 1. Wait for the Lord = you will gain strength from Him.
 2. Waiting doesn’t mean sitting by waiting for good to happen – it means doing our best with the attitude of trust in Him having hope and expectations that all will work out for the good to them who are intent upon doing the Lord’s will (Romans 8:28).
 3. Being related to God as a branch to a vine our youthfulness is promised no matter our age.
 - Illus. – Moses kills an Egyptian and flees... 40 years old. Burning bush and God is in it...; so, at the age of 80, Moses mastered unflinching youth by waiting on the Lord!

Conclusion: A young boy was overheard asking his friend, “Wouldn’t you hate to wear glasses all the time?” “No,” came back the answer, “Not if I had some like my grandma’s. She always sees when people are tired and sad. She knows just what to do to make them feel better. One day I asked her how she could see that way all the time. She told me it was the way she had learned to look at things as she grew older.” After thinking for a minute, the first boy concluded, “Yeah, I guess you are right. It must be her glasses.”

No, it’s not her glasses. It’s her *waiting on the Lord*. Are you waiting on the Lord? Are you learning the right way to stay young? Do you understand what this entails and do you see the value behind it?