

**Who Are You  
That You  
Should Retire?**



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By trial and error and the superabundant grace of God I have come through – no, I have learned to cope and be ME – the troublous times of the earlier part of my life. And God has made me to know He has no plans of retirement ahead for me. He has put up with my ignorance and my obstructing genetic flaws for many years and He has now brought me into what I can truly call my "golden years." They definitely are not golden in a physical sense, nevertheless they are absolutely sparkling in a spiritual way. I know God now as I have never known Him in my life, and that is as it should be. Every believer should know God at any given time better than he has ever known Him before. This Christian way is a progressive way. If you stop moving ahead, you lose ground.

I see too many older believers in Christ who are not relishing the same freedom I have found despite still being myself — within the framework of God's will of course. They have not yet found out how to be themselves, again within the framework of God's will. This, of all ages of life, should be the time in which to relax and quit trying to be what others want you to be. Some of my old colleagues have sort of resigned themselves to being putty (I had started to say silly putty) that others can shape to their own designs. The only design to which I want to conform is the design God has for me.

Others of my peers have slowed their pace and have committed themselves to sitting around waiting for the Old Man with the Scythe to catch up with them. What a waste of knowledge! What a waste of experience! What a waste of grace! No doubt God did not bring you this far just to let you pine away from lack of use. You – we – have something to give to our own age group and to younger Christians all around us. Surely, surely, we should give back what God has given us over the years!

Who Are You That You Should Retire?

There is no retirement in Christ. Retirement is like a final surrender to the end of life. It is capitulation to the "inevitable." We are indeed appointed to die, but death should not be our focus throughout a long, dreary, fearful life. We are born to LIVE.

“I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
‘Behold, I freely give  
The *living* water, thirsty one,  
Stoop down and drink and *live!*’  
I came to Jesus and I drank  
Of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
And now I *live* in Him.”

Hear me, you who are 70 years old or more, retirement from your job can be a wonderful thing, but you should never seek to retire from Kingdom work. As long as God gives you the ability to move physically and to think, you should do what you can. The movement may be restricted and the thinking imperfect, but God wants you to do what you can with what He gives you.

I can speak this way because I too am an oldster. I sometimes feel like a dinosaur living in a world of amazing inventions, confusing technologies, and “techno-speak” I can barely decipher. It is a bewildering environment of strange young creatures to whom I have to make a conscious effort to relate. I can’t ask them to relate to me; I am the one in the minority. So I make the effort. I reach out to these young people who think they will never grow old and to whom dying is irrelevant. Of course they expect to live forever.

But that is all right. Although I am known as a “retired” person, God does not see it that way. If I can think only in a fuzzy way, I have to use that limited capacity to pray often – the abundance of time is there – and I should use the restricted ability to move about that I have, by writing and occasionally talking on the phone to someone who needs help.

I am not a one-on-one counselor, but when you are thrown into a position for which you are not “qualified,” what can you do? Tell the person who needs, at the least, a listening ear, “Back off! I can’t help you”? No. You listen and, as you listen, you pray that God will give you what you need to help the poor soul before you. Perhaps you will need to say little. Just listening to the distraught person pour out his or her woes may be what God wants you to do. Whatever the need is, if I have the resources, I am required to fill the need.

At times we fail to give intercessory prayer the prominence it should have. I have seen persons who have or have had (many of my peers are gone now) the gift of intercessory prayer. We who do not have the so-called gift of intercessory prayer are nevertheless, as saints in whom the love of God resides, required to pray often for the many persons around us who have a plethora of pressing needs.

Are you alive? Do you have the ability to think? Can you pray? Can you talk? Can you write? Do you have financial resources? If you answer yes to any of the foregoing, there is no way you can afford to retire from this race. God needs you. Not for Himself; He owns the cattle on a thousand hills and has proprietary rights to everything we supposedly own. God needs you to reach out and touch the many people who are in need all around you.

And when you give of your varied resources, don't sound a trumpet before you, advertising the act. Just give and don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. For example, if you take someone to God in prayer, it is not necessary that you go to him or her and say, "I just want to let you know I am praying for you." I have found that if I pray unknown, unseen and unheard for one whose burden I have assumed as my own, God will answer even when the person is unaware of what I am doing and even of who I am.

It may be good, at times, to let your brother or sister – or one who is unsaved – know you are praying for them; the knowledge of what you are doing may give them a lift. It may raise sagging hopes and lift drooping spirits. Just be sure that you do what you do in love and not for the praise of men and women. If that is what you are seeking, you have your reward when they praise you for your good works. You should not expect anything further from God.

If you are old or if you are young, do what you do in this life as unto God. Quit disparaging any ability you have. Take a little, by God's grace, and accomplish much. Never, never retire from this life.





