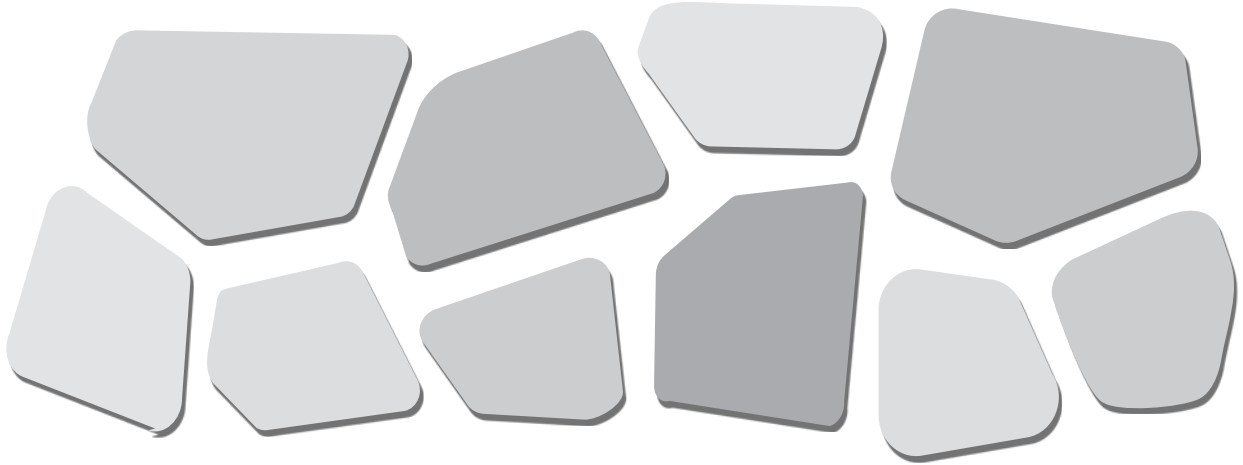


~ Aging with Grace Handout ~

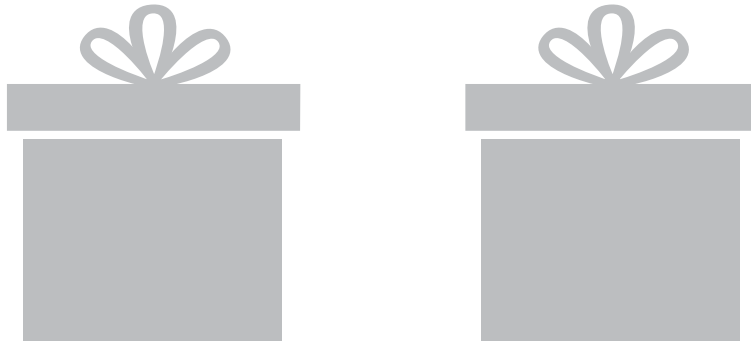
# CHAPTER 5: FLOURISHING AND FRUITFUL

## Psalm 92:12-15

1. . . . *ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls* (Jer. 6:16b).



What are two gifts God gives to empower us to walk on the good path?



### 2. Prayer

*Your word **is** a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.  
Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths.  
Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation;  
for You I wait all the day long.*

*You have made known to me the paths of life;  
You will make me full of gladness with Your presence*

Ps. 119:105, Ps. 25:4-5, ACTS 2:28

3. From *The New City Catechism Devotional*, p. 141-143:

**Q. 32. What do justification and sanctification mean?**

- A. Justification means our declared righteousness before God, made possible by Christ's death and resurrection for us. Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness, made possible by the Spirit's work in us.

**Abraham Booth:** Though justification and sanctification are both blessings of grace, and though they are inseparable, yet they are distinct acts of God; and there is, in various respects, a wide difference between them . . . The former is by a righteousness without us; the latter is by holiness wrought in us . . . Justification is instantaneous and complete in all its subjects; sanctification is progressive and perfecting by degrees.

**John Piper:** The power by which you daily strive to overcome the imperfections in your life is the confidence that you're already perfect. If you get these switched around, if you think, "Okay, God demands perfection; I've got to become in my behavior perfect, and then God will look at me and say, 'He's doing pretty good; we'll let him be perfect or count him to be perfect.'" It's just the opposite . . . Please don't get these backward . . . God reckons us as acceptable, makes us his children, counts us as righteous, and because of that righteousness we then spend a lifetime becoming what we already are.

*The New City Catechism Devotional*, Colin Hansen, General Editor (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway, 2017) 141-143.

4. From Karen Hodge and Susan Hunt, *Transformed: Life-taker to Life-giver*, p. 16:

When the first man and woman sinned against God, they deserved the death sentence but received the gospel promise of Life through a Redeemer, and grace upon grace this Life would come through woman (Gen. 3:15). In response, Adam gave his wife a new name that sounds like the Hebrew word for life-giver—Eve (Gen. 3:20).

The gospel brought a radical reversal of what our first parents expected and deserved (death), and how they had behaved (disobedience to God; disloyalty to one another). This reversal is evidenced by the name Adam gave her.

When we are saved, our potential changes from life-taker to life-giver because our status has changed: "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:12).

Birthing a child—a life—is a beautiful illustration of our redemptive calling to be life-givers, but the ultimate demonstration is when the Life of Christ fills us and spills out onto our circumstances and relationships.

Our redemptive calling transcends age, life-season, marital status, time, and place in history. It is big. Really big. It is a calling to live boldly and biblically. It is a life-long adventure of “beholding the glory of the Lord [and] being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another . . .” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Karen Hodge and Susan Hunt. *Transformed: Life-taker to Life-giver* (Geanies House Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2016), 16.

## 5. Fruitful

*Bear fruit in keeping with repentance* (Matt. 3:8).

***The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*** (Gal. 5:22).

*The fruit of righteousness will be peace; and the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever* (Isa. 32:17).

***Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness*** (Eph. 5:8b-11a).

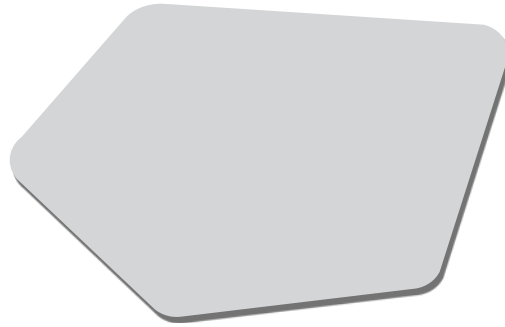
*It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God* (Phil. 1:9-11).

## 6. From Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, p. 18:

Prayer is the only entryway into genuine self-knowledge. It is also the main way we experience deep change—the reordering of our loves. Prayer is how God gives us so many of the unimaginable things he has for us. Indeed, prayer makes it safe for God to give us many of the things we most desire. It is the way we know God, the way we finally treat God as God. Prayer is simply the key to everything we need to do and be in life. We must learn to pray. We have to.

Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*. (NYC: Penguin Random House, 2016), 18.

- **Walking It Out:** What is one way you will apply this lesson to your life?



**Bonus:** Go to [www.agingwithgrace.online](http://www.agingwithgrace.online) to review *Aging with Grace – Ask an Older Woman* five-minute video of storyteller Jerdone Davis: “How do you deal with fear and loneliness as an aging single woman?” Listen to an extended interview with Jerdone on the topic of facing the fear of singleness in old age.

## Flourishing and Fruitful Women

*Amy Carmichael*

My Father, I will anchor my *self*, my *thoughts* and my *will* in these facts:

*You are.*

You rule in heaven and on the earth.

You call me “righteous” because I am in Jesus, your Son.

No matter what it may seem, I will stand firm forever.

Amy Carmichael, *I Come Quietly to Meet You: An Intimate Journey in God’s Presence*, Arranged by David Hazard (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2005), 66.



## The Cornerstone of Forgiveness

We must examine this fundamental and indispensable part of the Christian life with great care and gentleness. For the person who has been deeply wounded, it is difficult to cut through the pain and to consider whether or not she has forgiven the one who inflicted the wounds.

I approach this topic with much prayer. I am not going to glibly say, “If you really forgive, you will forget.” I will say that I am grateful for every opportunity I have had to forgive. I am not saying I am grateful for the pain—that would be sadistic. I am grateful for the opportunities to forgive because extending forgiveness necessitated drinking deeper of God’s grace than any other act of obedience.

I have seen what forgiveness and unforgiveness look like. Forgiveness is beautiful. Unforgiveness is ugly. Julia and Sarah are sisters. They are both in their sixties. I met Julia first. I was immediately attracted to this lively woman. My first impression was of her quickness to detect and respond to hesitant, withdrawn women. She seemed to instinctively know they were hurting. The more I observed her, the more curious I was. I knew there had to be a story that had shaped this woman’s radiance.

When I questioned her, she told me that she had been physically abused by her father. She remembered standing between her daddy and her younger sister as he pointed a pistol and threatened to kill them. “My healing came when I finally understood the price, extent, and power of God’s forgiveness. No matter what my daddy did to me, it was not as offensive, nor did it cost as much, as my sin offended and cost my Heavenly Father.” She told me that when her father was dying, she visited him, held his hand, and told him she loved him. He never asked for her forgiveness and never said he was sorry. But because of her Heavenly Father’s forgiveness to her, she was able to forgive her earthly father.

“What about your sister?” I asked. Her face saddened. “She would never forgive. She would not even go in the room to see him when he was dying. But what is even more tragic is that every relationship in her life is poisoned with her

bitterness. Her anger spills over to her husband and to her children. She is a prisoner to her past.”

When I met Sarah, I was startled by the contrast. She looks much older than her older sister. There is a hardness about her that repels rather than the softness that draws people to Julia. Julia’s life is beautiful. Sarah’s life is ugly. The price of unforgiveness is high . . .

Forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation. Often women truly forgive, but because there is no reconciliation with the one who has hurt them, they labor under false guilt that they have not done everything they should. Reconciliation requires both repentance and forgiveness. There is a dual responsibility on the part of the offender and the offended. We cannot control the repentance of the one who has hurt us. We can only forgive. Our forgiveness may or may not bring about reconciliation, but it will free us to have a right relationship with God and with others.

Susan Hunt. *Spiritual Mothering* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 171-184.

**Suggested scriptures to prayerfully read:**

- Matthew 6:14-15
- Luke 17:3-4
- 1 Corinthians 5:17
- Colossians 1:13, 14
- Colossians 3:13
- Isaiah 1:18
- Micah 7:18-19
- Mark 11:25
- Acts 3:19
- Ephesians 1:7
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- 1 John 1:9
- Psalm 103:12