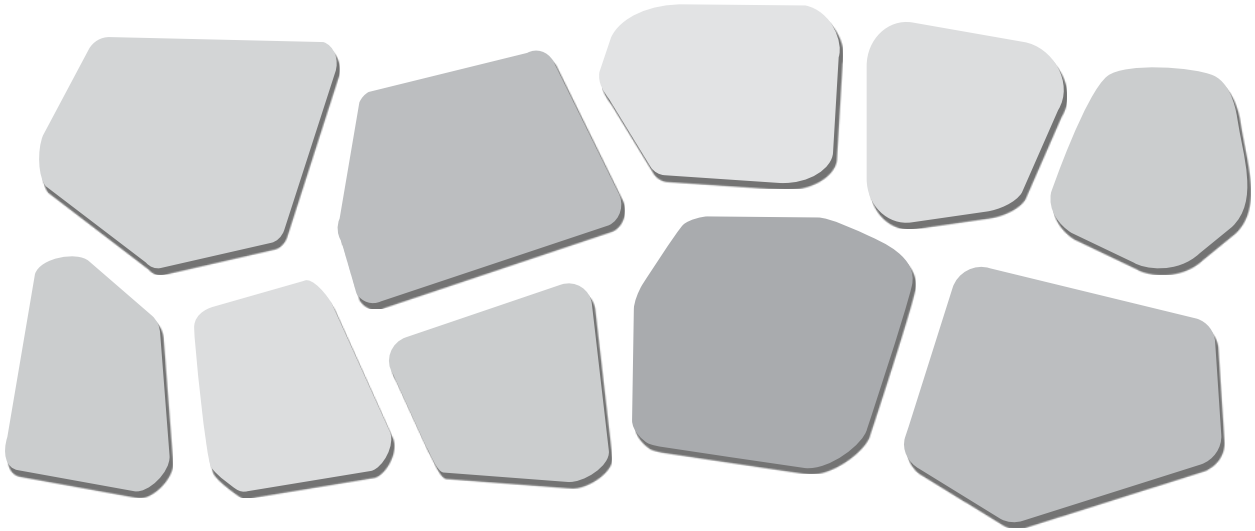


~ Aging with Grace Handout ~

CHAPTER 7: THE LONG VIEW

Psalm 71

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



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. Psalm 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4. The Means of Grace

Our growth in the grace of Christ will be commensurate with our use of the means God has appointed. Theologians refer to these as “means of grace” (*media gratia*).

The means of grace are God’s appointed instruments by which the Holy Spirit enables believers to receive Christ and the benefits of redemption. . .

If we are to grow in grace, we must acknowledge that God has appointed certain means for that growth. We should approach these means with eager anticipation and childlike reliance on the One who adds His blessing to them, and we must rest content in a right use of them, knowing that God has promised to bless them as we use them with repentant and believing hearts.

Nicholas T. Batzig, “What Is a Means of Grace?” *Tabletalk* (June 2020), 4-5.

5. Ecclesiastes 3:11 reminds us of the long view of God’s faithfulness: *He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart.*

Every thing is as God has made it; it is really as he appointed it to be, not as it appears to us. That which to us seems most unpleasant is yet, in its proper time, altogether becoming . . . There is a wonderful harmony in the divine Providence and all its disposals, so that the events of it, when they come to be considered in their relations and tendencies, together with the seasons of them, will appear very beautiful, to the glory of God and the comfort of those that trust in him. Though we see not the complete beauty of Providence, yet we shall see it, and a glorious sight it will be, when the mystery of God shall be finished. Then every thing shall appear to have been done in the most proper time and it will be the wonder of eternity . . . We see but the middle of God’s works, not from the beginning of them (then we should see how admirably the plan was laid in the divine counsels), nor to the end of them, which crowns the actions (then we should see the product to be glorious), but we must wait til the veil be rent, and not arraign God’s proceedings nor pretend to pass a judgment on them.

Matthew Henry, *Commentary, Vol. 3.* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 997.

6. Three take-aways from this chapter:

(1) David was not controlled by his circumstances.

Circumstances refer to things that are without. The word itself is based on two Latin words: *circum*, which means “around” (as in the word “circumference”), and *stare*, which means “to stand.” So circumstances are the things that are standing around

us. They are external. But where is the Lord in this picture? Is he without? No, he is within. It is a case of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). So why worry about what is without if Christ is within? To know that he is within and that he is directing us moment by moment, day by day, is the secret of that supernatural joy that is our rightful birthmark as God’s children.

James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John*. (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1297.

(2) David’s prayer was an answer to what he knew about God.

We can define prayer as a personal, communicative response to the knowledge of God . . . [This] means that prayer is profoundly altered by the amount and accuracy of that knowledge . . . The moment we are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ (John 1:12-13; 3:5), that Spirit shows us that we are not simply God’s subjects but also his children, and we can converse with him as our Father (Gal. 4:5-6) . . . In the Bible, God’s living Word, we can hear God speaking to us and we respond in prayer, though we should not call that simply a “response.” Through the Word and Spirit, prayer becomes answering God—a full conversation.

Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God* (NYC: Penguin Random House, 2016), 45-46.

(3) We can age with grace because of God’s sufficient grace.

2 Corinthians 9:8

God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

7. Responsive Reading – Isaiah 51:1-3, 7-8

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug.

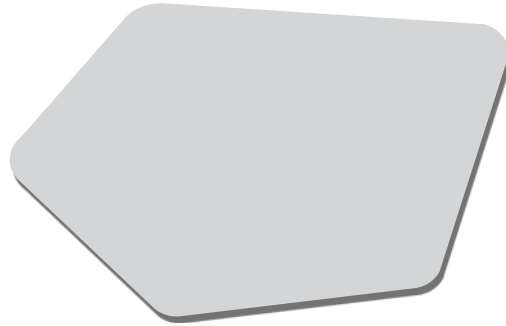
Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him.

For the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song . . .

Listen to me, you who know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear not the reproach of man, nor be dismayed at their revilings.

For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool; but my righteousness will be forever, and my salvation to all generations.

- **Walking It Out:** What is one way you are, or will begin to be, missional in your season of life?



Bonus: Go to www.agingwithgrace.online to review *Aging with Grace – Ask an Older Woman* five minute video for this lesson, with storyteller Carol Arnold: “What does flourishing look like for women who cannot travel the world and teach as you do?” There’s also a link to an extended interview with Carol on the topic of flourishing in every season.

Flourishing and Fruitful Women

Joni Eareckson Tada

When you meet Jesus face-to-face, your loyalty in your hardships will give you something tangible, something concrete to offer Him in return. For what proof could you bring your love and faithfulness if this life left you totally unscarred? . . .

Don’t worry about finding answers . . . Use the time you’ve got, the stillness you’re experiencing . . . use it to get to know God . . . Talk to Him in prayer, and let Him talk to you in His Word.

Joni Eareckson Tada, *Heaven Your Real Home*
(Grand Rapids, MI., Zondervan, 1995), 187, 189.