

How You Can Age Gracefully and Biblically All at Once

Is it possible to age gracefully? What does that even mean?

I've been thinking recently about aging. It may have something to do with the fact that I've reached another milestone birthday. In a culture that worships youth, I wonder how long it will be before I become a living relic of a bygone era—someone merely tolerated by younger people. Then I wonder if the future is now.

It doesn't help that I find myself saying many of the things that once caused me to roll my eyes when my mother said them decades ago. Things I had determined never to repeat. Sigh. Never say never.

I've known people who have modeled what it is to *not* age with grace. Many had health issues and painful life experiences. Their response was to grow more cranky and unhappy with each passing year.

I've also had some wonderful role models who exemplified how to age with grace. People who determined their circumstances would not drag them down. Instead, they kept looking up. Up toward heaven. Toward their Savior. Toward the gift of each new day, despite their difficulties. And I hope I've learned something from each of them.

The pages of the Bible are also filled with positive role models—people who aged gracefully. Here are six people I want to be like when I grow up.

▪ Enoch

Enoch's secret to aging gracefully was to “walk with God” (Gen. 5:22, 24). I love the word picture of walking with God. To walk with someone means you don't run ahead, and you don't

lag behind. That's how I want to live: walking with God.

▪ **Moses**

Age is not an obstacle to God's call on our life. Moses was 80 years old when God called him to lead Israel out of Egyptian slavery. What an encouragement it is to know that regardless of what the calendar says, God can still use me. We also read that Moses was more humble than anyone else (Num. 12:3). Hmmm—availability and humility: a combination I need to cultivate!

▪ **Caleb**

Caleb was one of the 12 spies sent by Moses to spy out the promised land and bring back a report. He stood with Joshua when the other 10 spies sowed seeds of doubt among the people. Forty-five years later, at the mature age of 85, Caleb requested a portion of the land that would be especially difficult to conquer—a land of “fortified cities” (Josh. 14:12). He was successful because he “followed the Lord God of Israel fully” (Joshua 14:14b, NASB). Someone willing to stand against the crowd who follows God fully: that's who I want to grow up to be.

▪ **Elizabeth**

Elizabeth was the wife of a priest. She was unable to conceive, a disgrace among women at that time. But despite her disappointment and her advanced age (Luke 1:6-7), she was described as righteous in God's sight. And God chose her to be the mother of the one who would herald the coming of Christ. What a woman! I want to age gracefully like Elizabeth—someone who trusts God despite the disappointments of life.

▪ **Simeon**

Although we're not told Simeon's age, it appears he was an older man. We can conclude this because the Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die before he had seen the

Christ (Luke 2:26). He was then content to leave this life, having seen the one who had been promised. I very much want to be like Simeon—someone who is sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and follows His leading.

▪ Anna

At 84 years old, Anna had been widowed for an estimated 60-plus years. She spent her life serving and worshipping at the temple “night and day” with fasting and prayer. When she heard Simeon’s pronouncement, she thanked God and spread the word to all who would listen that the Messiah had been born (Luke 2:38). I want to be like Anna as I age: someone who lives to serve and worship. Someone who lives with an attitude of gratitude. And someone who can’t stop talking about Jesus.

As the calendar pages turn and birthdays come and go, who are your role models for aging gracefully? {eo}

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