

Scripture's Little-Known Secrets to a Long, Healthy Life

Recently, my dear mother-in-law (more correctly, my “mother-in-love”) graduated to Paradise. Nonive Aldridge was 87 years old. A true Proverbs 31 lady, she was consistent in her commitment to God from the day she found the LORD around the age of 6. What a legacy she left behind—of prayer, fasting, selflessness, love for people, Christlike character, devotion to God and passion for His Word. The Most High rewarded her with over eight decades of fruit for the Father’s glory.

Legend has it that Ponce de Leon discovered Florida while on a quest to find a secret source of longevity called the Fountain of Youth. Eight years later, instead of achieving his goal, he died at the hands of the Calusa Indians. Ironically, a search for extended life led to an early death. On the contrary, Nonive never consciously sought after longevity, but longevity sought after her. Because she fulfilled the following six conditions of a God-pleasing life, He fulfilled the promises attached to those conditions:

1. Loving God

In Psalm 91:14a, 16a the Creator promises any sincerely devoted person, “Because he has set his love upon Me ... With long life I will satisfy him.”

2. Obedience

Those who genuinely love God will automatically strive to keep His commandments (there are 1050 in the New Testament). Deuteronomy 4:40b prophesies to such obedient persons that it will “go well with you and with your children after you, and so that you may prolong your days in the land, which the Lord

your God gives you, forever.”

3. Seeking Wisdom

Wisdom is mastery of the art of living in alignment with God’s expectations. In the book of Proverbs, wisdom is symbolized as a woman who pledges, “For by me your days will be multiplied, and the years of your life will be increased” (Prov. 9:11, see also 3:16).

4. Fearing God

To fear the Lord is to hold Him in the highest esteem, and to worship Him with deep, reverential awe. Proverbs 10:27 forecasts that “the years of the wicked will be shortened” but “The fear of the Lord prolongs days.”

5. Honoring Parents

When God gave the Ten Commandments, the first one with an attached promise was, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.” (Ex. 20:12)

6. Sharing and Displaying God’s Word

Deuteronomy 11:19-21 urges God’s people to both share the Word of God with their children and display it their homes “that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied ... as long as the days of heaven on the earth.”

If these six keys opened the door of a long and fulfilling life to my mother-in-love, surely they will do the same for you. Of course, the most excellent blessing is not just longevity in this natural world, but immortality in the next. This gift of all gifts is received when we sincerely set our faith on the Lord Jesus, for “He who believes in the Son has eternal life” (John 3:36a). To enjoy a lengthy earthly sojourn is wonderful indeed; but to live forever in the presence of God will be glorious beyond description. {eoa}

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