Growing Old - Biblical and Personal Thoughts Last Edit 11/15/2019

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As I write this I am 70 years old. I want to write various documents that will help pass on a spiritual legacy to my descendants. This document is not being written because I fear my life is near its end. As far as I know I have many more years of life ahead of me. But, I don’t take a longer life as a guarantee or a right. I personally accepted Jesus’ sacrifice for my sins in 1973 and I trust that God will take me to my eternal home at the right time.

I plan to take most of the Bible quotes from the NET Bible. THE NET BIBLE, NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION, COPYRIGHT © 1996 BY BIBLICAL STUDIES PRESS, L.L.C. This Bible is a free download from [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org/). The First edition without notes is free from<https://netbible.com/download>. The second edition with notes is $4.95 download as of 2018. The NET 2nd edition can be read online for no cost at<https://lumina.bible.org/bible/Genesis+1> (starts at Genesis).

Genesis 6:3 **3** So the Lord said, “My Spirit will not remain in humankind indefinitely, since they are mortal. They will remain for 120 more years.” (NET)

glc...In our human bodies we are not immortal. Our bodies wear out and we call this getting old. God has given us a span of life that is long enough to enjoy the world and the people of the world. But our life span on Earth is not too long such that we are away from heaven for too long of a time. ALthough getting old, with its aches, pains, diseases, etc., is not enjoyable it is tolerable. As a person grows old they move into different roles in their life: retirement, spending more time with those you love rather than at work; nurturing grandchildren and helping their parents have more time to themselves; passing on wisdom (without being a “know it all”) to younger people who are open to this conversation, ; etc.

Exodus 20:12 **12** “Honor your father and your mother, that you may live a long time in the land the Lord your God is giving to you.” (NET)

glc...This is one of the Ten Commandments. Obeying God’s direction that of honoring your father and mother has a reward from God. God is telling us the way the world works from his perspective. If you do this it likely means that you will seek to obey God in other areas of your life. And doing what God says is good to do will reward you in many areas of your life.

Leviticus 19:32 “**32** You must stand up in the presence of the aged, honor the presence of an elder, and fear your God. I am the Lord. “ (NET)

glc…It is proper to show respect for those who are older. Showing respect is the start to receiving wisdom from those who are older. If you don’t respect someone it is not likely that you will take to heart what they say. Also, God wants you to respect those who are older. There are various science fiction stories where the plot involves society not respecting those who are older and killing or abandoning the older people as a matter of economic or social convenience.

Deuteronomy 32:7 “7 Remember the ancient days; bear in mind the years of past generations. Ask your father and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you.“ (NET)

glc...Those who are older should be telling the younger generations of the faithfulness of God, of the workings of God. I probably should have done more telling to our children as they were growing, should have had more family devotion time. The documents I am creating on Google Drive are one attempt to rectify this. God is worthy of having his story told. God has so much love for us. He has provided the opportunity for us to have eternal fellowship with him for those who accept Jesus’ sacrifice for their sins.

Ruth 4:13-15 “**13** So Boaz married Ruth and slept with her. The Lord enabled her to conceive and she gave birth to a son. **14** The village women said to Naomi, “May the Lord be praised because he has not left you without a guardian today! May he become famous in Israel! **15** He will encourage you and provide for you when you are old, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has given him birth. She is better to you than seven sons!”” (NET)

glc...The promise is that Ruth’s son will help Naomi when she is old. Descendants should help parents and grandparents. This is pleasing to God.

1 Chronicles 29:26-28 “**26** David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. **27** He reigned over Israel forty years; he reigned in Hebron seven years and in Jerusalem thirty-three years. **28** He died at a good old age, having enjoyed long life, wealth, and honor. His son Solomon succeeded him.” (NET)

glc...I can also make this statement my own. I have enjoyed a long life, some wealth, and some honor. I do thank God for the blessings he put into my life: a godly, loving, wife XOXO; godly loving children; godly (I trust) grandchildren; sufficient finances; respect from others for the way I live.

1 Kings 3:13-15 “**13** Furthermore, I am giving you what you did not request—riches and honor so that you will be the greatest king of your generation. **14** If you follow my instructions by obeying my rules and regulations, just as your father David did, then I will grant you long life.” **15** Solomon then woke up and realized it was a dream. He went to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord’s covenant, offered up burnt sacrifices, presented peace offerings, and held a feast for all his servants.” (NET)

glc…God works on behalf of those who follow him.

Job 5:17-27 “17 “Therefore, blessed is the man whom God corrects, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. 18 For he wounds, but he also bandages; he strikes, but his hands also heal. 19 He will deliver you from six calamities; yes, in seven no evil will touch you. 20 In time of famine he will redeem you from death, and in time of war from the power of the sword. 21 You will be protected from malicious gossip, and will not be afraid of the destruction when it comes. 22 You will laugh at destruction and famine and need not be afraid of the beasts of the earth. 23 For you will have a pact with the stones of the field, and the wild animals will be at peace with you. 24 And you will know that your home will be secure, and when you inspect your domains, you will not be missing anything. 25 You will also know that your children will be numerous, and your descendants like the grass of the earth. 26 You will come to your grave in a full age,

As stacks of grain are harvested in their season. 27 Look, we have investigated this, so it is true. Hear it, and apply it for your own good.” “ (NET)

glc… For some (like Job) your body will have strength in your old age.

Job 12:12 - 20 “12 Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding? 13 “With God are wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

….20 He deprives the trusted advisers of speech and takes away the discernment of elders.

“ (NET)

glc… Those who are old have many life experiences and a long lasting relationship with God that gives them wisdom and understanding. Watch older Clhristians to see how they handle life and seek out their wisdom and advice.

Job 32:6-9 “6 So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite spoke up: “I am young, but you are elderly;

that is why I was fearful, and afraid to explain to you what I know. 7 I said to myself, ‘Age should speak, and length of years should make wisdom known.’ 8 But it is a spirit in people, the breath of the Almighty, that makes them understand. 9 It is not the aged who are wise, nor old men who understand what is right. “ (NET)

glc…At the end of the book of Job the young “friends” of Job are shown to have given Job bad advice. Here, Elihu, is saying that the elderly are not to be relied on just because they are elderly. I can agree with this. The elderly who are faithful to God are those who can be trusted to speak good advice. Those who are older should pass on their wisdom to others. But they need to mold what they speak to make it appropriate to those they are speaking to. They should be careful to discern what others need to near and not just say how they think things should be done from their perspective. Each person’s life has unique characteristics that need unique statements of wisdom to benefit them. Those who are older can’t make the blanket claim that the way things were done in the past must be the way things are done in the present and future. Those who are older will benefit the younger best by passing on general principles, godly principles, that can help the younger in their lives.

Psalm 34:11-15 “11 Come children. Listen to me. I will teach you what it means to fear the Lord.

12 Do you want to really live? Would you love to live a long, happy life? 13 Then make sure you don’t speak evil words or use deceptive speech. 14 Turn away from evil and do what is right. Strive for peace and promote it. 15 The Lord pays attention to the godly and hears their cry for help. “ (NET)

glc...Your behavior has an effect on whether you grow old and an effect on your conditions as you grow old.

Psalm 71:8-18 “5 For you are my hope; O Sovereign Lord, I have trusted in you since I was young. 6 I have leaned on you since birth; you pulled me from my mother’s womb. I praise you continually. 7 Many are appalled when they see me, but you are my secure shelter.

8 I praise you constantly and speak of your splendor all day long. 9 Do not reject me in my old age. When my strength fails, do not abandon me.

...14 As for me, I will wait continually, and will continue to praise you. 15 I will tell about your justice, and all day long proclaim your salvation, though I cannot fathom its full extent. 16 I will come and tell about the mighty acts of the Sovereign Lord. I will proclaim your justice—yours alone. 17 O God, you have taught me since I was young, and I am still declaring your amazing deeds. 18 Even when I am old and gray, O God, do not abandon me, until I tell the next generation about your strength, and those coming after me about your power.“ (NET)

glc…We can be confident that God will not toss us away. The world may ignore and downplay the value of the elderly but God will not do so.

We can make this prayer in faith that it is God’s will not to abandon us. But this is not a blank check. We can have confidence this prayer will be heard and answered if we fully trust in Jesus for our salvation. Those who are older have a responsibility and purpose of continuing to testify of God’s mighty working in this universe and his love for all people.

Psalm 73:26 - 28 26 “My flesh and my heart may grow weak, but God always protects my heart and gives me stability. 27 Yes, look! Those far from you die; you destroy everyone who is unfaithful to you. 28 But as for me, God’s presence is all I need. I have made the Sovereign Lord my shelter, as I declare all the things you have done.” (NET)

glc…Our bodies do wear out as we age. But our soul can remain strong and have vitality as we continue to trust in Jesus for salvation and continue to live as God wants us to live.

(Colossians 1:10 “...live worthily of the Lord and please him in all respects…” (NET)

Philippians 1:27 “...conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ…” (NET) )

All Christians should live as God wants them to live; not just the elderly. God is against those who are not faithful to him. Choose to make God your shelter and take comfort in his presence as you grow older.

Psalm 90:1-12 “A prayer of Moses, the man of God. O Lord, you have been our protector through all generations. 2 Even before the mountains came into existence, or you brought the world into being, you were the eternal God. 3 You make mankind return to the dust,

and say, “Return, O people.” 4 Yes, in your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday that quickly passes, or like one of the divisions of the nighttime. 5 You bring their lives to an end and they “fall asleep.” In the morning they are like the grass that sprouts up: 6 In the morning it glistens and sprouts up; at evening time it withers and dries up. 7 Yes, we are consumed by your anger; we are terrified by your wrath. 8 You are aware of our sins; you even know about our hidden sins. 9 Yes, throughout all our days we experience your raging fury; the years of our lives pass quickly, like a sigh. 10 The days of our lives add up to seventy years, or eighty, if one is especially strong. But even one’s best years are marred by trouble and oppression. Yes, they pass quickly and we fly away. 11 Who can really fathom the intensity of your anger? Your raging fury causes people to fear you. 12 So teach us to consider our mortality, so that we might live wisely. “ (NET)

glc…Time does “fly.” The days and years pass quickly and before you know it you are 70 years old! This is not something to fear, but is something to understand and live with, something to be a motivation for making good use of the time you are allotted on Earth by God.

...make the best use of your time

We should keep perspective that God is timeless. He is a sure foundation and rock of existence. There is more to “life” that life on Earth. Our time on Earth is very limited and is somewhat of a proving ground for faith. Will we choose to have faith in Jesus or not? To avoid God’s anger, and to enjoy God’s favor, put your faith in Jesus.

Psalm 91:14-16 “”14 The Lord says, “Because he is devoted to me, I will deliver him; I will protect him because he is loyal to me. 15 When he calls out to me, I will answer him.

I will be with him when he is in trouble; I will rescue him and bring him honor. 16 I will satisfy him with long life, and will let him see my salvation.” (NET)

glc…God is on the side of those who are faithful to him. Growing “old” and participating in his plan for salvation are God’s desires for us.

Psalm 92:12-15 “12 The godly grow like a palm tree; they grow high like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Planted in the Lord’s house, they grow in the courts of our God. 14 They bear fruit even when they are old; they are filled with vitality and have many leaves. 15 So they proclaim that the Lord, my Protector, is just and never unfair.“ (NET)

glc…Bearing fruit means much more than having children. All of us bear fruit as we do what God wants us to do. And we should proclaim that God is just.

Read these verses (and their context) John 15:2-5 John 15:8 John 15:16 Matthew 7:18

Matthew 13:23 Romans 7:4 Colossians 1:10

Do your own search for verses on bearing fruit. I am stopping here so I don’t have to put this topic in a separate document!

Psalm 143:5 “5 I recall the old days. I meditate on all you have done; I reflect on your accomplishments.” (NET)

glc...When you are old or in trouble you should still remember God and all he has done. The context for this verse is that David’s enemies have him on the run. As we focus on who God is (his greatness and his love for us) we will gain confidence.

Proverbs 9:10-12 “10 The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord, and acknowledging the Holy One is understanding. 11 For because of me your days will be many, and years will be added to your life. 12 If you are wise, you are wise to your own advantage, but if you have mocked, you alone must bear it. “ (NET)

glc...If you do desire to grow old, make wisdom a part of your character. You wisdom must be based on the fear (reverential awe) of God. Let your desire to do what God wants guide your wisdom. Having godly wisdom is to your advantage; it will bring results.

Proverbs 10:27-29 “27 Fearing the Lord prolongs life, but the life span of the wicked will be shortened. 28 The hope of the righteous is joy, but the expectation of the wicked perishes.

29 The way of the Lord is like a stronghold for the upright, but it is destruction to evildoers.“ (NET)

glc...Fear of God motivates you to have right actions and decisions in your life. These benefit your life, and God blesses your life. The righteous can have confident hope in their futures. Sticking to godly behavior blesses your life.

Proverbs 16:31 “31 Gray hair is like a crown of glory; it is attained in the path of righteousness.“ (NET)

glc… Living as God wants you to live can help your lifespan. This is a result of having God’s favor as well as treating your body in a way that is good for your body.

Proverbs 17:6 “6 Grandchildren are like a crown to the elderly, and the glory of children is their parents. “ (NET)

glc…Pam and I are proud of all our children and we seek to live lives that our children can be proud of. We are not perfect and we sin in various ways as all people do. But we ask God for forgiveness and seek to do better in the future.

1 John 1:**5** Now this is the gospel message we have heard from him and announce to you: God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we say we have fellowship with him and yet keep on walking in the darkness, we are lying and not practicing the truth. **7** But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. **8** If we say we do not bear the guilt of sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. (NET)

I am thankful that our lifespan has been long enough to see our children develop in their lives. I am thankful that we have seen and enjoy grandchildren. I don’t know why some people don’t have children and others do. I do not use the fact that some have children to give them extra consideration or value in my sight. Each person has a purpose in life. Some may have the purpose of not having children. I do acknowledge and trust Romans 8:28

Romans 8:18 For I consider that our present sufferings cannot even be compared to the coming glory that will be revealed to us. 19 For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly but because of God who subjected it—in hope 21 that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God’s children. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers together until now. 23 Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with endurance.

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes on behalf of the saints according to God’s will. 28 And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, 29 because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.” (NET)

glc...As you continue to love God (not just with head knowledge, but with your whole person), God will work behind the scenes to develop your life in a good way. It is important to let God define the meaning of the word “good.”

Proverbs 20:29 “29 The glory of young men is their strength, and the splendor of old men is gray hair. “ (NET)

glc… I am thankful that I still have a good head of hair! It is a little gray but not totally gray so I must not be totally old :) .

Proverbs 22:1-6 “ A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth, good favor more than silver or gold. 2 The rich and the poor are met together; the Lord is the Creator of them both. 3 A shrewd person saw danger and hid himself, but the naive passed on by and paid for it. 4 The reward for humility and fearing the Lord is riches and honor and life. 5 Thorns and snares are in the path of the perverse, but the one who guards himself keeps far from them. 6 Train a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.“ (NET)

glc.. As you live strive to keep a good reputation. Of course, you maintain a good reputation as you do what is right in God’s eyes. Show respect and love to God and to others. Recognize the rich and poor are both valued by God. Don’t be naive. Look ahead at the future to see some difficulties in advance. (Some troubles will come on you unexpectedly but do what you can to be prepared for difficulties.) Be humble (and content) and you will avoid stress in your life that would shorten your life. Walk in your life at a distance from potential danger (temptation, sin, etc.). As you grow old pass on godly principles to the younger generation. I think this includes children that are not your own. You can have a godly influence on them. You will need to be careful not to overstep and infringe on the parents’ authority. I would suggest that you talk in a humble and friendly way with the parents first, not the child first.

Proverbs 23:22 “22 Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. 23 Acquire truth and do not sell it— wisdom, and discipline, and understanding. 24 The father of a righteous person will rejoice greatly; whoever fathers a wise child will have joy in him. 25 May your father and your mother have joy; may she who bore you rejoice. “ (NET)

glc… This fits in with God’s direction to honor your father and mother. Godly, older, people should be a source of guidance for you. As you gather wisdom don’t let it slip away. Keep in fresh and active in your life. Your righteous life will bless parents; it will give them peace and joy.

Isaiah 46:3,4 “3 “Listen to me, O family of Jacob, all you who are left from the family of Israel,

you who have been carried from birth, you who have been supported from the time you left the womb. 4 Even when you are old, I will take care of you, even when you have gray hair, I will carry you. I made you and I will support you; I will carry you and rescue you.“ (NET)

glc…We age but God does not age! He has been the same forever and is able to sustain people today as he did in the past. (read these verses in context: Job 13:13, Lamentations 5:19, Isaiah 40:8 and 41:4, Romans 1:25, Ephesians 3:21, Philippians 4:20, 1 Timothy 1:17, Hebrews 5:6 and 7:24, 1 John 2:17, Revelation 7:12 and many other verses)

God cares for those who are aging and will sustain them with the strength they need for each situation. God cares for those he has chosen. In the Old Testament that was Israel. After Jesus came God chooses all those who choose Jesus as savior.

Luke 2:36-38 “**36** There was also a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old, having been married to her husband for seven years until his death. **37** She had lived as a widow since then for eighty-four years. She never left the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. **38** At that moment, she came up to them and began to give thanks to God and to speak about the child to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.“ (NET)

glc...Anna was serving God in her old age. Those who are old should continue to seek God and worship God.

Luke 17:33 “**33** Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it. “ (NET)

glc...We should not be overly concerned with our earthly life as we age. By accepting Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins we gain true (eternal) life. By making God’s purposes our priority we gain eternal rewards.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 “ **16** Therefore we do not despair, but even if our physical body is wearing away, our inner person is being renewed day by day. **17** For our momentary, light suffering is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison **18** because we are not looking at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen. For what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.” (NET)

glc...Our body does decline as we age. This verse may speak more to the body declining due to persecutions (read the whole chapter for context) but as we age we should strive to renew our inner, spiritual, life day by day through reading the Bible, prayer, fellowship with other Christians, etc. Troubles we have in this world are not comparable to the eternal glory we will experience in heaven if we have put our faith in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:10 “ For we know that if our earthly house, the tent we live in, is dismantled, we have a building from God, a house not built by human hands, that is eternal in the heavens. **2** For in this earthly house we groan, because we desire to put on our heavenly dwelling, **3** if indeed, after we have put on our heavenly house, we will not be found naked. **4** For we groan while we are in this tent, since we are weighed down, because we do not want to be unclothed, but clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **5** Now the one who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a down payment. **6** Therefore we are always full of courage, and we know that as long as we are alive here on earth we are absent from the Lord— **7** for we live by faith, not by sight. **8** Thus we are full of courage and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9** So then whether we are alive or away, we make it our ambition to please him. **10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be paid back according to what he has done while in the body, whether good or evil.” (NET)

glc...Our spirit now resides in an earthly body. We will all die physically, but our spirit will remain and be provided for in heaven. We have troubles on Earth and groan from time to time. As Christians we have the Holy Spirit in us as a guarantee of our heavenly future. God has a purpose for our life on Earth and we don’t want to leave Earth too early. As we age we should keep in mind our future, the future of appearing before Jesus. Jesus will evaluate our life and reward us properly. You don’t earn your salvation by your actions on Earth (you must read Ephesians 2:8-10) but there are eternal consequences for your actions on Earth.

Ephesians 6:3 “ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** “***Honor your father and mother*,**” which is the first commandment accompanied by a promise, namely, **3** “***that it will go*** ***well with you and that you will live*** ***a long time on the earth***.”” (NET)

glc...Honoring your father and mother will benefit your life. I have tried to put this into practice by helping Dwight and Marge Clements (my parents). The following is not written to flaunt my helping or bring honor to myself, but to let my descendants know some practical ways you can honor your parents. Starting around 2014 I began to drive to Lincoln from Omaha more often to bring them donuts and rolls, to eat lunch with them and visit, to do grocery shopping and run errands for them in Lincoln, to take them to some of their doctors appointments, to reset clocks in their apartment, to set up or take down Christmas decorations, etc. Pam went on some of these trips, especially to eat with them or see them in the afternoon on some holidays. Rick and Rob and others also did some of these activities.

Philippians 3:20,21 “ **20** But our citizenship is in heaven—and we also eagerly await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who will transform these humble bodies of ours into the likeness of his glorious body by means of that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself.” (NET)

glc…After we (Christians...those who trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sin) grow old we have a sure hope that Jesus will move us from the Earthly realm to the heavenly realm. Those who are not Christian have no sure hope but rather face eternal separation from God. If you don’t know you are a Christian I encourage you to read through the gospel of John and the book of Romans, and to talk to a person who trusts in Jesus, who trusts that the Bible is the trustworthy word of God, and who shows evidence of living a godly life. I pray that some people like this are visible to you in the future (past 2019).

Philippians 4:11 **11** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content in any circumstance. **12** I have experienced times of need and times of abundance. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment, whether I go satisfied or hungry, have plenty or nothing. **13** I am able to do all things through the one who strengthens me.

glc...Be content as you grow old.

1 Timothy 5:1,2 “ Do not address an older man harshly but appeal to him as a father. Speak to younger men as brothers, **2** older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters—with complete purity.” (NET)

glc…Older men need to respect godly people who give godly advice and rebukes. Timothy was a younger person who had spiritual authority over older people. Paul was coaching Timothy to not be harsh or “overlording” to older people.

2 Timothy 4:7,8 “ **7** But reject those myths fit only for the godless and gullible, and train yourself for godliness. **8** For “physical exercise has some value, but godliness is valuable in every way. It holds promise for the present life and for the life to come.”” (NET)

glc...Fight the good fight. Finish your life strong in the Christian faith. Living a godly life benefits you on Earth and brings rewards in heaven.

Titus 2:1-6 “ But as for you, communicate the behavior that goes with sound teaching. **2** Older men are to be temperate, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. **3** Older women likewise are to exhibit behavior fitting for those who are holy, not slandering, not slaves to excessive drinking, but teaching what is good. **4** In this way they will train the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, **5** to be self-controlled, pure, fulfilling their duties at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the message of God may not be discredited. **6** Encourage younger men likewise to be self-controlled,” (NET)

glc…Older men (and women) are to exhibit good behavior (don’t take advantage of your old age in expecting special treatment from others). Older women (and men) need to watch their behavior. As you age, keep being led by God and don’t be led by self-interests or the leading of the sinful world we live in. The natural flow of the world is to satisfy yourself. But God’s way is to live to satisfy God. This advice also applies to younger people who need to learn and practice self-control.

James 4:13-16 “**13** Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into this or that town and spend a year there and do business and make a profit.” **14** You do not know about tomorrow. What is your life like? For you are a puff of smoke that appears for a short time and then vanishes. **15** You ought to say instead, “If the Lord is willing, then we will live and do this or that.” **16** But as it is, you boast about your arrogant plans. All such boasting is evil. “ (NET)

glc...Don’t be arrogant or over reaching in your plans. We can make plans but verse 13 carries the implication that the person has the point of view that what they plan will take place; that they are entitled to profit. But, we live “inside” the sphere of life and cannot see the total picture and often do not know what will happen to us in advance. Life is short. Our attitude should be dependence on God’s direction. We should seek to discover what God wants for our life rather than trying to be in total charge of everything that happens to us. Boasting about our plans in a way that excludes God is putting yourself in the place of God and is a dangerous attitude. You will eventually discover that you can’t control everything.

1 Peter 1:23-24 “ 23 You have been born anew, not from perishable but from imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of the grass; the grass withers and the flower falls off, 25 but the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word that was proclaimed to you. “ (NET)

glc...As a Christian you have had a spiritual rebirth. Before you accepted Jesus as your savior you were a child of the human race. After accepting Jeus you are a child of God. Read the Bible and let God’s word impact your life. The Bible was certainly written in the past but it is still alive in its effects if you let it into your life. Our youth is soon gone but God’s word, message, and purposes, endure.

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Ecclesiastes is a book written to give you perspective on life. You should read the whole book.

Ecclesiastes Chapter 2 discusses the poor perspective of seeking to fulfill yourself by trying to grow rich and enjoy pleasure.

Ecclesiastes 2:18-26 “18 So I loathed all the fruit of my effort, for which I worked so hard on earth, because I must leave it behind in the hands of my successor. 19 Who knows if he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will be master over all the fruit of my labor for which I worked so wisely on earth. This also is futile! 20 So I began to despair about all the fruit of my labor for which I worked so hard on earth. 21 For a man may do his work with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; however, he must hand over the fruit of his labor as an inheritance to someone else who did not work for it. This also is futile, and an awful injustice!

22 What does a man acquire from all his labor and from the anxiety that accompanies his toil on earth? 23 For all day long his work produces pain and frustration, and even at night his mind cannot relax. This also is futile!

24 There is nothing better for people than to eat and drink, and to find enjoyment in their work. I also perceived that this ability to find enjoyment comes from God. 25 For no one can eat and drink or experience joy apart from him. 26 For to the one who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy, but to the sinner, he gives the task of amassing wealth— only to give it to the one who pleases God. This task of the wicked is futile—like chasing the wind! “ (NET)

glc...Pam and I look forward to being able to pass on an inheritance to our children and spouses. We have confidence in the good character of our children and spouses and trust that God will work in their lives to guide them. I don’t think we will be praying for our descendants when we are in heaven. Jesus intercedes for Christians. I don’t have a fully developed picture of what our experience will be like in heaven, but I suspect that we will be focused on praising God rather than looking back to Earth. Certainly if we get the opportunity you can count on us to intercede for our descendants when we are in heaven.

We sleep well at night and are not weighed down by anxiety. I hope you have satisfaction in whatever job you are engaged in whether that job is outside the home or inside the home. If you have a worldview that includes God and seek to honor God in all you do, you will find enjoyment. Pam and I are not indulging ourselves with our earthly wealth but we are enjoying it. Enjoy what God has given you and what God has given you to do in this world. Please God and God will give you wisdom, knowledge, and joy. Be content in your relationship to God.

Ecclesiastes 7:10 “**10** Do not say, “Why were the old days better than these days?” for it is not wise to ask that. “ (NET)

glc…’The good old days’ is a frame of mind that is similar to “the grass is greener on the other side of the fence.” Our thinking that other situations were better pulls away from the task of making the present the best it can be, pulls us away from appreciating what we have now, pulls us away from being content in each situation as Paul wrote in Philippians 4:10-13 (glc paraphrase...be content in all situations because God is active in my life).

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 “So remember your Creator in the days of your youth— before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you will say, “I have no pleasure in them”; 2 before the sun and the light of the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds disappear after the rain; 3 when those who keep watch over the house begin to tremble, and the virile men begin to stoop over, and the grinders begin to cease because they grow few, and those who look through the windows grow dim, 4 and the doors along the street are shut; when the sound of the grinding mill grows low, and one is awakened by the sound of a bird, and all their songs grow faint, 5 and they are afraid of heights and the dangers in the street; the almond blossoms grow white, and the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caper berry shrivels up— because man goes to his eternal home, and the mourners go about in the streets— 6 before the silver cord is removed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the well, or the water wheel is broken at the cistern— 7 and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the life’s breath returns to God who gave it. “ (NET)

glc…These verses refer poetically to decreasing strength in the body. It is good to remember (obey and honor God, trust Jesus for Salvation) God when you are old but it is better to remember God when you are young so you can enjoy his benefits for more of your life!

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Ecclesiastes 12:13,14 “13 Having heard everything, I have reached this conclusion: Fear God and keep his commandments, because this is the whole duty of man. 14 For God will evaluate every deed, including every secret thing, whether good or evil. “ (NET)

glc…When I taught physics I started the class by asking what questions the students had. I should have narrowed this to questions about the current physics topic :) . I had one student who would sometimes ask me at the start of class “What is the meaning of life?” I would summarize this verse to him (and to the class) and then go on with the days’ topic. This student was respectful and did not ask this at every class session. His voice tone was light hearted, not confrontive. I think he would ask the question when the mood hit him. He and the class knew I was a Christian. I put a short paragraph in all of my class syllabi about how I had accepted Jesus as my savior.

Now it is your turn to ask yourself “What is the meaning of life?” The “fear of God” is a respectful awe that motivates a person to try to honor God. Our lives have true meaning when we are living in line with God’s values and purposes. Life is a great gift and it is our responsibility to make good use of this gift. The New Testament teaches that God wants to restore relationship with us through Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins. God is holy and cannot ignore sin. But he has chosen to completely forgive our sins based on Jesus dying in our place. Jesus died to take the punishment for our sin (separation from God) that we might be seen as righteous in God’s eyes. Jesus was temporarily separated from God. God rewarded Jesus for his completion of the task on Earth that God assigned to him. God raised Jesus to life after his death and Jesus now is beside God in heaven. We don’t become acceptable to God by doing good works or living a good life. We are only acceptable to God when God sees that we have personally accepted Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins.