



# STRENGTHENING OUR GRIP

A study of issues especially relevant to the lives and faith of Christian men

## Lesson 5 → Strengthening Your Grip On Aging:

- A. Life is a great journey full of possibilities – The sky's the limit!**
1. Really, our lives are the culmination of the decisions we make and the attitudes we possess. Our life is what we make of it.
  2. But along this journey of endless possibilities there are a few inescapable realities that we all must come to grips with
  3. One of those realities is growing older – Everything that lives is growing older. When we stop growing older, we're dead!
- B. For some people, growing older is something they face with some enthusiasm, for others growing older is something to avoid:**
1. What makes the difference is the attitude we possess in growing older. Our attitude toward ourselves, our lives, God, & others
  2. God intends for our old age to be a time of satisfaction, joy, fruitfulness, and usefulness. But first we must get a grip on it!

## Questions For Class Discussion:

1. Can you think of someone who has faced growing older with the wrong attitude? Describe their attitude and how it impacts their life:
2. In 2 Corinthians 4, Paul deals extensively with his attitude toward his suffering; however these lessons also apply very well to facing old age:
  - 1) Vs 7-12: Describe Paul's attitude toward himself & what he was facing. How did this help him? How does this apply to growing older?
  - 2) Vs. 13-15: As Paul faces his struggles, what was his focus? How can this apply to how we approach growing older?
  - 3) Vs. 16-18: List some keys from here to growing old successfully

## The Reality Of Growing Older

Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, "I have no pleasure in them"; before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain, in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows are dimmed, and the doors on the street are shut--when the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low -- they are afraid also of what is high, and terrors are in the way; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and desire fails, because man is going to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets -- before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity."  
(Ecc. 12:1-8)

“That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John 1:3)



3. There are several attitude that are common among those who struggle to get a grip on old age. What are some specific ways in which people struggle with these especially in facing growing older?

a. Uselessness →

b. Guilt →

c. Self Pity →

d. Fear →

“In the central place of every heart there is a recording chamber; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, and courage, so long are you young. When the wires are all down and your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then, and then only are you grown old.”  
(General Douglas MacArthur – 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday)

4. Psalm 90 deals with the reality of growing older:

a. What principle is verses 1-2 emphasizing? How does realizing this help us deal with growing older?

b. What images does the psalmist employ to convey into our minds the frailty & brevity of life:

c. What does he decide to do in verse 12 to deal with life? What does this mean?

5. One of the greatest examples of a good attitude in facing one’s latter years is seen in Caleb (Josh 14:6-14).

a. What phrase is repeated in this section twice that shows the basis for his outlook on life and for the great success which he had experienced?

b. How did Caleb view these later years of his life? Describe his attitude:

c. What lessons can we learn from Caleb to help us with facing old age triumphantly?

6. What are some special opportunities that are found in growing older which a person can focus on to find usefulness, joy, contentment, and fruitfulness... especially in serving the Lord?

How do I know my youth is all spent?  
Well, my get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went!  
But in spite of it all I'm able to grin when,  
I think of where my get-up-and-go has been...  
I get up each morning, dust off my wits,  
Pick up the paper and read the obits.  
If my name is missing, I know I'm not dead  
So I eat a good breakfast – and go back to bed