

## Chapter 19: The Golden Years Ain't No Time To Quit

### Life Application Verses:

**Proverbs 16: 31.** Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life; **Psalms 71: 18.** And even when *I am* old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to *this* generation, Your power to all who are to come.

**W**e are born, we live, we die. Have you ever heard that saying? I'd like to amend it to something a bit more accurate for Christians: we are born-again, we live a full life as Heavenly Minded, doing Earthly Good, until our hair turns gray and our bodies won't carry us any longer as we would like them to. At some point, God calls His Children to their Eternal Home. Oh, and omt (one more thing): whether we live our lives as Heavenly Minded, doing Earthly Good, or not, if we live to a golden age, we will have gray hair (or bald heads) and we will leave this world. That is a fact! Absolute, assured, and guaranteed! Unless Jesus returns before we leave this world to meet God, we will all go through the process of 'born, lived, and died.' If you are without Jesus Christ as your Savior, your last part of this triad is horrifying. You will meet God, unsaved, and without remedy for your sins. To those of us who have given our lives to Jesus, we will meet God with a reservation in Heaven and our remedy has been paid-in-full by the death, burial, and Glorious resurrection of Christ Jesus.



As my wife and I are getting older, as many of you will also experience, my reading acuity is that the smaller the letters lately, the farther the item gets moved away from my eyes so I can read it. Like the cell phone you see here, only the older generation knows that the dial mechanism is called—that's right, a rotary phone, not a digital phone. Wow! Age has its advantages, but I can't seem to think of any at the moment...now, what was I talking about??? Oh yeah, the weather! No, let's don't talk about the weather, that makes my joints ache. Oh, the joys of getting older! But, *The Golden Years Ain't No Time To Quit!* Period! Maybe slow down; maybe even more naps; but when it comes to the service of our Lord and Savior to reach

others, there ain't no time like the Golden Years to be involved! That's why my wife and I love to keep the grandchildren: they keep us young! And longing for those naps!

The local church we attend has a Followership Ministry in which the concept is that "every member in ministry" is practiced, and as I looked over the list of opportunities, there were some 195 areas of service listed. As I looked at the list, and as I considered my approaching age of retirement, it comes to mind that I have fewer years ahead than behind. And I think about what I have accomplished, what I would like to have accomplished, and where I should serve in this next year at the Church. IN perspective, then, I think that maybe as I am one day going to retire, should I do more, less, or about the same? I think there is an idea that should be espoused at this point: the idea is "show up empty handed." IN other words, when we get to Heaven, let's get there empty handed because we have used up every gift God gave us, we have prayed to our last breath, we have given until our material resources have been properly used up for family and those who were less fortunate, and our pockets are empty when we turn them inside-out because we have held nothing back. Another way to say this: the golden years ain't no time to quit because I believe that if God has given us health, financial resources, our eyesight, hearing, and our health (did I already mention that one?), in Prayer and Guidance from God, we should be as busy for Him in our Golden Years as we have been all our lives—maybe even more so. Maybe??? There ain't no maybe to it!!!

There are so many Lost souls in our neighborhoods, communities, towns, cities, and nation (and world) that there is little time to lose. We may be taking care of grandchildren and aging parents simultaneously (The Sandwich Generation<sup>1</sup>); we might be experiencing health issues; our finances may be at a modicum level to do much; our eyesight might be in decline; our stamina might be lower than 'a snail's belly'; and, we might just be plain tired out from life's demands. It happens! Yet, if we are able, we can Pray. We can study God's Word. We can tell our life experiences to other generations. We can be the best listener that you can imagine, because so many people just want to be listened to as this gives them an outlet to express their heart and who knows—their need for Jesus. There is an old saying, "Give until it hurts." I say, "Give what you can as you can because soon enough we'll leave this place and the legacy we

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/01/30/the-sandwich-generation/>

leave behind is not simply material things, but what we did to change lives for Christ—in our families and communities.” Translate this as follows:

- **IF** I can call someone in the Name of Christ Jesus, I will do it;
- **IF** my financial resources are fixed and the best I can do is to contribute x-amount, then I will do it;
- **IF** my grown child needs comfort or a shoulder to cry on, I will do it;
- **IF** I forget my Source of Love to others and I need to Pray without ceasing for myself, I will do it;
- **IF** my body hurts from pain in my joints and my mind allows me to Praise God in spite of the pain, I will do it;
- **IF** my hair is gray and Grecian Formula will make me look younger and feel better, I will unashamedly do it;
- **IF** I have just turned 80+, can see good, hear good, and drive good, and someone needs me to take them to the doctor or pick up food, in the name of Jesus, I will do it;
- **IF** I have a garage full of new-but unused or valuable old things that I have hoarded for sundry reasons, and I can use these items to help others, and I can donate them to brighten someone’s life, and they are useful items, and I can part with them because I want to show up in Heaven with empty pockets, I will do it;
- **IF** I have experiences in certain areas of life, and I can volunteer to go into the local schools and share my experiences, and I can write for a newsletter group, and I have time to help someone learn to read or write, and I can give back to my community, and I remember that Jesus told us to do this for the ‘least of these’, then I will do it;
- **IF** my grandchild needs me, but I am so tired, and my body hurts, and I need sleep, and I might just fall over at any moment (unless this is a medical issue), then bring that grandchild over and share with them while you have the time, and Pray to God that your ailments and worn-down feeling will abate for you to spend true quality time with that grandchild, then I will do it (and tell them about God and Jesus).
- **IF I AM BUT ABLE TO DO NOTHING BUT PRAY FOR OTHERS IN NEED, AND I CAN REMEMBER THEIR NAMES, AND I AM ABLE TO FALL ON MY KNEES, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT MOVES IN MY SOUL, AND I WANT TO OFFER UP PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN NEED FOR ANY REASON THAT GOD HAD PLACED ON MY HEART...THEN I WILL DO AS GOD ALLOWS ME TO DO FOR MY LORD AND SAVIOR, CHRIST JESUS;**
- Finally, **IF YOU CAN’T THINK OF ANYTHING TO DO, EMAIL ME, I CAN THINK OF SEVERAL THINGS YOU CAN DO—FOR YOURSELF, FOR YOUR GOD, FOR YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS, AND FOR LOST SOULS.**
- **OH...IF I CAN MANAGE IT, I WILL REMAIN ACTIVE IN MY COMMUNITY AND POLITICAL LIFE AND I WILL SUPPORT AND VOTE FOR CANDIDATES THAT REPRESENT MY FAITH AND CANDIDATES WHO SERVE A HOLY GOD.**

Years ago, when my daughter was about 10 or so, she was in her room for some time working on a project. When she came out, she had made a collage of sayings, images, and other items on a large 16x20 size poster paper. It was so amazing that I bought a frame and kept that

poster all these years. As I was working on this chapter, I happened to look over at that wonderful treasure and at the bottom of the poster, she had cut out the following big, bold words from a magazine and pasted them to the poster:

## *gray hair lies* (ain't that the truth—added by author—me)

That was some 25-plus years ago. Yet, it's true! Oh, we will one day get to a point when we can't go anymore, see much, hear good, walk without the worry of falling, and the other ailments that will afflict each and every one of us. Those days are a hard time for children of aging parents as we watch them in decline after decades of vibrant and useful life. I don't know every detail of the Ways of God, but I know God has told us in His Holy Word that for those who fall asleep in Jesus Christ, they will be Saved and that Heaven is a Place where tears do not exist and where pain and old age are no longer our nemesis. While we have time here on Earth, in our Golden Years, let that be a time of Heavenly Mindedness unlike any other in our lives, so that our Earthly Good is more profound than at any other time in our lives. Even in the little things.

Age is no respecter of any person. My wife and I were watching TV recently when we found a Billy Graham Crusade originally telecast in 1991. As Dr. Graham does at all of his crusades, he made sure that everyone in attendance understood that death was no respecter of anyone. The point that we would all one day leave this world was to impart the Truth that every person needed Jesus. Until that time does come—until that appointed day/hour comes to us, we should do what we are able in the 'golden years' to contribute to the Kingdom of God and to serve the Lord Jesus. Gray hair lies—for the most part. In fact, gray hair is more likely to produce: a) experienced and hopefully—wise—people; b) a slower rate of motion, yet it is perpetual if God allows; c) a sage in family matters, provided the person has Trusted in and Lived for God in the years leading up to and during the 'gray hair lies' development process; d) the expense of buying hair color to cover those gray things that look like Santa Clause (if you have a beard) or a head full of that 'gray stuff'; e) the ability to solve all types of problems and

share this wisdom with a host of individuals, including your family and others because you have been through good times, bad times, and learned to rely on God to find sundry solutions to what we think cannot be solved; f) a conversion into 'grandparenthood'; and, g) stuff we didn't count on, like age related forgetfulness, the ability to waddle up from a sofa or recliner, and getting shorter—at the rate of my reduction in height, I'll soon be shorter than a turtle!

There is another saying: "you are only as old as you feel." Duh!!! Who organized that nugget of wisdom for living? I am just kidding (sort of) because when we consider what God had to say about our aging process, we must return to the Life Application Verses: Proverbs 16: 31. "Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life"; Psalms 71: 18. "And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come." A key phrase in these verses—don't miss the value of these verses in their totality—is, "O God, do not forsake me..." IN other words, I am old, O God, but You have not called me home as of this moment in my life; please don't forget me in times of need, pain, failing eyesight, and all that other stuff we so much dread as we age. Or think of it like this: O Lord, make me wise enough to create a Legacy for You in Christ Jesus, for my family—while I have time to do so in my Golden Years—if I have missed the opportunity to realize that this needed to be done before I became old and gray!

As I read about people not being able to retire as they planned, the need for more financial resources to live on, and the political landscape of how seniors are viewed, it grieves my heart to think that I am soon going to be joining the ranks of the 'elderly.' (Please note: I would not have used this word, but I am in that category as an official Senior Citizen now, and elderly is ... well, it is what I am...) But, then again, I can still go and do—maybe not as fast as I could when I was running track some eons ago—but, I need to remember that 'The Golden Years Ain't No Time To Quit.' There is still the need to Study my Bible, Pray, Seek God's Guidance, Help Others, Give Back, Read, Sleep [okay, nap!] (one of our favorites), and do so many other Heavenly Minded things so that at the very least, I can be active in the Earthly Good things of emptying my pockets for the Service of God. I am thinking to myself at this very moment, "I am ONLY as OLD as I FEEL?!" Hmmmmm... Might this have been better suited to be:

"I am only as old as my body allows me to feel?" Okay, Ken, remember Psalm 71:18 & Proverbs 16:31!!! Uh...what was that I was trying to remember? 😊

I hope no one has been offended by my comments about growing old, but as they say, "I resemble that remark." Let me give you one final example: I have a friend that I met in our Leadership Montgomery class. His name is 'Bob' and Bob was 80+ years young some years ago. He works out every day, takes care of his wife and keeps active with his adult children, yet he has time to be involved in community service and is still helping with the *FoodForKids-Mongomery* project we developed in our Leadership Montgomery community team project. He is truly the epitome of 'The Golden Years Ain't No Time To Quit.' We recently attended a community function and he was a dapper gentleman in his pin stripe suit, looking like he had just stepped off the pages of Senior GQ. He is also active in his Church, and he symbolizes and lives Psalm 71:18 & Proverbs 16:31!!! I like Bob and he is a sharp, funny, and kind fellow. If God allows this type of Blessing as we add gray hair, let's be reminded that it is a Blessing to enable us to be Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good – while we can for as long as we can. Amen!

**A Question of Curiosity:**

Retirement is not a time to 'stop out, drop out.' It is a time to give back to yourself, your loved ones, your community, and to your God in Christ Jesus. Have you heard, "Let not the sun go down on your wrath?" I say, that is veritas: I also say, "Let not the sun go down on your gray hair, tired bones, and golden years—without doing all you can as you can—for God." He will add the Grace and Mercy and Strength if you will seek His Will to run the race as fast as our old tired bones will allow! Remember: God does not get old and He will supply our needs. Amen!

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**"Grandparents don't have to be smart, only answer questions like why dogs hate cats and how come God isn't married."** ~ Patsy Gray (Age 9) ~

**"A grandma is old on the outside and young on the inside."** ~ John Wright (Age 7 1/2) ~

**"If wrinkles must be written on our brows, let them not be written upon the heart. The Spirit should never grow old."** ~ J. Garfield ~

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### **My Prayer For You:**

Oh Lord, please don't forget us when we are old and gray hair has come to our body. Whether we are 55 or 95, bless our minds and bodies, that they might be able to Praise You in spite of aches and pains. Remind us that age is not the end of Life, but the Beginning if we are Children of God in Christ Jesus. You have given us the reassurance that at the last breath, we are changed in the twinkling of an eye, and Glory we will see forevermore. If someone is reading this and they are having medical problems, causing them to be disheartened, I pray that You would give them the strength and stamina to overcome these problems. Only You, O God, have answers to the problems we face; even in our golden years, you have answers. I pray that you might provide us with help in times of need and troubles as I know that from Your Throne of Mercy and Grace, Your Storehouse of Healing never runs dry. For those who have parents that need care, meet their needs in a way that demonstrates Your Power and Love for Your children. To those who live to see their parents called to Heaven, give them a measure of Tenderness of Heart to enable them to Remember and Love those parents for all time while we tarry here; for those who are reaching their Golden Years, grant them Wisdom and Guidance as to what needs to be done in their families and for Their God. I would remind my Senior Citizens: "Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life"; "And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come." In the name of Christ Jesus, Amen.

### ***Final Word:***

Here is a Prayer that was part of *The Old Man's Sermon*, by C. H. Spurgeon, September 26, 1875  
(Paraphrased)

If, like David, you have slain the lion and the bear and the Philistine when you were young, up, man, and do another deed of daring, for the Lord liveth still, and His people have need of you. Though your joints are rather rusty and your limbs can hardly bear you to the battlefield, yet limp to the conflict, for the lame take the prey. He who helped you when you were but a youth and ruddy will help you now, though you are old and infirm, who knoweth what you may do yet?! Oh, my honored brethren, revered for your years, show us your metal. Let the young ones see how victories are won... and let us see how he who is washed in the Blood of Jesus would not hesitate to shed his own blood in the Redeemer's cause. Your zeal will stimulate us, your courage nerve us, and we, too, will be valiant for the Lord God of Israel. So may God's Spirit work in you and in us. Amen.

***Continue to the next page for the actual 'final words' – they will be worth turning the page!***

## The Bridge Builder

BY © WILL ALLEN DROMGOOLE

An old man going a lone highway,  
Came, at the evening cold and gray,  
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.  
Through which was flowing a sullen tide  
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,  
The sullen stream had no fear for him;  
But he turned when safe on the other side  
And built a bridge to span the tide.

“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim near,  
“You are wasting your strength with building here;  
Your journey will end with the ending day,  
You never again will pass this way;  
You’ve crossed the chasm, deep and wide,  
Why build this bridge at evening tide?”

The builder lifted his old gray head;  
“Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,  
“There followed after me to-day  
A youth whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm that has been as naught to me  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;  
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

Think of this poem as a legacy-motivator so that we in the older generation might leave for our children or grandchildren a legacy for Christ. Let’s build those bridges that help them have a less bumpy road in life—from financial to Spiritual! There is no time like the present to start building. Remember: GRAY HAIR LIES! All the time! Every day! Age is just a number! For every Senior Citizen out there, GOD BLESS EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!