

RETIREE CONNECTION

Greetings from your friends at Servant Solutions! We are proud to be your partner in ministry - whatever that ministry may look like in your “retirement” years. We want you to know that your contributions are celebrated within our ministry family. You’ve relied on us for many years to help you save and invest and now we stand ready to assist you in retirement. If you should have any questions about your account, please don’t hesitate to contact us!



SIMPLIFICATION: THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF OLDER ADULTS

BY REV. DR. DAVID SEBASTIAN

“Keep it simple” is wisdom for any age, but it becomes the chief developmental task for people fifty-five years of age and older. Pastors and other congregational

leaders will serve older adults well if they keep this stage of development in mind when discipling believers.

The following thoughts are shared out of a question posed to me by a pastor friend. What might older adult discipleship look like in a local congregation? This is my 30,000 feet impression of a context for ministering with older adults.

Family

Seeking harmony in families is a path of wisdom. Fractured relationships within families are one of the greatest regrets in older adulthood. Regarding relationships, St. Paul admonishes, “*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone*” (Romans 12:18).

Our roles change as we move into our older adult years. If we have moved healthily through life, we have come to the point of letting our children go. Ideally, we no longer give directional or financial support to our adult children. Parenting and grandparenting should be less stressful as older adults’ step back and give responsibility to adult children. However, studies show this task of healthy development has not gone so well for many older adults. Many older adults are emotionally and financially supporting adult children. It should be also noted many adult children are supporting their parents.¹

Congregational leaders help us to appreciate our diminishing parental responsibilities and, as needed, assist us in untangling the web of unhealthy family relationships.

Prestige

Many older adults work a lifetime building a reputation in the workplace, home, community, and church. Skills are honed, degrees are pursued, and résumés are developed to leave a legacy of productivity. When retiring, many of those former markers of status are left behind. Many retirees find it difficult to move into the stage of life where “being” replaces “doing.” People become depressed when thinking about how to fill their days with meaning and purpose.

Congregational leaders help us to understand titles and accomplishments are only temporary markers along the way and not trophies to be touted proving personal value and worth.

Simplification of Physicality

Popular culture masks the scientific reality, beginning in the late twenties, our bodies begin to deteriorate and perform less effectively. Instead of embracing physical decline as inevitable, we invent unhealthy slogans, such as, “I am as good as anyone,” or “I am as strong as I ever was.” At each stage of life, we should be mindful of what we put into our bodies. We exercise our bodies appropriately. We participate in service activities aligned with our physical stamina and do not overextend ourselves to impress others.

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WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

FROM JANUARY 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2024

for those celebrating their 50th, 55th, 60th and 60+ years

74th

Billy L & Mardena E. Adams 4/28/1950

73rd

Charles B & Dorothy J Ridgway 1/26/1951

71st

Donald L & Gloria R Collins 1/16/1953
David D & Patsy J Hamlin 6/14/1953
Rolando E & Bernarda B Bacani 6/20/1953
G David Cox & Jeanette P Cox 6/26/1953

70th

Gale & Marelyn Hency 1/1/1954
Carl M & Elizabeth Hazel 4/24/1954

69th

Arley K & Ruby G Cravens 2/4/1955
Ronald E & Jean Williams 6/10/1955
Rodney F & F Ilene Bargerstock 6/11/1955
James Joe R & Doris Daniels 6/17/1955

68th

Georgia E & Robert M. Hall 6/3/1956
Loren C & Elouise C Sutton 6/8/1956
Lovell J & Shirley A Sorrell 6/23/1956

67th

James S & Gerrilee C Moore 4/20/1957
Carl E & Joyce F Phipps 5/19/1957
Norman S & Marjorie A Patton 6/15/1957

66th

Alva S & Gloria R Tilman 4/5/1958
Alfonso F & Tomasa Hernandez 5/20/1958
Gary W & Stella F Ausbun 6/18/1958
Clayton E & Betty L Shriver 6/21/1958
J Benjamin & Marjorie M Chandler 6/22/1958

65th

Wendell G & Donna L Magner 3/1/1959
George W & Naomi L Warson 3/6/1959
Dorcas C & Joseph W Mc Allister 4/3/1959

Charles B & Zona M Gray 6/6/1959
Thomas J & Bernice H Bunting 6/7/1959
Johnny W & Deloris L Myers 6/30/1959

64th

Leslie E & Martha S Lanham 1/22/1960
Mary M & Albert G Ross 3/12/1960
Michael D & Patricia L Conley 4/17/1960
Kresten & Lenora Rae Norholm 6/10/1960
David L & Shirley S Coolidge 6/11/1960

63rd

Thomas H & Caroline A Pelt 3/12/1961
Paul J & Gail L Smith 3/22/1961
Joseph L & Linda N. Downs 6/1/1961
James L & Judith Powell 6/9/1961
Harriet J & Robert J Whipple 6/24/1961
Dennis V & Patricia L Tyler 6/25/1961

62nd

James D & Donna Walls 6/16/1962
Donald E & Mary M Talley 6/17/1962
Acy J & Joyce Gibson 6/29/1962
Robert L & Shirley A Domokos 6/30/1962

61st

M Arleen & George N. Jr. Atkin 1/12/1963
Donald E & Delores M Unsell 1/19/1963
Laura June & Stephen E Mc Cart 1/25/1963
Judith K & Vernon W Witte 1/26/1963
John H & Jane A Silvey 2/10/1963
Carol B & Melvin J Robinson 2/14/1963
Benjamin F & Sylvia A Ellis Jr 4/6/1963
Patrick A & Patricia O'Brien 4/27/1963
Isaac C & Lela Turner 5/18/1963
Larry E & Grace S Bashaw 6/1/1963
Michael J & Anna R Bailey 6/8/1963
Franklin D Vaughn & Marilyn J Vaughn 6/8/1963
Gary G & Beverly A Swogger 6/15/1963

60th

Fredrick C & Carolyn A Bays 1/4/1964
Barbara J & Floyd M Hickerson 1/18/1964
Virginia & Bradley J Ohm 1/26/1964

Charles G & Peggie J Shrewsbury 5/8/1964
Robert W & Sharon K Moody 6/13/1964
John L & Dixie C Crose 6/14/1964
James Lee & Deanna K Edwards 6/20/1964

55th

Dennis R & Nancy L Cole 1/25/1969
Myron E & Zola T Noble 3/2/1969
Donald C & Darlene L Coleman 4/19/1969
Robert W & Kathy L Henderson 4/19/1969
Chauncey Dale & Helen M Robbins 4/19/1969
James O & N Jean Morehead 4/28/1969
Michael C & Barbara J Hurdman 5/3/1969
James R & Connie S Conn 5/16/1969
Karvin A & Sandra L Adams 5/31/1969
Larry C & Bonnie Taylor 6/7/1969
Ronald E & Dana Kruse 6/9/1969
Sandra A & Steven Hildebrand 6/10/1969
J Steven & Marilyn Mc Coy 6/14/1969
Valdin R & Joellen Bender 6/20/1969
Duane & Joyce A. Houser 6/21/1969

50th

Gary T & Arlene Glatthar 1/5/1974
Jerry W & Debra E Salisbury 2/1/1974
Miguel & Ana Rosa Venegas Garcia 2/12/1974
Lawrence J & Patricia A Dodge 2/16/1974
Leroy & Beatrice L Harris 2/23/1974
Randy E & Sandra L Irwin 3/23/1974
Robert E & Barbara Kesselher 3/28/1974
David E & Helen A Andrews 4/6/1974
Lois C & Stephen G Venanzi 4/6/1974
C Mark & Sheila L Higdon 4/26/1974
Robert K & Cheryl R. Cohee 5/10/1974
Robert E & Sharon K Coulter 5/10/1974
William J & Margaret L Gilfillan 5/25/1974
Susanne & Doug J Kohutek 5/25/1974
Mearl W & Marilyn Wolf 5/25/1974
Dean W & Susan K. Meyer 6/1/1974
Wade W & Jeanette P Brower 6/14/1974
Emily A & Douglas A Baber 6/22/1974
Roger L & Wanda L Clark 6/30/1974

Please let us know of any major or minor changes to your account, such as death of your spouse, change of address, or change of banking information. Our contact information is on the first page of this newsletter or you can send a note to Servant Solutions, P.O. Box 2559, Anderson, IN 46018

SIMPLIFICATION, continued from page 1

Congregational leaders help us to be mindful of our physical realities by providing healthy options for fellowship, service, and worship.

Simplification of Finances

The older adult years typically show a diminished income. Instead of having a modestly growing income, allowing for savings set aside for retirement, now older adults adjust to living on their savings and investments. This is an adjustment to a new reality often evoking the fear of, “Will I have enough?” If people have planned wisely, most adults should have a diminished but adequate income for their life expectancy. The problem is many older adults, for one reason or the other, cannot maintain their income because they are forced to retire. Generosity to benevolent causes in older adult years may come in the form of estate planning rather than percentage giving from social security and pension funds. Scripture reminds us, *“For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (1 Timothy 6:7).*

Congregational leaders help us to embrace generosity by providing retirement and estate planning prior to retirement years and sound financial guidance during our diminished years of earning capacity.

Simplification of Character

Character has often been defined as who you are when no one is looking. Many people spend a lifetime trying to become what they think others want them to be. In emotionally healthy older adulthood, there is the possibility of shedding this burdensome mantle of doing what others think and simply enjoying the freedom of being oneself. In moving to the later stage of life there is a shift from doing to being. Guilt no longer becomes the motivating factor in discipleship. Mature adults begin to evaluate time, talent, and treasure by what brings them joy. Out of an abundance of joy—not duty—older adults live out their golden years.

Congregational leaders help us to move from bitterness and vain regrets of unfulfilled expectation to the joy of living in the grace and benediction of the triune God.

Simplification of Spiritually

“In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, “This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, because you will die; you will not recover” (2 Kings 20:1–2).

A couple of years ago, my four-year-old granddaughter stared at my face and said, “Grandpa, you are old. You are going to die.” Through her young eyes she saw something many older adults fail or refuse to see—we are going to die.

Playwright Woody Allen once said, “I don’t fear death. I just don’t want to be there when it happens.”

To get your house in order is to understand the importance of arranging affairs, by solving complex problems, to embrace simplicity and the peace it brings. By nature, we are creatures of procrastination. But spiritual maturity is to embrace every season of life. Part of life is to prepare for death.

Planning for life’s end allows disciples of Christ the freedom to decide and there is power in a decision. Older adults need to make funeral arrangements, establish a last will and testament, execute a durable power of attorney, create a living will declaration, and provide designation of a health care representative.

While older adulthood is not typically a fertile field for evangelism, we are still called to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed.

Christian discipleship in older adult years helps believers to think through their theology regarding eternity. Before senescence becomes a reality, older adults need to be mindful of the meaning of eternal life, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection, the final judgement, heaven, and hell. These themes help older adults approach the future with hope rather than fear. Simplifying spirituality enables older adults to focus on eternity. *“And now these three things remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love” (2 Corinthians 13:13).*

Congregational leaders help us to prepare adequately for the things we will leave behind and to embrace with simple hope the things that last forever.

EPILOGUE: ON GROWING OLDER

As we think about becoming old it is not always what we thought or have been told. The mind can encourage us to believe youthful attainments must still be achieved. Wisdom is heeding the body’s complaints, not merely living without restraints. And with thoughtful reflection, the mind is emboldened, to remind us the past was not always so golden. Accepting a future with some limitation need not produce fear or intimidation. For aging is neither weakness nor lack, provided we move forward and do not shrink back. Faithful living demands our best and does not allow on our laurels to rest. So, when life’s journey ends, we will welcome God’s compliment, “Well done, my friends.”

Rev. Dr. David L. Sebastian is Dean Emeritus of Anderson University School of Theology and Christian Ministries where he served from 1995 to 2014. He has been a senior pastor at North Hills Church of God in Phoenix, Arizona, and Salem Church of God in Dayton, Ohio.

Servant Solutions
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DECEASED

(REPORTED TO US JUNE 2023 THROUGH DECEMBER 2023)

Aldridge, Charles M	66	Holston, Manuel	83	Olson, Carol	94	Wrightsmann, Susan	92
Brandon, Normarie	86	Hooker, Jennie	90	Petroff, Donald	85	Yerden, Frank	74
Brunson, Joan	86	Howland, Ronnie W	89	Pitts, Stephen	68		
Clayton, Neil	46	Hyslip, Agnes Alene	94	Ramsey, Carl	93		
Davis, Samuel	82	Jackson, Ruth Ann	77	Reinholz, Patricia	91		
Farrar, Robert	62	Kufeldt, Doris M	89	Shriner, Joyce	95		
Fraley, Elsie	92	Lee, James H	93	Scoff, Henry	71		
Franco, Israel	64	LeMay, Albert	85	Slack, Roger	85		
Fulda, William K	76	Lewis, Dale E	93	Snyder, Debra	65		
Grannum, Hyacinth	80	Mamaloff, Evelyn	99	Tarr, Betty	88		
Greer, Annie V	88	Massey, Gwendolyn	93	Thomas, Donna S	95		
Grubbs, Dwight	90	McBrayer, Jack	89	Tira, Joseph	72		
Harden, Ronnie Sr	57	Miller, Ursula	91	Voelker, Janet	79		
Harrell, Nancy	64	Molihan, Max	83	Watson Sr., William	79		
Harrington, Sam	96	Myers, Lois	82	Whalon, Patsy J	95		
Hoffman, Stanley	91	Neace, Robert L.	91	Wood, Loretta J	90		

ONE THING

I ASK FROM THE LORD,
THIS ONLY DO I SEEK:
THAT I MAY DWELL IN THE
HOUSE OF THE LORD ALL THE
DAYS OF MY LIFE, TO GAZE ON
THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD
AND TO SEEK HIM
IN HIS TEMPLE.

PSALM | 27:4

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