

View

It's Terrible to Grow Old

BY GENE TAYLOR

Did the title of this page get your attention? I hope so. That is why I put it there. I want everyone, especially the young, to read this article because the sentiment expressed above is what our



society in general thinks. You don't think that is the case? Ask Don Shula.

The winningest coach in NFL history "retired" the day after his 66th birthday. Yes, he was given the option to retire rather than being fired so he could at least maintain some sense of dignity. After devoting most of his life to football, because he was aging, it was said of him "the game has passed him by" and "we need an infusion of youth into this organization." He is not the first one to be adversely affected by aging. I doubt he will be the last.

One of the greatest horrors in our society is to grow old. In our youth-oriented culture it is embarrassing, if not downright shameful, to be old. Such an emphasis on youth causes people to spend millions of dollars to retain their youthful appearance and to buy into such philosophies as "You're only as old as you feel," hoping that others will think they are young.

The church of Christ

Meeting at 900 E. Natoma
PO Box 492
Folsom, CA 95630

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Evangelist/Editor

David Posey: 530/676-9514
dpaulposey@mac.com

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9:30 AM

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It's Terrible to Get Old

Corporations, with no compassion for the individual, no sense of loyalty for years of dedicated service, and no appreciation for experience, permanently lay off older workers and replace them with younger ones who will cost them a lot less.

I am saddened when I see this attitude in the world. I am horrified when I see it in the church in some places.

Sometimes, instead of being utilized for their knowledge and experience, those who are older are looked upon as being out of date and not useful to the Lord's work. Sometimes preachers, as they age, find it difficult to locate with a congregation because the people want someone who "can relate to the young people."

How different this attitude is from what God would have it to be. Psalm 92:12-15 states,

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree:

He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

They are planted in the house of Jehovah;

They shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age;

They shall be full of sap and green:

To show that Jehovah is upright;

He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

God, in His wisdom, knew that age was necessary to be that full, mature individual who could properly serve as an overseer in the local church. 1 Timothy 3:6 states that one who would serve in that capacity must be "not a novice." Titus 1:6 says he must be old enough to

have "believing children." Also, one designation of his office is "elder" (Phil. 1:1), implying age. God has also seen the usefulness of "older women"— they are to instruct the younger women (Titus 2:3-5).

The Lord realized that age was needed for one to be wise enough to effectively lead His

people. Wisdom, based on knowledge and experience, is a vital asset for good leadership. While those who are young may possess great knowledge, they do not have sufficient experience to make them wise. One of the greatest resources our country and the church have is older people. They are useful and necessary and ought to be appreciated. May we always show them proper respect. May we utilize them for their wisdom. And may they

have the same sentiment expressed by the Psalmist in Psalm 71:18: "Yea, even when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, Until I have declared thy strength unto the next generation, Thy might to every one that is to come."

VIA CHARLOTTESVILLE BEACON

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