

“Hope for Caregivers of the Elderly”

Women Counseling Women: Biblical Answers to Life’s Difficult Problems

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“As much as we enjoy sunsets, they mark the passing of another day.”

Age is a funny thing. It happens so slowly that it goes mostly unnoticed, until one day you look in the mirror or look in the face of your parent and it hits you, “we are aging.”

Day after day our lives are passing away; we’re like a “mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes” (James 4:14).

For the caregiver, eldercare usually takes place in the “afternoon” of life.

Common emotions and heart responses of caring for an elderly loved one:

*sorrow-It’s hard to see our parents age.

*fear- “Where is the money going to come from?”

*isolation-“I never have time to see anyone except Mom and Dad these days.”

*anger/frustration “Why don’t they do it my way?”

*exhaustion-“I need a break. When is life going to be normal again?”

These are common emotions and responses and we don’t want to discredit the difficulty and the strain that caring for an elderly loved one takes on a person.

However, eldercare is a very important calling, and even a privilege.

In caring for aging loved ones, you become, in effect, an integral part of the process of ushering these dear ones into heaven and trusting the Lord to complete what He has begun. “I am sure of this, that He who begun a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6)

The Honor of Aging

Proverbs 16:31 “Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.”

Psalms 92:14 “They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green.”

Honor is shown to a deserving person through special treatment, attention, and cooperation.

Hope when storm clouds loom

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10-11)

It is our honor to be considered worthy to do eldercare.

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful, putting me into service” (1 Tim 1:12)

What a great ministry to serve someone on their way out of this life.

The Humility Required of the Caregiver

God is glorified when we accomplish His will in the difficult tasks we face and we demonstrate that the humble nature of Christ is dwelling in us.

Seeing the Elderly with New Eyes

See them for the age that they are.

Suggestions:

Show Compassion-We are givers of care, not just custodians of bodies.

Listen-Each person has a history.

Share-Include them in your world.

Laugh and be joyful-Do not take things too seriously.

Touch-Sometimes this is the only way of communicating.

Speak gently-Talk with them, not at them. Appreciate them and express it.

Choose battles wisely-be "eager to maintain a spirit of unity in the bond of peace"

Read to them- Read the psalms or books of heaven together.

Pray for them and with them-Go the Lord together or on their behalf for strength and mercy.

Ministering to the True Needs

As you guide and help the elderly, point out that growing old and becoming frail is challenging but has a spiritual purpose.

God has made His children frail "to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Cor 4:7)

God is preparing His own to meet Him.

Trusting God's Sovereignty

God has overseen the details of this frail person's life for many years, He will not stop now. It is not all up to you. Find God in His Word. He's waiting there to comfort, to love, and to walk with you on this sometimes uncertain and lonely path.