

Aging Gracefully, Part 2

Last month in this space I broached the subject of aging gracefully. *Aging gracefully is a work of the indwelling Spirit as we walk with and listen to the Lord Jesus under the benevolent gaze of the Father.* It happens by abiding with the Lord through our elder years.

I shared eight questions that have become helpful to me in gauging whether or not that abiding is taking place. Here are eight more to consider with some Scripture references for reflection. I'll start the numbering where I left off last time. (Again, credit to Richard Rohr, Arthur Brooks and others for shaping my thinking on this subject of the elder journey.)

9. Am I learning to live happily with mystery and paradox (i.e., things I don't understand or can't easily explain) under the bright Light of Jesus? (1 Corinthians 13:12; John 8:12, 1:5)

10. Am I withdrawing my energy from foolish people and foolish matters rather than fighting them directly? (2 Timothy 2:23-24; Proverbs 12:16)

11. Are the qualities of the Beatitudes increasingly characterizing my daily life? (Matthew 5:3-12)

12. Am I learning to be content with now, living mindfully and gratefully in the present moment? (1 Timothy 6:6-8; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

13. Am I more aware of and forthcoming about my hidden faults and negative attributes such that they have less power over me and I have less urge to pretend? (Matthew 7:5; 1 John 1:8-9)

14. Am I enjoying prayerful, contemplative solitude more? (Luke 5:15-16; Isaiah 30:15; Psalm 46:10-11)

15. Is my thinking becoming less competitive, either-or and me-centered, and more collaborative, both-and and other-centered? (Philippians 2:1-5; Mark 10:35-37, 41-45)

16. Am I seeing and encouraging the goodness in others more often? (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 4:36, 9:26-28, 15:37-39)

I'm sure these sixteen questions are not an exhaustive list of what's involved in aging gracefully, but they'll keep me plenty busy. The bottom line is this: If I die as an old man (and it's probably getting too late to die as anything else), I'd like to know I lived an eldership worth emulating. I'd like to know I aged in a way that brought honor to the Lord and blessed others. May it be, Lord Jesus, may it be.