

Weekly Newsletter: 23rd July 2024

Reflection: Fading with Age

By Barbara Harper (the full article is [here](#))

I remember sometime in my youth talking with an elderly person and noting that not only was his hair very white, but his skin was pale almost to the point of being white as well. Even his eyes seemed faded. I wondered, "Is that what happens when you get old? Do you just . . . fade away?"

Now that I'm nearer the category of "old," I've learned that not everyone gets paler as they age. And no one ages in quite the same way: we've known people well into their eighties who travelled internationally as public speakers and even got married.

But it does seem we fade a bit in many ways. Win Couchman called it "[The Grace to Be Diminished.](#)"

First, energy decreases. We may not be able to do all we once did. We can't push ourselves like we used to. Physical issues of various forms may creep up. We can lose our jobs and ministries as we retire. We lose our independence as we have to give up our car keys and may not be able to live alone any more. We lose our dignity as someone else has to feed and change us. And eventually, we lose life itself.

That would all sound pretty dreary if that were the end of things.

But we were told that life would be fleeting. *"What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes"* (James 4:14). *"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle"* (Job 7:6). *"The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away"* (Psalm 90:10). *"We all do fade as a leaf"* (Isaiah 64:6, KJV).

A radio preacher said one reason our bodies start falling apart as we get older is to encourage us to let loose of them. We need the reminder that this life is not forever. C. S. Lewis said in *The Problem of Pain*, "Our Father refreshes us on the journey with some pleasant inns, but will not encourage us to mistake them for home." "For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come" (Hebrews 13:14). This world, as the old song says, is not our ultimate home. Our transitions as we age help prepare us for our true home.

Does that mean when we reach a certain age, we just sit in our rocking chairs and wait to die? By no means. Elisabeth Elliot has said that our limitations don't hinder our ministry; they define our ministry. We may not be able to coordinate Vacation Bible School for 100 children any more (if you can, go for it!) But we can pray with the psalmist, *"O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So*

even to old age and grey hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come” (Psalm 71:17-18).

How we proclaim His might and wondrous deeds may vary. We might be able to teach a class, write a book, or speak to groups. However, I’ve often thought that when Paul told older men and women to teach the younger, he probably didn’t have classes and retreats in mind. There’s nothing wrong with those; I have been blessed by many of them. But they probably weren’t done in Bible times. I think he probably had in mind interaction in the everyday course of life.

Godly women have influenced my life in just that way. One family had me over frequently as a teenager who came to church alone. I don’t think the wife of the family thought of me as a “project.” She was just being hospitable. Yet visiting their family and seeing her interact as a wife, mother, and homemaker was instructive for me.

We don’t have to approach our old age with dread.

- **God has promised to take care of us:** *“Even to your old age I am he, and to grey hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save” (Isaiah 46:4).*
- **He has promised our fruitfulness:** *“They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him” (Psalm 92:14-15).*
- **He has promised a bright future to those who know Him.** *“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).*

As we look back at His faithfulness all our lives, we can trust Him for the future.

Summer Appeal 2024



The banner for the Summer Appeal 2024 features the Holyrood Evangelical Church logo on the left. It includes a central photo of a family and portraits of three missionaries: Hannu & Hazel Sorsamo (Finland), Lorna Ferguson (Japan), and James Stewart (Singapore). The text on the banner reads: "Summer Appeal 2024", "Hannu & Hazel Sorsamo Finland", "Lorna Ferguson Japan", "James Stewart Singapore", and "To contribute please use the bank details on holyroodevangelical.org (use reference 'Summer Appeal'), send a cheque to our treasurer, Nick Archer, or speak to your elder."

and please use the reference 'Summer Appeal'.

The **current total is £11,632**. Thank you to everyone for their generosity and the appeal will be open until Sunday 18th August.

Our summer appeal goes towards the support of our three overseas missionaries – the Sorsamo family in Finland, Lorna in Japan and James in Singapore.

The church bank details can be found [here](#)

Cheques (made payable to Holyrood Evangelical Church) and cash in an envelope marked 'Summer Appeal' can also be placed in the offering box or given to Nick Archer.

Join SASRA in Edinburgh - Saturday 27th July

On Saturday 27th July at 6.30pm for 7pm, Scripture Readers together with HQ staff, will be sharing about their work 'behind the wire'. There will also be an opportunity to meet some new Scripture Readers, as well as to hear about their evangelistic outreach to performers of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Location: Ferniehill Evangelical Church, Edinburgh, EH17 7AA

An Evening with Josh Garrels – Wednesday 7th August



Grace Church Leith are hosting Christian musician Josh Garrels for his first ever Scottish concert on Wednesday 7th August at 7pm.

Tickets are available [here](#) and speak to Alex MacDonald for more details.

Act Like Men – Tuesday 20th August

Hope Church Bingham are hosting an Act Like Men event on **Tuesday 20th August from 7-8.30pm**. Ian Hamilton is speaking on Walking With God and these the events are to encourage men to live for King Jesus in Edinburgh and beyond.

Scottish Women's Bible Convention – Saturday 5th October

The Scottish Women's Bible Convention is back! This year Caroline West will be teaching on the topic of rest from Matthew 11. Come along to Charlotte Chapel on Saturday 5th October from 10am to 3pm. Bring your own lunch!

The aim of the day is to provide faithful Bible teaching by women for women with the Lord Jesus as our focus. For tickets go [here](#) and speak to Liz for more details.



Church Calendar

For your info and prayers:

- Wednesday: Prayer meeting in person at 7pm (and on Zoom). Catherine Brown will be speaking.
- Sunday: Worship Services at 10.30am and 6pm (and livestreamed). Joe Barnard preaching



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