



SENIOR ADULTS MINISTRIES
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
SUNDAY SCHOOL AND DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES



**"Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect
for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD."
Leviticus 19:32**



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The following lessons are not so much for senior adults as they are for those who minister to, live with, or interact with senior adults.

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INTRODUCTION:

The Church of the Nazarene through the SDMI department considers it important to provide educational lessons for all ages from birth through old age. Everyone has an important place, and we are committed to providing them with the necessary spiritual food and fulfilling the mandate of Christ: “Jesus replied, ‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’” (Matthew 14:16)

This is why we see it as important to provide lessons for senior adults, knowing that they pour a wealth of experiences, through their contributions and experiences, into the church and all around them.

It’s also extremely important to include them in the special task of interceding for the congregation, because they have more time to be alone with God through prayer.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

What age are we talking about when we speak of Senior Adults?

Senior Adults, also known as “the elderly,” “Senior Citizens,” etc. begins anywhere from 55-65 years of age.

According to EL HERALDO, experts consider that non-chronological factors also affect the determination of whether one has entered into old age / senior adulthood.

What does it mean to reach senior adulthood? Who is said to be old?

The United Nations (UN) recognizes people who have lived 60 years or more as senior adults. When they reach 75 years of age, the World Health Organization (WHO) calls them old or elderly.

Are there ages that are not based on chronological aging, often related to the role of individuals in the labor market? Perhaps you have seen 50-year-old men with the appearance of an older man, or women over 70 who don’t appear to have the age that appears on their ID. Many factors determine aging influence. But the average age for senior adults is 60 years and up.

The following lessons are applied for senior adults, or in some cases those who work and interact with senior adults, with regard to placing a greater emphasis on prayer.

By Rev. Evilanda Solís de Cruz

LESSON 1

THEME: THE FAITH AND PRAYERS OF SENIOR ADULTS

TEXT: JAMES 5:13-16

INTRODUCTION:

The Apostle James is exhorting us today about our behavior in the face of affliction or problems. The supreme duty of an older adult in all circumstances is prayer. James declares to us that prayer is the only requirement to give us integral health.

What are the benefits of prayer?

I. PRAYER CAN RESTORE THE AFFLICTED. (V. 13)

- a) The word “afflicted” in Greek is "kakopatheo," which means to suffer anguish, i.e., physical, mental, emotional, financial and even spiritual. In other words, affliction. As seniors, we can experience all these same symptoms that the youngest feel in daily living.
- b) Jesus mentioned in John 16:33, "In this world you will have trouble (affliction). But take heart! I have overcome the world." Even though we are still exposed to all circumstances that arise in the course of life, Jesus is with us as our overcomer!
- c) In all this, there is a joyful peace, because victory is in Christ. James remembers those who are afflicted: pray! This is an order and the recipe for success: Prayer, as the first response to any illness or problem.

II. PRAYER RESTORES THOSE WHO ARE SICK (V. 15)

In general, seniors are vulnerable to diseases, but today James advises the following:

- a) In the face of illness of any kind, the answer is the same: "The prayer of faith will heal the sick." The word "sick" comes from the Greek word “Astheneo” meaning “to be without strength, weakened.” James advises us to call the church to pray for us. We are not to suffer alone. We are to pray for and support those who are ill, regardless of their age. We as seniors must be on both sides of this – as pray-ers and as pray-ees, as supporters and supotees.
- b) James continues in v. 15, “the Lord will raise them up.” The idea here is to save and restore. Jesus will raise us up, physically, emotionally, and

spiritually. Jesus states in Matthew 9:2, "Have encouragement, your faith has saved you."

- c) And finally in V. 15, James states that Jesus will complete his work, not only physical restoration, but also spiritual restoration: "They will be forgiven." We are never too far away, too sick, too bad, too anything to keep Jesus from forgiving us!

III. PRAYER RESTORES THOSE WHO ARE WEAKENED BY SIN (V. 16)

- a) This refers to those who are experiencing spiritual decline.
- b) The Greek word "Athenaeus" is also interpreted as "ailment." This is the proper way to describe a spiritual illness. Matthew 4:23, Hebrews 12: 12-13 "Raise up your hands ..."
- c) Prayer brings about recovery in both areas: physical and spiritual. We are to pray for ourselves as we are experiencing spiritual illness. We are to pray for others who are experiencing spiritual illness. "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

CONCLUSION:

The work of grace for the senior in a crisis of anguish, decay or weakness is: PRAYER! For the downcast, fallen, and without strength, there is a promise of forgiveness and restoration through the prayer and support of the church.

To strengthen seniors through prayer, it is necessary that there be a Prayer and Visitation Committee that supports them, helps them, and even restores them.

LESSON 2

THEME: THE TESTING AND PERSEVERANCE OF SENIOR ADULTS

TEXT: JAMES 1:1-4

INTRODUCTION:

Jewish Christians suffered persecution and exile from their own nation to follow Jesus. Like Stephen and others, they suffered and were martyred.

In these verses, James, the half-brother of Jesus, while guided by the Holy Spirit, gives wise counsel to each senior adult in his or her Christian pilgrimage, and He advises the following:

I. HAVE GREAT JOY (V. 2)

- a) The Greek word for "have" is interpreted as "to consider or to evaluate."
- b) The natural human reaction of seniors, or of all people for that matter, in the midst of trials is not to rejoice but to complain and become discouraged. But it is here that James advises us to face trials with responsibility without losing the joy of salvation of being a child of God.
- c) The test that comes to the lives of seniors should be used to examine the strength that they experience from the Lord. This test produces patience (v.30). The word "patience" is translated as "resistance or perseverance." Senior adults must resist with tenacity the pressure of the test until God removes it in the assigned time. In doing so, we will see the benefits obtained in that process. In 2 Corinthians 12:10 we read, "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

What are the results of having great joy?

II. PERFECTION AND COMPLETION (V.4)

- a) Perfection is to reach spiritual maturity.
- b) The perfection of faith enables the believer to have a deeper communion with God and a greater trust in Christ; qualities that in turn produce a stable, devout and righteous character. "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast" (1 Peter 5:10).

- c) "Completion" is a word in Greek whose meaning is: "All the parts united as a whole" (Complete). "And in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority" (Colossians 2:10).
- d) Completion is related to plenitude and fullness. God did a complete work through his salvation. It was a seal of belonging. That's why God wants to complete his work in each of us so that we will be perfect and complete.

CONCLUSION:

Brothers and sisters, have great joy, patience, and perseverance in the midst of life's trials. In doing so, you will be made complete and perfect. Then ask with faith, not doubting, with a confident hope in the Sovereign God that supplies your needs; then he will achieve victory for you in the midst of the test.

LESSON 3

THEME: CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY - PRAYER

TEXT: COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

INTRODUCTION

This letter is addressed to the Saints, or believers, in Colossae ... and to us (1:1-2). Paul was upset because the church was getting into the false doctrine of the Gnostics and the philosophers. For that reason, it was imperative for the Christians to remain in prayer. These verses in Chapter 4, verses 2-6 reveal our Christian duties:

Persevere in prayer, with thanksgiving:

1. Intercessory prayer: for those who preach the Word
2. As your Personal Duty: Live wisely
3. As your Social Duty: Reflect Christ in our interactions with others

I. **PERSEVER IN PRAYER (V.2)**

The Greek interpretation of "Devote yourselves" is "to be persistent with courage or to cling and not to let go." (Also Romans 12:12 - "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.") It is an imperative ... there is no option. If Jesus being God incarnate prayed personally and collectively, the more we believers need this means of grace.

- II. **BEING WATCHFUL** means to always be alert. Prayer must be persistent and vigilant; this needs to become a way of life.

Paul was in prison. He desperately wanted to be at the church in Colossae that was unprotected to help prevent it from falling. The Colossians needed, and we need, constant prayer to be protected from the darts of the evil one.

- III. **THANKFUL:** The word "thankful" is one of the values that the Christian must possess. It characterizes a life filled with the Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- IV. **INTERCESSORY PRAYER:** The apostle Paul was imprisoned. He wanted to be out of prison to continue carrying the saving message. He needed intercessory prayer for Him and for the church
- V. **PERSONAL DUTY:** Live wisely (vs. 5). The Christian must live in such a way that his faith is reflected in all that he does. (See also Ephesians 5:15-17.) In other words, live with great care and wisdom, living a holy life.

VI. **SOCIAL DUTY:** (v.6) Speak words of grace that reflect the Lord, seasoned with salt, be known as Christlike by what we say and how we speak.

CONCLUSION:

The times in which we are living are difficult and we need the help of the Lord. We can only live faithfully by being watchful and thankful, praying for others, living wisely, speaking words of grace, and covering all with the special ingredient of prayer.

LESSON 4

THEME: EFFORT AND COURAGE TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S BLESSINGS

TEXT: JOSHUA 1:1-9

INTRODUCTION:

The book of Joshua teaches the fulfillment of the promises that God had made to bless Israel. These blessings depended on the attitude of the people. And today, God's blessings continue to depend on people's attitude and obedience to Him to open the windows of His blessing. In this lesson, we'll learn that God gives three commands and three promises to Joshua ... and to us.

I. GET UP AND CROSS THE JORDAN RIVER (V.2)

- a) To get up means to prepare for action ... for doing something ... for moving forward.
- b) For our time, there is also the promise and the blessing. What should we do? How do we prepare? Get up and enter the throne of grace. Psalm 100 tells us that it starts with praise to the Almighty One who has blessed us and will continue blessing us.

II. TAKE POSSESSION OF THE LAND (vs. 3-5)

- a) Canaan was extensive, the promised land was so large. This means that the blessings of the Lord are immense.
- b) We must take possession of the promises that He offers us today.
- c) No one will be able to stand against you to prevent you from taking possession of God's blessings. In verse 5, the three phrases "I will be with you," "I will not leave you," and "I will not forsake you" are three ways to emphasize and say the same thing in the Hebrew language. To ensure the presence of God, the "Shekinah" was always present: a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to light the way so that Psalm 121:6 was fulfilled for them, "the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night." How precious it is to be in constant communion with God. God's presence is with you ... ALWAYS!

III. BE BRAVE AND MEDITATE ON THE LAW OF GOD (vs. 6-9)

- a) Be brave. The Hebrew term used is "shazag" which means: to be strong, courageous, firm and fortified. Three times God tells Joshua to be brave (verses 6, 7 and 9).
- b) Meditate on the law of God. There is no other bread that nourishes and sustains the human being in such a spiritual way, to remain standing, firm and strong.
- c) Do not move away or depart from the Word of God. Joshua would be victorious if he remained firm in obeying the law and meditating on the Word.

CONCLUSION:

The text ends with the words "wherever you go." The limit of God does not exist. He has all ... He has power over all ... He has no limitations on what He can do or how He can bless. But God gave Joshua then, and us today, some conditions for receiving His promises and blessings:

- Give your best effort.
- Be strong and courageous.
- Don't be paralyzed by fear.
- Don't allow yourself to get discouraged.
- Don't deviate, move away from, ignore, or depart from the Word.
- Meditate day and night on the Word of God

All this can be achieved through constant prayer.

God's promise is: "I will be with you."

LESSON 5

THEME: LET'S GO TO GETHSEMANE

TEXT: LUKE 22:44-45

INTRODUCTION:

This passage shows us the full humanity of Jesus Christ. Without losing his divinity, in his heart he felt anguish, pain and suffering as the hour approached to bear the sins of humanity as the sacrificial lamb.

Formerly, a clean and pure animal was sacrificed to atone for the sin committed. The penitent had to put his hands on the animal while it was slaughtered to sprinkle its blood.

This time it was not an animal, but Christ himself who was the lamb of God, given to remove the sin of the world. This is what John the Baptist spoke of in John 1:29.

These verses give us two teachings for senior adults today:

I. THE DIVINE SACRIFICE PROVIDED SALVATION FOR ALL OF HUMANITY

When Jesus is called the Lamb of God, it is in reference to Him being the perfect and ultimate sacrifice for sin. In order to understand who Christ is and what He did, we must begin with the Old Testament. In Isaiah 53:10, we see prophecies concerning the coming of Christ as an "offering for sin." In fact, the sacrificial system established by God in the Old Testament served as the basis for the coming of Jesus Christ, who is the perfect sacrifice that God would provide as an atonement for the sins of His people. This prophecy was fulfilled according to Hebrews 10:10,12.

II. LET'S GO TO GETHSEMANE (vs. 44-45)

- a) **What does Gethsemane mean?** Gethsemane means "oil press." That's where the oil was taken from the olive trees. And according to what we read in Romans 11:17, it is where the last drop of blood was taken from that natural olive tree, Jesus Christ, who gave the best of Himself at Gethsemane.
- b) **What did Jesus do at Gethsemane?** It was there that he surrendered his will and likewise his life to be crucified later on Golgotha. In fact, it was there that he gave his life. Each time someone surrenders his will, he gives his life to acquire the life of God. Each one of us will have to go through

our own Gethsemane, which will be to purify our soul and take us to a higher level.

- c) **What other interpretation does Gethsemane have?** Here we see a situation lived and experienced by Jesus, the most crucial that ever took place here on earth. He was in one of his favorite places to meet the Father. Gethsemane was an orchard that is part of the Mount of Olives. Scripture tells us that Jesus spent a lot of time in this place. That night, Jesus "went out to spend the night on the mountain called the Mount of Olives." (Luke 21:37) This was the place where Jesus felt strengthened when talking with his Father about the difficult situation in which he was. In that place, Jesus found consolation through communion with his Father.
- d) **All people have difficult moments in life.** That's life. The question is not why difficult times happen, but how are we going to face those situations in the best way? We must recognize the power that God has in those circumstances that we present to Him.

CONCLUSION:

We, like Jesus, go through difficult situations ... situations when we must run to Gethsemane to find the strength of the Father to guide us, to help us endure the test to become better Christians every day, strengthened through intimate communion with God through prayer.

LESSON 6

THEME: AS SENIORS, DON'T DIE WITH RESENTMENT.

TEXT: GENESIS 44:28-29

INTRODUCTION:

Specialists explain the disorders that can affect the quality of life for older adults. While for some, senior adulthood can mean the ideal time to take advantage of free time to dedicate oneself to the tasks that had been postponed in other stages of life, for others, its not so easy to find the positive side.

According to the American Psychological Association, elderly people may feel that they lose control of their lives due to vision problems, hearing loss, and external pressures such as low income. Virginia Viguera, a retired psychiatrist dedicated to the education of older adults, agrees that there is a tendency to confuse depression with other issues that correspond to situations that are faced in old age.

"Many times it is confused with the situation of mourning that is frequent as a process, and that is the natural and normal reaction to the different losses: death of loved ones, changes, separation from children or spouse, loneliness, lack of care and affection from relatives, the loss of social groups and retirement, among other changes.

The specialist explains that all grief carries with it a state of sadness that sometimes extends over time. "Many times it is preceded by states of anger and bewilderment, isolation and detachment."

I. THE MOURNING OF JACOB (GENESIS 43:5-6)

- a) Jacob the patriarch still grieved for his first child (Joseph) who was born of the woman that he loved (Rachel), a grief which he had still not overcome. His consolation was his second son from Rachel and the youngest, Benjamin. The loss of Benjamin would aggravate his grief even more. Judah gave his commitment to his father to return with his brother after visiting Egypt to get food.
- b) Judah came forward to act as a spokesperson. (43:8-9) And in the attitude he assumed, the nobility of his character stood out. Remember that he was from the tribe of Judah, the same one from which Jesus would come. Judah would give one of the most beautiful speeches that has ever been recorded. He expressed a full confession, recognizing that everything that had happened to them was a consequence of his sin.

- c) It was evident that Joseph wanted to test the affection that his brothers felt towards Benjamin, his brother. That is why he declared that Benjamin was the guilty party and would remain as a slave in Egypt. And to think that the brothers had sold Joseph as a slave! Listen to Judah's response. Let's read 44:19-29.
- d) Here Judah was, in fact, telling what had happened upon his arrival in Canaan, and Jacob's fears and feelings. Actually, the father had been deceived about Joseph's disappearance, which was what Joseph was wanting to hear about. Now Joseph found out the version his brothers had told his father a long time ago, about his supposed death. This was the first time that one of them had talked so much about this. Previously they had limited themselves to saying, referring to Joseph; "the other no longer exists," meaning that he was dead.
- e) We can also observe something else this time in Jacob; He was growing spiritually, but he still had not reached maturity. Instead of trusting the Lord, he was leaning on his son Benjamin. If something had happened to him, it would surely have meant his death.

II. THE SPIRITUAL MOURNING OF CHRISTIANS

- a) There are some believers who demonstrate a wonderful faith in God when death takes away a loved one. However, others sink into despair.
- b) It is here that we must learn, no matter how much we love a member of our family, if both are children of God, we must know that one day we will see them again.
- c) Those who rely on faith will not collapse in the face of that separation. Jacob surely had not reached such a level yet. Although he was growing in spiritual maturity, he still did not have full trust in God.

III. JUDAH'S INTERVENTION (GEN. 44:32-34)

- a) Observe Judah's concern for his father Jacob. I think any of his brothers would have said the same thing. We see that Judah, as spokesperson for the group, concluded his speech with a proposal; He asked to take Benjamin's place as a slave. Any of them would have had the same attitude.
- b) Joseph wanted to check the reaction of his brothers and they all passed the test.

- c) In the future, someone who descended from Judah, and who was called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, would come and bring the punishment upon himself instead of the guilty. The apostle Paul said in his letter to the Romans (5:8), "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus Christ took the place of the guilty. He carried that guilt so that we could be saved and become children of God, justified by the blood he shed on the cross.

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION:

Some seniors, even with age and experience, may not have sufficient spiritual maturity to face loss as they should. They need to grow in their spiritual maturation and growth – maybe through these lessons or other discipleship opportunities.

It's important as senior adults to internalize the Scriptures so that we have confidence in the Lord. Also, prayer must be the daily consolation for our souls.

If you don't already know, we have a wonderful Senior Adult Ministry, called "Fullness of Life," promoted by SDMI, so that the senior adults of our church are taken care of in an integral way.

(It is here that we as Christians must act as Judah on behalf of each other – especially for seniors.

Through this study we realize that they need the daily interaction of their families, understanding and care. Try to make their days easier so that they do not enter a state of discouragement, isolation and depression due to the circumstances that happen in the journey of their lives.

It is urgent and of vital importance to have training/counseling with the children and relatives of the seniors and the teachers in charge of carrying out this beautiful ministry, who can accompany them through studies and moments of prayer that will be the incentive to heal the wounds of their soul. In this way we will be a blessing so that the gray heads of our seniors don't "go down to the grave in misery.")

LESSON 7

THEME: INTERCESSORY PRAYER OF SENIOR ADULTS

TEXT: JOB 42:7-9

INTRODUCTION:

There are always people who lack Christian maturity, who profess to be children of God, but who point to others wanting to justify their spiritual life, wanting to torment others. Job was a man tormented by great physical affliction. He also had the visit of three people, but instead of helping him, they tormented him by saying that his illness was because of his own sin. As a result, he was in great anguish. This book is full of the prayers of Job, but what is especially noted is that Job is the only one who prays. There are no recorded prayers from his friends who didn't feel the need to pray for their friend Job, as for their own lives. What reactions did Job have?

I. JOB TRUSTED AND WAITED ON JEHOVAH

- a) Although Job was always praying, his prayers were not answered as he hoped. One of his great problems was the silence of God.
- b) Although Job groaned in great distress, God seemed to say nothing to him until He finally spoke to him from the storm in response to Job's comments/questions. Then, as you know, Job repented in dust and ashes, because of God's reply to him. (Job 42:1-6)
- c) God's silence has a purpose that in the end is beneficial for the one who prays. (According to the song, when he is silent, it is because he is working.) God has his time ... his "kairos" time. God is Lord and master of everything, and He has dominion over the times. The word "time," from the Hebrew "Et" translates as "period, determined time, or appropriate." We can say that it refers to a time designed by the hands of the divine architect, in the fulfillment of His purposes. He rules over the time of men.

II. JOB INTERCEDED FOR OTHERS (42:7-9)

- a) One thing that stands out from this passage is the fact that it is a clear example of a man interceding for his friends.
- b) This is an excellent example of what we often call an "intercessory prayer."
- c) First, this passage reveals that we have relationship responsibilities for others.

There are levels of growth and true spirituality that are recognized in the Scriptures:

1. Some are spiritual babies, just beginning their Christian life.
2. Others have grown to the spiritual level of adolescents, young people who are trained to battle with the enemy and overcome the assaults and battles of life.

3. Spiritual mature "Parents" who have been on the road for a long time. Their age and experience have taught them many deep and penetrating lessons that the young ones have not yet learned. God recognizes these differences, as do we.

III. THE POWER OF PRAYER

We must recognize those who are spiritually mature, these spiritual giants, and recruit them and rely upon them for their ministry of intercession.

This ministry of intercession is a privilege we have of sharing our spiritual strength with those who are going through trials.

Sometimes you are the one who is strong and others are weak. You can pray for those who are struggling, who are under great pressure, confused, perhaps deceived by sin and cannot even see their own problems. "You who live by the Spirit," says Paul in the book of Galatians, "should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted." (Gal 6:1)

At other times, you may be the one who is weak, depressed, or discouraged, and the one who may have been weak but is now stronger than you can pray for you.

CONCLUSION:

It's necessary to understand that everything has its time. If we pray fervently, we'll have a nice life before God and we'll fulfill his Word. We only have to have faith and hope that our prayers have their answer in God's time. To better understand the times of God, it's necessary to study the following terms:

In Biblical Greek, the terms most used for time are "Cronos" and "Kairos." Let's see the meaning of these words:

1. Cronos: lapse of time, duration of time. It is the root of the word "chronometer" and its derivatives.

We speak of earthly time, which can be measured. God established this time with the creation of the sun, the moon and the stars (Gen. 1:14-18) the units of measurement of our time: millennium, century, year, month, day, hours, etc. It is the time of man.

2. Kairos: correct measure, occasion or event defined period, opportune time, favorable time, indicated and precise moment. Cronos time defines quantity. Kairos time defines quality (Rom. 5:6). Kairos is the opportune time and designed from heaven, where God intervenes in the lives of men in a supernatural and powerful way as he did with Job, with Judah, with Israel in his pilgrimage, with Jonah in the belly of the fish, etc.... Time designed in heaven, manifested on earth, for the blessing of men. Here we must watch and be prepared for the changes of God. Meanwhile we pray and wait for God to answer in His time.

LESSON 8

THEME: THE STORMS IN THE LIVES OF SENIOR ADULTS

MATTHEW: 8:23-27

INTRODUCTION:

In the lives of senior adults, there are many difficulties that cloud the happiness and calm of their steps. This is seen in deep sadness, the loss of sight in their deep eyes, and their trembling voices that shows us the increase of their illnesses that shorten their existence every day.

I. WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST STORMS OF YOUR LIFE?

- a) **In the original Greek, the word used to describe the storm** is "seismós," from which comes the word earthquake. We also find the word "big" that refers to the waves. This comes from the Greek adjective "mégas," which suggests something enlarged. This shows us the storm that rose with winds so strong that it seemed that the boat was going to sink.
- b) **What is the storm that has arisen around you in life?** The certain thing is that Jesus our captain goes with us in the same boat and is next to us. **THE BOAT WILL NOT SINK.** The promise of God in Isaiah 43:2 says, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you."

II. JESUS REMAINS CALM

Previously, Jesus' disciples had witnessed the healings he had done: the leper, the centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law, etc. They had experienced his divine power, but this time, their fear made them panic and they lost their calm.

We can't say that they lost their faith completely because when they looked for Jesus, and woke him up to save them, they expressed their confidence that he could really help them. That's why Jesus calls them men of "little faith," not men of "no faith."

- a) **Jesus is awakened from his sleep**, and then he rebuked them for their small faith: "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?"
- b) **The words "little faith" in the original Greek come from a single expression, "oligopist,"** and denotes a lack of confidence. The word "fear" is translated from the adjective "deilós," which can also be translated as "coward."

- c) **This shows us that faith requires courage**; trust in God implies not letting ourselves be terrorized by the difficulties or trials of life, and our firm trust in the power of God to bring about the peace of God even in the midst of the worst situations. As Christians, we will all go through terrible storms in life which threaten to destroy us, but it's important not to let ourselves be intimidated by them. Our trust must be firm, our faith must prevail, believing that God will perform miracles for us.
- d) **What is your storm?** You may have a big problem, the worst disease in this world, be in the midst of a strong spiritual storm at home, in the ministry, in the family, etc., but if there is the peace of God in our lives, in our hearts, we will be safe, calm, relieved, serene, and above all calm.

CONCLUSION:

- a) **Life is like a boat. We'll face many storms**, but at the end of each storm a new dawn awaits us. The important thing is to make sure that Jesus is in our boat.
- b) **Jesus rebuked the wind and the sea.** This was so amazing that the disciples marveled saying, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" The one who was in the boat once again demonstrated his authority by showing that he not only had power over diseases and demons, but also over nature itself. This proved that he was definitely the long-awaited Messiah.
- c) **Men who enjoyed the support of God** - The Bible teaches us about some men who experienced the power of God when he gave them authority over the elements of nature.
- Moses: (Exodus 14:21) He divided the waters of the sea when the Egyptian army was descending upon the defenseless Hebrews.
 - Elijah: He prayed to God and called down fire from heaven, demonstrating to the prophets of Baal that God was living and powerful (1 Kings 18:36-37), he prayed for rain and rain fell (18:45)
 - Elisha: Divided the Jordan River after Elijah was taken up in the chariot of fire. (2 Kings 2:13-14)

And now we see Jesus showing his power over the wind and the sea. He is the one who gives us authority today (Luke 9:1-2), and just wants us to have faith. This requires that we pray in faith in all circumstances of life. Dear senior, what is your storm? The captain is at your side!

Note: The following lesson is not so much for senior adults as it is for those who minister to, live with, or interact with senior adults.

LESSON 9

THEME: QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SENIOR ADULT

TEXT: "Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone." (Psalm 71:9)

INTRODUCTION:

Psalm 71 opens with a wise phrase: "God, I shelter in you" (v.1). This is said by someone who feels the accumulation of years in their skin and bones. Their feelings are confused between supplication and hope, between trust and fear. The moment in which they live is not easy, and they open their life to God, like someone who ventures forward with a friend.

We all know that the law of life is to grow, reproduce, and die. The older adult lives reality in his own flesh and mind, his strength weakens and he is no longer the same with the vigor of his youthful years.

In this stage there are many difficulties that make the load heavier, among them are the following:

I. PROBLEMS OF SENIOR ADULTS

- a) Burden of responsibility for problems due to bad decisions by themselves or their spouse.
- b) The experience of loneliness when their children leave home.
- c) Health problems (hypertension, diabetes, renal failure, deafness, forgetfulness, respiratory diseases ...)
- d) Facing loneliness when a spouse dies.
- e) Arthritis, loss of sleep, among others.

II. FEARS OF SENIOR ADULTS (v.1-11)

In this stage, the elderly can become depressed thinking about their future, because they accumulate in their minds all the problems that arise in their age. Among these fears are:

- a) Fear of being shamed and humiliated (v. 1)
- b) Fear of not being heard in their anguish (v. 2);
- c) Panic of being rejected in old age and abandoned for lack of vigor (v. 9);

- d) He does not trust those around him; he remembers those who speak against him and wish him ill (v. 10);
- e) He worries about being mocked (verse 11).
- f) He lives in conflict in his advanced age, and the problem gets worse because he is alone, sick and without strength.

III. THE HOPE OF SENIOR ADULTS

Senior adults can be encouraged because they are receptive when a person is close and interested in their life. For this reason, the psalmist David writes this Psalm.

- a) In the midst of his poverty, he has a deep sense of life, which does not come from himself, but from He who sustains him.
- a) His words recover the necessary strength to say, "I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, Sovereign LORD; I will proclaim your righteous deeds, yours alone." (v. 16).
- b) Here is expressed the meaning of his life, of his trembling knees, of his cloudy vision, of his deaf ears, of his worn teeth.
- c) The elderly want to be useful for the younger generations; they want to live and count, and as long as their breath allows them, they want to proclaim the wonders that God has granted to all generations, having the clouds as a limit (verse 18).

CONCLUSION:

As the Church of the Nazarene, we must not push our senior adults aside just because they are old. They are part of our congregation that deserve to be held in high esteem, knowing that "Even in old age they will bear fruit" Psalm 92:14. God will know how to reward all work done on benefit of our elders.

In ancient times, the first-born son was responsible for taking care of their old father until death came, and then they were in charge of burying him.

Today is the same. We must look after our elders, give them a place in the home and church, and allow them to continue to be useful and busy in the service of the Lord.

Note: The following lesson is not so much for senior adults as it is for those who minister to, live with, or interact with senior adults.

LESSON 10

THEME: ABUSE OF SENIOR ADULTS

TEXT: EXODUS 20:12

INTRODUCCIÓN:

The Social Sciences teach us that families are the fundamental component of society, and proper relations between parents and children must be maintained. There are some families in which the parents are older (many are grandparents) and live with their adult children as an "extended family." In some families of this type, abuse of these older adults takes place because they do not contribute financially and become a burden. Perhaps this also happens because the senior adults mistreated their children when they were young, or perhaps because they still want their "children" to make decisions motivated by their tastes or way of thinking, etc.

The Bible explains in the fifth commandment the duty we have towards our parents and all other older adults:

I. TO HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER IS:

HONOR means to have a high esteem, show respect and consideration for one's parents throughout all of life.

- a) It is the first commandment with a promise.
- b) You will live long in the land God gives you.
- c) You will have many blessings from God, but it is conditional and will be granted to those who honor their parents.

II. CONTRARY TO HONOR IS TO COMMIT ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER.

If we do not keep this commandment with a promise and do the opposite, the result will be: curse (Mark 7:10).

- a) The verb "to curse" in the Greek is "kakologeó," which means "to speak evil of."
- b) Anyone who speaks evil against his father or mother is going to die.
- c) Contempt for their parents is not approved by God.

CONCLUSIÓN:

Aging has become an problem for those who have not raised their children with Christian principles and who are unaware of the benefits and consequences of the fifth commandment. They don't realize the treasure that is lost in their hands. They must be taught these truths, and become intercessors of prayer to God for their families. We must love them with all our hearts.

RECOMENDATIONS:

Elderly adults, like children, should be given special consideration because they have suffered loss of strength and increase of diseases in their old age. They walk and perform any work slowly, and they lose their vision and hearing ability and other bio-related repercussions.

In some cases, their frustration with these difficulties that come with advanced age makes them capricious, violent, thankless, resentful, etc. We must understand them so as not to enter into conflict with them or disrespect them. It is necessary to give them opportunities to contribute and be useful. They need to have fun, so as not to "make their gray hair descend in pain to the grave."

We need to recognize the amazing things they still have to contribute:

- Wisdom
- Experience
- Knowledge
- Counsel
- Love
- Intercessory prayer for families

EXERCISE:

Do a drama with a discipleship group that illustrates the attitudes of some older adults ("Precious elders" as the Bible calls them), and their whims and ways of being and doing things. Try to point out both positive and unpleasant qualities.

After the drama ask your group:

- What should our attitude be in response to the attitudes of the elderly?
- Why do you think senior adults have that way of being and doing and thinking and responding?
- In regards to some of the negative attitudes, what should we do?
- Should the elderly have moments of recreation, walks and fun activities?

Note: The following lesson is not so much for senior adults as it is for those who minister to, live with, or interact with senior adults.

LESSON 11

THEME: COUNSEL FOR LIVING WITH SENIOR ADULTS

TEXT: “Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.” (Psalm 90:2)

INTRODUCTION:

Senior adults have contributed their work and energy to the betterment of society and their families and their church, etc. But now, old age has begun and they have begun to lose their strength and are experiencing the symptoms of the advancement of years. The expectation that people had of them to contribute and be productive has come to an end. This is where the “children” must step up to help senior adults lead a pleasant life.

Here are some tips for living with older people, according to a Doctor in Psychology, Claudio García. She advises the following:

1. **PRIVACY:** The elderly have modesty, and want privacy like any of us. To respect their privacy is to respect them as people.
2. **CULTURE:** Older people have idiosyncrasies, cultural habits, which mean identity. We must respect their customs such as going to church, listening to a particular kind of music, liking their television programs, having a bedside table and lamp, etc. Not respecting their personal culture is a form of violence and abuse.
3. **BELONGING:** Every human being needs to feel they are “someone,” that they “belong” and that there are people who care for them and want them around. Abandonment is not just physical ... it includes attitude as well. When we don’t include them in family life, we’re abandoning them. This is also a form of abuse.
4. **PARTICIPATION:** Belonging must be participatory, that is, active. It’s not just existing with others, but actively being with others. To feel that there is something they can still do to share or contribute is of fundamental importance for the elderly person. Giving them opportunities to learn something new or develop interests or hobbies, taking on jobs they can do, having daily responsibilities, etc. also promote quality of life.
5. **INTERGENERATIONALITY:** Older people need intergenerational contact. Actually, we all need it. Family life is a field of growth, among other things, because it allows us the richness of that contact. It is a benefit for grandparents and grandchildren, young and old. It is a health-giving factor

from and for the family. We must promote forms of intergenerational exchange.

6. **LISTEN:** Older people have many things to share: experience during many years and changes of life, stories that bear witness to family history, tradition, etc. They need to pass it on, and the family needs to receive it.
7. **DON'T OVERPROTECT THEM:** The family should try to avoid falling into overprotection that end up being invalidating. When we overprotect, we communicate that they are incapable. Give them opportunities and confidence to try. Don't do everything for them. (Example - indicate where to step instead of grabbing their foot.)
8. **BEING OLDER MEANS TO CONTINUE BEING:** By adding years, one does not stop being who they are. Even when they are in bed, in a nursing home or in a wheelchair, let women continue putting on makeup, making up their hair, wearing jewelry, etc. They are still the same women and men they always were. Neither the years nor the illnesses mean that "they are no longer." Even if before us their image has changed, they are the same.
9. **ACCEPTANCE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING:** Connections are sustained by acceptance, not necessarily by understanding. That is, you don't have to understand the rationale of the other to accept them. The logic of the senior adult is often not understood by those younger than them. Children often do not understand the reasons of their older parents. We may not understand them, but we can accept their emotions, feelings and needs.
10. **SHARE IT ALL:** Coexistence is always complex. The myth is that it's difficult to coexist with the elderly when in reality, all coexistence is complex. One of the keys to achieving this is to share everything, that is, what there is and what is lacking. Talk about how things are going. Share joys and frustrations. Talk about the future and the way forward. Live with seniors, never forget about them. (Source: Claudio García Pintos, doctor of psychology)

CONCLUSION:

Let's find a balance that guarantees special care for our seniors that respects their rights and makes life meaningful, to help them live in a pleasant way this last stage with family harmony, company and care. Make their remaining days the best. It's necessary to realize that we as "children" have the same path ahead of us, and what we sow we will harvest, i.e., the attention that we'll also need when the time comes. For this we need to add other actions to fulfill:

1. Understanding
2. Love
3. Attention
4. Goodness
5. Service, among others. "He who sows, harvests."

Note: The following lesson is not so much for senior adults as it is for those who minister to, live with, or interact with senior adults.

LESSON 12

THEME: THE VALUE OF THE PRECIOUS PEARL

TEXT: PROVERBS 20:29

INTRODUCTION:

To have self-esteem is to love oneself and love others. It means knowing that you are valuable, worthy, worthwhile and capable. It implies respecting yourself and teaching others to do the same. The senior adult Christian has an incalculable value that no one in this world is able to pay, because there was someone who was interested and paid with blood, that is, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Today we belong to the royal family (1 Peter 2:9).

I. HOW IS THE LIFE OF THE SENIOR ADULT EXALTED?

Each stage of life is exalted (or not) and has its own value, which is why everyone should know that their own stage has its own importance. Someone said that, "you learn more from ten grandparents than from ten experts in family issues." We need the guidance of the elderly. Their gray hair and wrinkles deserve respect and admiration according to Leviticus 19:32. The beauty and energy of youth begins to give way to maturity, gray hair, experience and wise advice ... so necessary for other ages. Grandparents fulfill a function of continuity and transmission of family traditions.

As Emilio Durkheim said, Education is: "A process of cultural transmission from one generation to another, from the adult generations to the younger generations; it is a social process both because of its origin and because of its functions." (From his book Theory of Education, 2003)

This means that grandparents play an important role in the education, "That younger generations learn from the generation of adults." No one is in a better position than senior adults to help parents and grandchildren understand principles too often forgotten, yet truly essential for today's families.

II. THEY NEED TO LOVE THEMSELVES AS THEY ARE

Senior adulthood is a very difficult stage for self-esteem. People see how their physical and mental capacities are diminishing. At the same time, they observe how their social contacts are disappearing, either because of the death of some of their acquaintances, because of their inability to

maintain the previous rhythm of life, or because their own relatives put them aside. Some of them come to be considered little more than a piece of furniture in their children's homes, and others are sent to asylums, finding themselves in a new environment that scares them and in which they only receive contact with other elderly people who don't motivate them. They may entertain the occasional visitor or family member, but they never do anything really productive. In this context, it shouldn't be surprising that self-esteem suffers serious damage, and that many of them experience severe depression.

Their beauty, reflected wonderfully in their gray hair, should be enjoyed by each family through the testimony of their lived years, to be a "library of consultation" which must be visited frequently.

We must treat them today how we would like others to treat us when the day comes. The elderly gave everything of themselves, and now they expect or ask so little of us. Remember what another proverb says to us in this respect, "Gray hair is a crown of splendor; it is attained in the way of righteousness." (Proverbs 16:31) That "crown of splendor" has been the product of a life that has truly honored our God.

CONCLUSION:

According to Proverbs 20:29, each stage of life must be supported by the other stages, each one has his own advantages and disadvantages. We are all useful and we must serve each other so that there is harmony and family coexistence. We are all important to the Lord and we can all help each other.

The elderly do not despise younger people because of their lack of experience and seriousness. Rather, God has honored the young with bodily vigor, which enables them to actively serve God and people. How would the seniors defend their lives and their properties, or how could they survive, if they did not have the help of the strength of the younger?

Senior adults need us. They have already lived many years and are now preparing to go to a long-awaited encounter with God. This promise awaits them: " Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." (Isaiah 46:4)

If you don't already know, we have a wonderful Senior Adult Ministry, called "Fullness of Life," promoted by SDMI, so that the senior adults of our church are taken care of in an integral way.