

FATHERS THAT MAKE THEIR DAYS COUNT

“THE PRIME OF LIFE”

Ps 71:14-21

June 16, 2013

INTRODUCTION:

Psalms 90:12

**“Teach us to number our days aright,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom”.**

My favorite Bible verse is **Proverbs 20:7.**

**“The righteous man leads a blameless life;
blessed are his children after him.”**

Listen to David’s words in the *“prime of his life”*:

Psalms 71:17-18

**“O God, You have taught me from my youth;
And to this day I declare Your wondrous works.
Now also when I am old and grayheaded,
O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to this generation,
Your power to everyone who is to come.”**

So many seem to die before seeing their dreams, life goals, and God’s purpose fulfilled

Isaiah 38:9-10

“This is the writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness: I said, ‘In the prime of my life I shall go to the gates of Sheol; I am deprived of the remainder of my years.’”

Hezekiah speaks of being **“deprived”** (robbed of the rest of my days.)

Prime of life, old age, can be your best days

Psalms 92:14

“They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green.”

Like unto an old tree.

It is difficult if not impossible to be a “difference maker” unless you live with intentionality.

Please make sure you have a proper perspective of yourself. You can be living a lukewarm life.

Revelation 3:17-18, “Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked — I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”

Refined – speaks of purity

Clothed – speaks of character

Anointed – speaks of vision/perception

Question: *“What if you were more important than you think?”*

Jesus wishes to take the little that I have to accomplish much for His purpose. What I give to Him in faith, He gives back to me having multiplied.

“Once I offer them to Him by faith, they become to me what they already are to Him, His.”

Give what you have to Jesus and He will give it back to you much better.

Luke 16:10

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.”

I. HIS TRUST IN THE PRIME OF LIFE.

14-16

v.14 “but as for me”

A. FOUNDATION. 14

“Hope” is about future expectations, but it is meant for present utilization.

Believers hope in the present appropriation of a future joyous certainty.

There is a truth to be learned here: As we worship God, our faith is built. Paul says of Abraham that humanly speaking he and Sarah could not have the son God promised them.

Romans 4:20-21, He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.”

“Hope” means a long and patient waiting in spite of delays or disappointments. If we trust God, than the trials of life will work for us and not against us, and will lead to glory. The Psalmist’s hope reveals his courage and commitment.

B. OCCUPATION/FAITHFULNESS. 15

His word becomes his witness. God’s righteous acts and saving deeds are more than he can recount.

“For I do not know their limits” (numbers)
His occupation has become his pre-occupation.

all the day”

**Isaiah 46:3-4, "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob,
And all the remnant of the house of Israel,
Who have been upheld by Me from birth,
have been carried from the womb:
Even to your old age, I am He,
And even to gray hairs I will carry you!
I have made, and I will bear;
Even I will carry, and will deliver you.”**

*“Count your many blessings, name them one by one.” (See what God has done)
Speaks of His personal involvement, He has sustained.*

C. PROVISION. 16

Here is the answer when his strength fails. God’s strength is his mighty power. His commitment is clear and exclusive. An aged man with his trials, troubles, and trust. The Lord was the source and secret to his strength. Impotence leaning on omnipotence.

II. HIS TESTIMONY IN THE PRIME OF LIFE. 17-18

The Psalmist helps us see our continual value

to the kingdom.

Spurgeon said, *“Many have misjudged their capacity for God.”*

A. HIS PASSION. 17-18

v.17 His thoughts went drifting back through the long years of his life. His testimony did more than dwell on the past.

The lyrics of an old song come to mind:

*“If you could see where Jesus brought me from
To where I am today
Then you would know the reason
Why I love Him so.”*

The Psalmist looks at his past, present, and prospect or potential.

Psalms 71:18

**“Now also when I am old and grayheaded,
O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to this
generation,
Your power to everyone who is to come.”**

The Lord will not forsake the Psalmist; the question is if the Psalmist will forsake Him?

Joshua, the new leader:

Deuteronomy 31:6, “Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.”

Deuteronomy 31:8, “And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.”

Joshua 1:8-9, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

NOTE: Heb. 13:5-6

Poet Robert Browning put it this way, “*The best is yet to be.*”

He also said of the youth, “*They see but half.*”

The younger generation needs the stability, sagacity, and the sympathy that can be found only in godly older people (**discernment, insight, perception and wisdom**).

However, the older generation often is *tired*. The natural tendency is to *resign* or *relax* and *rest*. This godly old man wanted to keep “*young in heart*” by seeking out young people whose friendships he could cultivate and whose lives he could help *shape* and *mold*. He sees there is still work for him to do. With his aged body, he has a youthful spirit. He wanted to tell the next generation what the Lord could do for them.

v.17 His witness was of the Lord’s “**wondrous works.**” Speaks of God’s mighty acts in **creation**, **judgment**, and **redemption**.

1. Creation.

He was made by God and for God.

2. Judgment.

Jesus bore the wrath of God I deserved

3. Redemption.

Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe

Donald Williams, *The Communicator’s Commentary* –

“Although the psalmist has been taught the redemptive history of Israel, her “creed,” and will declare this, we must guard against thinking that he is just a good theological historian. The underlying reason for his witness to the ‘wondrous works is the personal experience of his lifetime.’”

WHY PEOPLE LACK PASSION:

1. They have allowed something precious to become familiar.

Loren Kierkegaard warned of the danger of the church losing her passion for the gospel; treating it instead like a “piece of information.” Passion is replaced with descriptions of passion. The result of the church could be compared with reading a cookbook to a starving man.

“When this happens the poison of the ordinary deadens your senses to the magic of the moment.”

Max Lucado

- *Wonder how many times we come to our place of service and say, ‘I’ve don’t that – I’ve been there.’*
- *Have we lost that enthusiasm we had when we felt the unexplainable joy of being called to our places of service?*
- *Have we lost the blissful feeling of when God placed His hand upon us and said, ‘You are my man?’*
- *Has the gratefulness of service been replaced by the grind of serving?’*

2. We want acceptance and approval.

Passion **draws** people and it **repels** people – all at

the same time.

3. Our society is passive.

Life has become about **“making it”** instead of **“making a difference.”**

4. Apathy tends to increase with age.

As we get older our energy wanes, past failures haunt us, and criticism makes us callous. Age causes passion to ebb out of our lives.

“If you only have one talent, don’t bury it in the ground, try to live as to be missed. There is far more to be done in twelve hours than most people have ever done on any day of their life. It may be true that wise young believers are very rare, but it no less true that zealous old believers are very rare also. Never allow yourself to believe you can do too much. For one man that does too much, I will show you a thousand that do not do enough. Lay to heart the words of the nobleman who said when told that he ought to rest a little, ‘What should we rest for, don’t we have all eternity to rest?’”

J.C. Ryle

5. We have no purpose beyond ourselves.

People who live for themselves are in a mighty **small** business.

B. HIS PERSPECTIVE. 19-21

1. His Upward Look. 19

Your righteousness/salvation transcends our minds and our abilities. In **Psalms 126:1** “**like a dream**” – too good to be true; I’m going to wake up.

“Who is like You?” Expresses his appreciation in his old age, full of praise! No comparison!

2. His Inward Look. 20-21

Metaphor for the troubles he had experienced (felt buried under trouble.) He is using figurative language to express deliverance from his present dire circumstances. These troubles/struggles he’s known a long time. His God offers a “**resurrection from the depths.**” The Psalmist is about to experience a “come back.” The Lord will increase his greatness.

This passage also may very well speak of the next life; there’s Heaven up ahead. This life is not all there is, there’s going to be another life.

v.21 *“You should increase my greatness and comfort me on every side.”* The old singer is anticipating even greater glory on the other side.

C.HIS PERSEVERANCE. 20-21

Calls for faithfulness

v.20 **“great and severe trouble”**

“Your standards come from your view of God.”