



Ideas for Ministry for and with Older Adults

For the Older Adult Ministry of
The Kentucky Conference

CHOICES: NO SUCH THING AS RETIREMENT FROM SERVING GOD

Many church members today believe what society tells us about aging. According to the world our bodies are machines that deteriorate as we get older. However, according to God's Word, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." Long, healthy life is not supposed to be an anomaly. Those in covenant with God, their Creator, are told "your days will be multiplied and years of life will be added to you."

Not only does the world have erroneous expectations about our physical condition and life span, it also maintains a negative posture regarding the role of older adults in our society. It's a common belief that people should retire at about age 65, and for many, this also means to relinquish whatever church roles they have held. They believe these responsibilities of life should be turned over to younger people who have the skills, energy, and ability to perform these roles more competently. Our society seems to feel that the elderly simply have nothing of value to contribute.

The Bible says otherwise. We are commanded by God to teach our children and our children's children what we have learned about God, what great things he has done in our lives and the importance of remembering his commandments to do them such as is found in Deuteronomy. Believers are promised that they will be wiser and be given more understanding than their teachers. This suggests that God's children in the years past age 50 have wisdom and knowledge worth sharing until they leave this earth to be with God.

Jesus makes it very clear that his followers have the same relationship with God that he had with his Heavenly Father while on earth and his followers are to do even greater things than he did. Can any of us claim to have ever finished fulfilling this promise? In today's church, most members don't even begin to focus their talents and energy toward serving others until their own educational and family pursuits have been satisfied. The chances that they have gone on to surpass the actions of Jesus before age 50 or exhausted their service to him are pretty slim.

And Jesus also gave his followers the greatest instruction of all, what we have come to know as the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20. This means we are to make disciples by witnessing to our faith. It is not limited to any specific period of our lives. Therefore, it is

easy to see that in God's Kingdom there is no retirement and no excusing ourselves from his directives due to physical aging a desire to relax and play, or the loss of memory and energy. As long as we are alive, we are called to serve God and fulfill his purposes.

Will you accept the world's view of growing older and allow yourself to be put out to pasture, or will you too serve the Lord and mount up on wings like eagles? The choice is yours!

Where can you serve today? Are there hungry people where you live? Statistics say "Yes!!" Are there people without hope? I'm sure there are. Are there people in your church family who need prayer? Have you thought about being a prayer warrior in your congregation, your community, your family? I don't know of a church, a town or a family who doesn't need prayer. Have you thought about trying something new? Something you wanted to do when you were younger but didn't have the time? What about trying it now. The children have flown the nest and you aren't nearly as busy as you used to be. How can you use your time to bring honor and glory to God? What can you do to build God's Kingdom? Pray about it, ask your Pastor, look for opportunities and walk through the door God opens for you. You will be blessed and you will be a blessing.

"Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15