

Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
October 6, 2021

“AGING GRACEFULLY!”

“For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.” (Genesis 3:19B)

Today, October 6th, is a bit of an interesting one for me, one that makes me take stock of my own mortality. My oldest brother, Rich, turns 70 years old today. Now I know that many of you wouldn't see that as much of a big deal, but this is a first for me. I have a brother who is an “old man”. Before you all call me to complain about my lack of understanding of just what is old and what is not, hear me out. My brother's age is not what makes him old...it's more of his attitude. He really doesn't do all that much with his time since he retired about 5 years ago. He's rather sedentary. On top of that he's had some major health issues in the past year, and it looks like they're going to continue into his 8th decade. We almost lost him a couple of months ago, and it's my opinion that he might be going to heaven sooner than we might all think. Again, these types of things give us pause to reflect on the transient nature of this life, and our own life. We're only here for a very short time when comparing it with eternity. Of course, death wouldn't have ever become an issue if it wasn't for sin. If we could just skip past Genesis chapter 3, we'd all live forever, right? No that's not right, because even if you ignore the reality of the fall of mankind into sin, and all the damage that has done, the effects of that sin are contained in every page of Scripture from there through Revelation 22. The truth is that we are all going to one day die, unless our Lord Jesus Christ returns before our allotted time on earth is up. After Adam and Eve's sin God told them that life was going to be a whole lot more difficult for them because of it, and that it would end in death. God formed them out of the dust of the ground and their human bodies would decompose back to dust after death. I chose the title for this devotion today to be “Aging Gracefully” because that's what we Christians do. Baptized into Christ and by faith in Him we are citizens of God's Kingdom of Grace...the Christian Church on earth. We have been called out of darkness, the secular world, which is called God's Kingdom of Power. The world may not acknowledge God, but He still rules over it through His holy and perfect law. All who are citizens of this Kingdom alone are subject to judgement under the law and will have to give account and bear the consequences of their sinful actions. *No one will be declared righteous in God's sight by works of the law.* (Romans 3:20) *For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.* (Romans 3:23) The law shows us our sins. It condemns and it kills. Dying under the Law is a one-way ticket to hell. We, as Christians, while remaining citizens of God's Kingdom of Power are also citizens of God's Kingdom of Grace. This Kingdom is ruled by the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus and the forgiveness and salvation that He won for us in the cross and empty tomb. As citizens of this Kingdom, given to us by the grace of God and received by faith, we are no longer under the Law but under grace. Jesus has taken on all of our sins, under the law, and paid the ultimate price for them. He is indeed *“The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”* (John 1:29) Jesus not only takes away our sins but He gives us the gift of His righteousness, His perfection, so that we stand justified before God our Father. Knowing all of this, as we age, we age in the grace of God...“Gracefully”...and we can actually, and we should, look forward to our day of death, because that is the precise moment that we'll enter into another of God's Kingdoms, that would be His “Kingdom of Glory”. That's the place where all the faithful that have finished their race of earthly life in faith and won the victory in Jesus (that sounds like a good title for a song) are in eternal glory and bliss forever, and where we will join them once our journey is complete. Jesus has destroyed the power of death over us and has transformed it into a birthday, our birthday into heaven. One more thing on this October 6th. I went to the doctor today for my regular physical. Apart from the weight being “a little too high” along with the cholesterol level...just a little...I am the picture of health. If I were a betting man, and I am not, I wouldn't place any wager that today is the day that I die, at least not from “natural causes”. Now I know that God might know of a meteor that is currently hurtling through deep space and headed my way, that might bring me face to face with Him by evening, but I'm not going to bet on that either. What I am going to do is continue to stay connected to the True Vine of Christ and by His grace

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and the power of the Holy Spirit living within me do the things that God wants me to do while I'm here, looking forward with joy to that day when He has completed the good work in me and calls me to His endless glory.