

AN AGE OF GRACE

Bible Study • Study Guide

Opening Prayer: *O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come. Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens. You who have done great things, O God, who is like you? (Psalm 71:17–19). Amen.*

“Youth is wasted on the young.” “Age before beauty.” “I’m not as young as I used to be.”

“Aging gracefully.”

What other age-related phrases do you hear often? Which have you said yourself?

Our culture seems to be consumed with the aging process.

Why do you think that is? What kinds of messages can Christians give about living life at any age?

Activity Quiz time: Briefly answer the following questions with your opinions.

How old is old? _____ **How young is young?** _____

What do you consider to be the perfect age? _____

Now, think about this: Would your answers be different if you were twenty years older?

How about twenty years younger?

Read about the following women.

Describe who they were. What were they called to do?

Sarah (Genesis 17:15–21)

Miriam (Exodus 2:1–10; Numbers 26:59)

Naomi (Ruth 1:1–5, 15–18; 4:13–17)

Mary (Luke 1:26–38)

Anna (Luke 2:36–38)

Lydia (Acts 16:11–15)

When describing these biblical servants of God, did you note their ages? If not, take time to go back and do that now. How old do you think each of these women was during the passages given? Further consider this: How may their age have seemed beneficial to their task? Could their ages have been considered an obstacle somehow?

Now, think about the stages of life you have already encountered.

How has God used you at each stage? What are ways you may serve Him in the future?

Read Job 12:12–13.

What is one blessing that often comes with age? From whom does this blessing come?

Read 1 Timothy 4:11–12.

Why would youth be something to "despise" in a young believer? How could it be an asset for young people to set a Christian example?

Read Jesus' promises to us in Revelation 22:12–14. Think about God's timeline.

Who is "the beginning"? Who is "the end"? Thanks to the Alpha and Omega, how long will our lives be?

How do these answers change our perspective on age?

We can do our sisters in Christ a disservice by not considering them for a task due to age — any age! Women who are bedridden can be prayer warriors and amazing examples of Christian patience. Women who are just entering adulthood can provide insight on how to reach a new generation as well as enthusiasm to serve with new ideas. Women in all stages in between can use their unique combinations of experience, time, and energy to provide service to the Lord and His people.

What gifts can younger people bring to the Church?

What gifts can older people bring to the Church?

What can a mother to grade-schoolers contribute?

What can a new grandma contribute?

Look around your group.

Is there a gap somewhere in the ages of the people in the room?

Why do you think this is?

Try to reach out to women of this age group.

How can you help them? What ideas do they have for your group? How can you be more available to more women?

How does your current stage in life enable you to serve in special ways?

Think of the next stage of life you will likely encounter.

How will you be able to serve the Lord then?

The women in the Bible listed above were all loved by their Heavenly Father. Some of them were happy with their stage in life. Others were not. All of them experienced God's grace and learned of His perfect timing in their lives. Thanks to our loving Savior, every age we experience is an age of grace — where we experience the forgiveness of Jesus and share the Good News of that grace with those around us.

Closing Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us, Your daughters, no matter our ages! Thank You for giving us eternal life through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Enable us to use our time on earth to serve You and our brothers and sisters in Christ in every age and stage we experience. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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