



A Message from Rev. Tom Ficklin

Ephesians 1:17-19¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

The scripture above was in my devotional today. It especially resonated with me when I read it. Scripture can be like that, no matter how many times you read it, it brings affirming surprises. To not read scripture could be to miss these nuggets God offers to us.

But, what made this particular scripture so impactful today? Linda and I have begun to read *The Gift of Years – Growing Older Gracefully* by Joan Chittister. We read one chapter every day, then we talk about that chapter the next morning when we walk our two miles at six in the morning. This book was suggested to us by Sharon Connor, who is Nettie Callahan's daughter. Don't you love it when a friend suggests something very worthwhile to you!

We are early in this process, but it has opened another way for Linda and I to have conversations about wisdom and revelation and hope, things like the scripture states above. Today's chapter was on "meaning," something that we all struggle with as we age and move from employed to retired. Chittister asks, "What *am* I when I am nothing else?" She bases this on the fact that what we do in life often affects how we think about ourselves. Have you experienced that?

Age often gives us the time to be able to reconnect with scripture and with God in ways that a busy work life would not allow; when we move from a human *doing* to a human *being*. As she would say, "being caring, being interested, being honest, being truthful, being available, being spiritual, being involved with the important things of life, of living – is so rare, so unspoken of, as to be obtuse." It takes time to simply "be" because we do not practice just "being" enough.

You may or may not have heard me say that this time of pandemic has enabled Linda and I to come closer together. We walk and we talk. We sit and we talk. We have talked about things that maybe we should have talked about years ago; but, life got in the way of those conversations then. Yes, we have talked in the past, but this time, it is different. It is at this point that maybe we are beginning to understand Robert Browning a little better, when he wrote:

“Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith “A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half;
Trust God; see all, nor be afraid!”

Recently, I have had a few conversations with various folks about our aging bodies, those same bodies that never let us down in our youth. Those same minds that never would forget a thing, now sometimes struggle to maintain a single thought. And yet, in each transition we make in this continuum of life, there is a richness of God’s blessing to be realized.

A social worker I talked to reminded me that while every day may not be a good day, when we have a good day, we need to cherish it and hold it tight. We need to honor the day as the gift from God that it is! Our God, who is immeasurable in the greatness of His power as He works for us who believe.

We may not be able to “do” as much as we age, but we can never forget that God is still asking us to “be” the fullness of who He created us to “be.” *Praise God from whom all blessings flow!*

Amen?

AMEN!