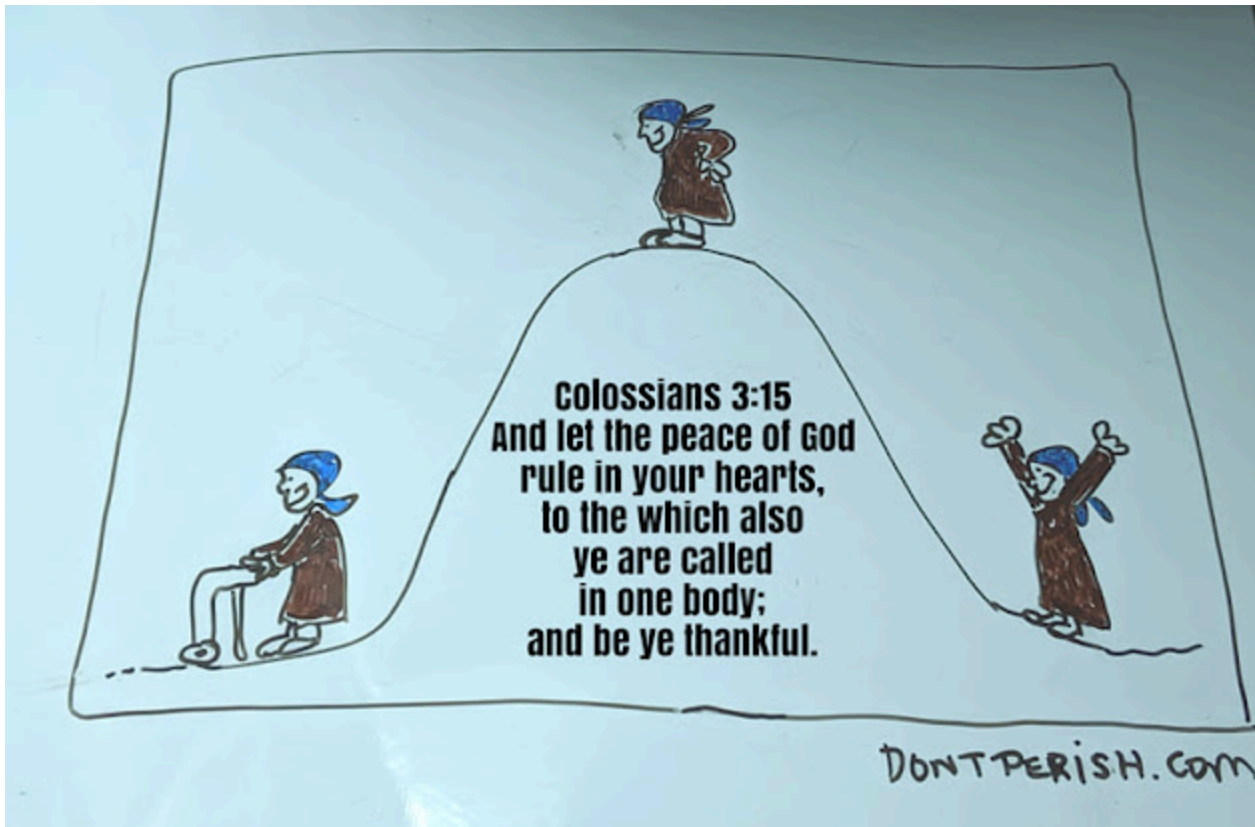


## Growing Old Gracefully

2/11/2022



I've been thinking about this post for a while and wanted to share my thoughts with you. Some of you may have heard the phrase 'Growing Old Gracefully'; I heard it in my secular life before Christ. It means, in a worldly sense, that we are to accept the changes in our body as we age, and gracefully go along with them. But, how the world gracefully does this is to magnify whatever you can in your beauty to detract from whatever isn't 'beautiful' anymore. This usually means changing your clothing to accent various parts of your body (they have undergarments that push stuff up or down where you want it), different makeup techniques to cover wrinkles and sagging skin, fresh new hair styles, just the right jewelry and accessories and most of all...an attitude change. Normally one of 'you go girl', 'if you got it flaunt it' or 'show it off'.

That = pride and vanity.

I'm combating that concept and writing about a godly perspective of aging and 'growing old gracefully'. I'm grateful for each day I have because the Lord should have struck me dead in my unregenerated life but He has given me (us) the hope of eternal life instead...and I'm grateful. Therefore I'm happy to shed all that vanity and self centeredness and simply grow old gracefully, biblically, regardless of what happens to this aging body of mine.

This is a tough subject for women but if we are born of the Spirit of God, He will help mold and change our hearts and minds to have a biblical view of ourselves and our body, no longer having the view of the unregenerated who are built on pride and vanity. I recall before Christ when I was beginning to see age set

in and wondered how I would deal with that, and today I'm grateful not to worry about it because the outside of the body is not what matters, it's what's inside when it comes to godly women. See 1 Peter 3.

God has removed a lot of the external troubles in how He has His daughters dress. Long, plain, loose dresses (or skirts / shirts), covering our hair / head and not decorating anything. This right off eliminates a lot of concern because whatever is going on with most of your body as you age, is fully covered. The only person who knows what's going on is your husband if you have one and he should love what's inside, not outside especially if you have a meek and quiet spirit. (Read 1 Peter 3 again.)

What I want to do is encourage you sisters to have a biblical view of your body, not a worldly one like you had before Christ. It's obvious that the average young person has a youthful vitality and energy with a body to match. Smooth skin that stays where it's supposed to (for the most part), muscles and bones that are strong, minds that are normally clear and quick thinking etc. But as we age, even in the younger (pre-middle age 30-40) years, our body goes through changes that we cannot stop and growing old gratefully will cause us to not fret over such things because our minds and thoughts are set on the things above. (Colossians 3:2)

Some of you might still be young, having babies and snapping back into good shape rather quickly and there are others who after the first one (or few) might have a drastic body change (from structural or hormonal imbalance etc) and not look the way you did before, the weight might not come off as fast or has shifted somewhere else. As you get older you notice that what was up high is now starting to descend lower and getting thicker.

What was once taught is now loosening up and sagging. The jawline may begin to disappear, hair may get drier or less vibrant, thin and shapely may become something of the past unless you spend countless hours exercising and counting every calorie; glowing skin becomes thin and lackluster. What used to be an endless energy supply runs out sooner and sickness can overtake you more often than before. Bones creak, muscles ache, eyes can't see quite as good and your mind can go blank at times. From a worldly aspect this sounds horrible but from a biblical aspect it can make a person grateful for every day, knowing that if we endure in the faith, our end is coming near to be set free from this aging body and for us to be with our Savior.

Even after being born again I spent a short period time physically trying to fight all that. Buying facial creams that claim to tighten wrinkles, working out for hours, counting calories to the point of obsession and being hungry all the time, jumping on the scale so often it was like being on a trampoline, pinching this and that, partaking of the latest diet and exercise fad etc. I was wasting my time on vanity and pride:-)

It was so deep that I did it even while I was very sick and suffering some serious issues. (Then I was obsessed with all the herbal cures and such to the point of wasting a tremendous amount of money looking for a cure.) For a time, in my youth in Christ, I allowed my flesh to deceive me into thinking I was doing it all to be healthy for the Lord but it was a sinful distraction, taking up a lot of my focus. Have any of you noticed that the more weight you lose the more pride you "have the potential" to gain? I would lose weight and that would make me proud and then my sickness would make me weak to where I couldn't

keep up that regime and I'd be discouraged and feel horrible. It's a distracting roller coaster that can be a big pitfall for even a godly woman whereas moderation is the key.

It all comes down to pride and vanity and part of it is that women are worried that their husband won't like it- or single women won't find a husband.

I know some of you who are married have suffered that when you learned that you are to cover your head and bodies in biblical clothing, thinking your husband might be looking at other scantily dressed women instead. Or as your body ages, it doesn't look as good and you think your husband won't love you anymore. Let me tell you something sisters, if your husband is looking at other women or doesn't love you because your body is aging, he's got a sin problem with God and he's in trouble. Yes, it is hard to be intimate or trust a husband who does that but you will have to work it out to where you can push that part of your flesh (feelings) aside and pray for him instead because either he's not a born again man and needs to be, or he's in danger of unrepentant sin, which is not allowed in heaven.

1 Peter 3 (read it again) talks about how a woman is to win her husband from the inside, adorning herself with a meek and quiet spirit, not the outside by doing her hair and such things to entice the flesh of her husband.

**1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;**

**2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.**

**3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;**

**4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.**

**5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:**

**6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.**

I encourage you to find a middle ground (moderation) like brother Jim encouraged me. It's a place where you are not concerned about what the outside looks like but you are taking care of the inside which equals it out in a good balance. It means exercising and eating in a manner that is about health and not looks. Apostle Paul teaches that exercise is of little value:

**For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.**

**(1 Timothy 4:8)**

But godliness is profitable to all things. Amen.

I hear women using this excuse all the time *'Well what about gluttony, shouldn't we exercise because of that?'* If you look at what the greek and hebrew word gluttony means, it's a voracious or riotous eating, it's not always what size you are. Do you realize gluttonous people can be skinny too? Most often, the women defending such *'over expense'* of exercising and specific eating, have the sin of pride because they want to maintain a body image of their liking and will be stressed because of it and focused on it...instead of things eternal. I also see such people who defend the extreme are also showing themselves off in unbiblical clothing that exposes their body. Exercise in moderation is good, IF you are doing it for health and not looks. We find that witness walking is a great way to get exercise but keeping the Lord first.

It's about a simplicity in this life, focusing on the things of God, not worried about wrinkles, heavier hips or thicker thighs. A humble, heavier godly woman will enter the kingdom of God before a skinny, self centered woman will.

I also want to put in here that many women suffer from more illnesses as they age and can get caught in the trap of spending a lot of time researching cures and money on those cures. We have to be careful that we go to our Father in heaven first to see if He will heal us. Oftentimes He may choose not to but rather give us the strength to get through them, not removing the thorn(s). We see apostle Paul asked the Lord 3 times and what did he get for a response?

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10)**

**7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.**

**8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.**

**9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

**10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.**

I fell into that trap myself of eating nothing but organic, taking all sorts of supplements, studying for many hours about healing herbs, going to a naturopathic dr and ignoring the strange things she said...and what I realized is that it made a little bit of difference in my health, but it was damaging to my spiritual health, our bank account and I was never able to fully cure myself. I'm not saying that some supplements or healthy eating won't help a person, what I'm saying is we can idolize good health and lust after it when 'maybe'

God doesn't want us to have it. Only you can determine this through prayer and being in the Spirit, not the flesh. If you suffer ongoing illness like I do, you may have to submit yourself to the fact that you might have them (and maybe more) until you die. We then have to have a content and thankful heart for the health the Lord has given us and some day, if we endure in the true faith until the end, we will receive a new body:-)

Be grateful for each day our body can do what we need it do do, regardless of what it looks like or feels like, because someday we will be set free from it. See 1 Corinthians 15:34-58. I look forward to that day.

**34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.**

**35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?**

**36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:**

**37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:**

**38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.**

**39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.**

**40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.**

**41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.**

**42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:**

**43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:**

**44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.**

**45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.**

**46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.**

**47 The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.**

**48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.**

**49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.**

**50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.**

**51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**

**52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

**53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.**

**54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.**

**55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?**

**56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.**

**57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.**

Let us all learn how to grow old gratefully and toss away the vanity of our youthful lust.

**Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**

**(2 Timothy 2:22)**