

# THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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## ***Tempus Fugit***

By Robert Turner

***“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”***

(Hebrews 11:6)

Our seeking of God must be diligent. What does this mean? It means that we must give ourselves to the quest for God with a priority and a passion that we don't invest in any other pursuit. God must be first in our hearts. We must be ready to sacrifice anything else -- indeed *all* else -- to see His face. Our hearts must be purged of any conflicting interest or competing desire. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (**Matthew 5:8**). In our longing for God we must be utterly sincere, and in our seeking of God we must be passionately committed. He deserves no less than our all.

God's making of the world is such that we find it necessary to seek and to search

for Him, but in truth "He is not far from each one of us" (**Acts 17:27**). His hiddenness in this present broken world is not meant to hinder us from finding Him, but to entice us. As He whets our appetite for Himself, God is weaning us away from our sinful, self-sufficient rebellion. He is teaching us to love Him. With convicting evidences of His power and loving tokens of His goodness, He is drawing us toward His eternal presence. "I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love" (**Hosea 11:4**). It is God's good pleasure to be found by all who long for Him in honest, obedient love.

God is not neutral with regard to the inclination of our hearts. He desires that we find Him. He yearns for those who delight in Him. "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (**James 4:8**). Yet there is a danger: we must not deceive ourselves that we are seeking *God* if in fact it is only certain blessings *from* God that we

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seek. Resisting the tendency to focus on ourselves, we must learn to seek *Him*, simply and contentedly. When we diligently do so, our reward will be God Himself and He will fill our deepest longings according to the design of His own love. Having sought God earnestly, we will be enriched by the joy of a heart that overflows with His glory.

## **Getting Older**

By W. Frank Walton

***“The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness”***  
(Proverbs 16:31).

As soon as we are born, everyone begins to get older. Have you ever plucked out a gray hair? Our sensual culture worships youth and good looks more than virtue and good sense. This began with those who came of age in the 1960's, saying, "Don't trust anyone over 30." Those spoiled baby boomers have had to revise their mantra, pushing it ever higher as they themselves age. However, there is more to life than being young, looking good, and having a good time.

In the Biblical world, gray hair was a badge of honor, not a sign of being decrepit.

"The splendor of old men is their gray head" (**Proverbs 20:29**). It represented maturity, hard-won experience and wisdom by living long and learning well from God's university of hard knocks. God's purpose for our lives is our spiritual and moral development, "so we might share in His holiness" (**Heb 12:10**).

It is not how long we live, but how well we live before God that counts. "Teach us to number our days, that we may present to you a heart of wisdom" (**Psa 90:12**). As the years roll by, we never retire from the Lord's service. Caleb was one of the faithful few to the divine vision to conquer Canaan with God's help against all odds. He remained active and alert to the end, with youthful exuberance to take on new challenges (**Joshua 14:6-15**). "Paul, the aged," still wrote encouraging letters during his final Roman imprisonment (**Philemon 1:9**). To keep his mind sharp and occupied, Paul was still studying toward the very end of his life (**2 Timothy 4:13**). Victor Hugo said, "Winter is on my head, but spring is in my heart."

Someone has said, "Experience is what you get after

you don't need it." No, if we keep active in the Lord's work, we can use our experience somewhere in the future, even if it is teaching someone younger (cf. **Titus 2:3-5**). Contrast this with some elders who may think serving as an elder is a lifetime appointment to a board of directors, regardless of their declining fitness of age and ability to execute the "hands on" work of shepherding the flock.

David Lipscomb, long-time editor of the Gospel Advocate and co-founder of David Lipscomb University, knew the Bible in his day about as well as anyone. In the very last months of his life at 84, he would sit in his rocking chair and study his Bible for up to 2 hours daily. In 1916, a year before his death, he wrote, "We have long ago passed the threescore and ten years allotted to man on earth.... As we approach the end, the more we study the word of God, the more anxious we are to meet him, knowing we have opposed all innovations and changes upon His order at every point along the line of duty drawn by Him" (Gospel Advocate, 1916, p. 1).

May this be our epitaph, that we were faithful to the Lord and His Word, as we get older

until the very end of our life on earth. It is better to wear out than rust out in the Lord's service. Christians should not detest getting older. As we progress through the Lord's school of discipleship, it brings us closer to graduating to that heavenly shore where there are delights with our Lord forever more (**2 Cor 4:16-18**). The sick and physically weak are then forever healthy and strong.

**"Children are so unpredictable. You never know what inconsistency they are going to catch you in next."**