

The Bulwark

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November 17, 2024

“FULL OF SAP AND VERY GREEN”

PICKLES: By Brian Crane



To say that many congregations of the Lord's people are going through dramatic demographic changes is a given. Somewhere along the line, it seems as if we have misplaced a generation (or two). Those young people were being counted on to carry forth the work. Now who is going to do the work? The answer to that query is seen in the 92nd psalms, verse fourteen. *“They will still yield fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and very green.”* Quite honestly there is no retirement in a spiritual sense. While it is true, that one may not be able to do all the things that once was done, but there must be adaptation and then proper application to the task at hand.

Do you realize how old Noah, Abraham and Moses were when called upon by God? Daniel was thought to be about 80 when he was thrown in the lion's den. It should be noted that prior to such he was still working daily, while maintaining a positive relationship with God and serving as stellar example. Consider as well Caleb who was one of the twelve spies that Moses had sent to check out Canaan, the land of promise. Only Caleb and Joshua recommended the children of Israel move forward and take the land, as they had God on their side (see Numbers chapters 13-14).

Now fast forward to Joshua 14:10-11. Notice what Caleb sets forth, *“And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the Lord spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming.”* He is ready to press the battle, there is work to do and he will not be content to sit on the sideline and leave the battle to the younger generation. He knows the victory awaits inasmuch as what he asserts in verse twelve, *“for you*

have heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said.”

What a thoroughly amazing mind set. Caleb focused on what God could do through him. He did not focus on his age, nor on his ability or inability as the case might be, rather his attitude was like what Paul wrote centuries later in Philippians 4:13, *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”* Regardless of advanced age, physical limitations or whatever else might be looked at as a hinderance, those excuses fall by the way-side. *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?”* (Romans 8:31) A few verses later one reads, *“But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.”* (v 37)

Thinking back to Psalms 92:14, age shouldn't deter us from thinking in monumental terms. As long as we have life, there are still great things we can do for the cause of Christ. Consider one example as seen in Psalms 48:12-14, where the psalmist notes the necessity to *“mark well the bulwark”* in order *“that you may tell it to the next generation.”* A responsibility exists that is clearly pivotal for the stability and advancement for *“Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven...”* (Hebrews 12:22-23) In other words, the church that belongs to Christ.

When opportunities arise, we can't afford self the “luxury” of pulling back. Welcome them, embrace them knowing that with God for us, we can indeed enjoy victory. (wbe)