

## AGE MATTERS

***When Joshua was an old man, the Lord said to him, “You are growing old and much land remains to be conquered.”***

***Joshua 13: 1***

We are living in a period of time when “age matters”. I was reminded of this last night standing in line at the grocery store when I recognized a person behind me despite his mask. As we waited, I asked him if he has had his vaccine shot yet. Currently, people 80-years-of-age and up are eligible for the vaccine. He replied, “No but I am in the next age category and can’t wait until it is my group’s turn”.

Right now age matters when it comes to getting a vaccine. What I have found amusing though is age didn’t disqualify this one 90-year-old-woman from being asked this question before being administered the vaccine: “Are you pregnant?” This 90-year-old woman’s name was not Sarah, or the Rev. Mother, but if vaccines were rolled out at the time Abraham and Sarah were alive I could see the need to ask her that question. Presently, our age does matter as we await our turn to be vaccinated.

Society hasn’t always embraced the view that age matters. Because of my age, I remember the attitude when I was growing up toward young children that they were to be seen and not heard. Age didn’t help me either when I came out of university and was looking for my first job as an accountant. I remember being rejected several times at job interviews for being too young or unqualified. I remember this same view when I started ministry and somebody in Petrolia said to me, you are too young to be a minister. Funny, I haven’t heard somebody say that recently. Society not only disqualifies some people as being too young but also as being too old. So many people today 55 and above are saying it is so hard to find work because they are viewed as being too old or too close to retirement.

While society and culture may discriminate based on age, the Kingdom of God does no such thing. One thing Scripture makes very clear is that no matter our age, we can always be used by God. One example we see of this can be found in Joshua 13. Joshua was between 85-100 years old, according to scholars, when God said to him

***“You are growing old, and much land remains to be conquered.”***

Despite his age, God was not asking Joshua to hand over the reins to somebody younger but rather was encouraging him to keep serving because there was still work to do. Age did not disqualify Joshua from serving God. Age did not disqualify a young boy from offering his lunch to Jesus either. When the disciples began to search to see how much food they had to feed the crowd of 5,000 men, John’s Gospel tells us

***“There’s A Young Boy Here with five barley loaves and two fish (John 6:9).***

We know what Jesus did with this young boy’s offering.

These two examples from Scripture are a reminder to us that our age does not disqualify us from using our gifts to serve God. This is very important for us to remember as we emerge out of this pandemic. One thing people in various age groups in our society will need as they emerge from this pandemic is hope:

- *Those who are depressed all need hope,*
- *Those who are lonely will be in need of hope,*
- *Those who have suffered and lost loved ones through this will need hope,*
- *People and businesses struggling financially need hope.*

With all this desire for hope, society will need the message of hope and faith found in the Good News of Jesus Christ. Christ’s Church in our community and all over the world can play an important role in instilling hope in people’s lives again. As members of the Body of Christ we have important work to do for the Lord as the world emerges from this pandemic. Because of this, God’s words to Joshua are His words to us too:

*You are growing old and much remains to be conquered.”*

In our case the land to be conquered is offering hope and “GOOD News” to all age groups that are hurting and suffering coming out of this pandemic. No matter how young or old we are, age does not disqualify us from doing this work for the Lord. So regardless of age, let us be ready as the Church eventually regathers to roll up our sleeves and do our part in serving God and bringing hope to this hurting world.

Keep Safe & God Bless

Pastor Dean