



Praying as families for the aged and the elderly.

Day 32

The elderly and aged individuals are a blessing to our communities, bringing with them a wealth of experience and knowledge. However, aging comes with its share of physical and social challenges. The global population of those aged above 60 is steadily increasing, constituting one-sixth of the world's population. As they become physically weaker, they often require care and assistance. This stage of life, rich in experiences, should be a time when their journey can edify and guide others. Unfortunately, for many, it becomes a period marked by feelings of isolation, loneliness, and a sense of being unwanted.

Health issues are a key factor contributing to the dependency of the elderly on others, presenting a global concern that needs the attention of God's people. The United Nations has declared 2021–2030 the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing, urging the World Health Organization to lead its implementation. The Church must play a leading role in providing the necessary care and support for the elderly to age gracefully and maintain good health.

While elder care homes have been established in the West for some time, the concept is gaining importance in the East. In countries like India and across Asia, sending older individuals to elder care homes may carry social stigma, viewed as neglecting ones responsibilities towards parents. Consequently, many elderly parents live with their children, a blessing for some, but a challenge for others. I remember one elderly person asking a question, "Is it a blessing to live long, or is it a curse?" Then, with a pause, he answered, "It's only a blessing when you have your children and grandchildren around you to live and love. Otherwise, it's a curse to live long." This was based on his own experience of not having his children nearby who had migrated to other countries.

The Bible offers profound words of promise and direction to the aged, encouraging them to bear fruit in their old age (Psalm 92:14) and to exhibit good character, good judgment, and a strong foundation in faith, love, and endurance (Titus 2:2-5). God's Word



assures them that the Lord will sustain them and strengthen their frame even in old age (Isaiah 46:4; Isaiah 58:11). So the elderly need not spend this phase of their life in regret, be renewed in their view of this new phase of their life. They can be fruitful like Moses, mentoring and preparing Joshuas and Calebs for his work to pass on the baton of God's work.

It is imperative for the families, the church and the society to encourage our elderly to use their experience in creative ways to benefit God kingdom with a renewed sense of purpose. Additionally, old age is a time to be ready to meet the Lord, emphasizing the importance of leading those who have not accepted Christ to commit their lives to Him.

LET US PRAY

Lord Jesus, we acknowledge your care for us even in our old age. We bring before you the struggles of those who feel unused and rejected. Help the Church to be a source of comfort and care for the elderly, utilizing their wisdom to lead others to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. We pray for those who have not yet encountered your salvation, that their hearts may be receptive to the gospel. Grant grace to caretakers, children, and grandchildren to be there for the elderly in their time of need. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

