

## HANDLE WITH CARE: AGING WELL, CARING WELL

Scripture used: [John 19:17-18, 26-27](#) (NIV)

### OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon continued the Handle With Care series with a focus on relationships with elders, particularly as we face a national crisis around extreme longevity, dementia, and loneliness among seniors. Fifteen million Americans, most of them women, take full-time care of a physically or mentally frail elderly person. In our Scripture, Jesus asks His disciple to care for His mother Mary as He will be unable to do so after “dying young” to redeem our sins.

### KEY POINTS

- 1) To age well, we must first live wisely, with intention, and with anticipation of loss. We should not be fearful, but we have to be realistic. We have to prioritize relationships, and focus on spending valuable time with the people we love. We have to treat our bodies with deference, as sacred vehicles for a healthy and purposeful life. Let's remember that Jesus offered His body to be broken for us.
- 2) We must emulate a person whom we see modeling the “aging with grace” attitude to life. This is about being proud of who we are, of our age, of the honor of growing old and being a “wise elder”. It's about looking forward to who God continues to shape us to be and not looking backward upon our failures or limitations. [Psalm 73:25-26](#) speaks of God as being the strength of my heart throughout the journey of life.
- 3) We should never be too busy to care for others. We must pay attention to elderly relatives, friends, and neighbors, including visiting them, looking for signs that they're struggling, connecting over memories, doing activities together (from museum outings to watching movies at home). Teach elders about technology and social media. Meet with their friends.
- 4) But be realistic about what you can do, don't try to be a hero, and have a clear-eyed assessment of the situation & your limits, including your stress and exhaustion. Build a team to care for the elderly person, and if possible, involve your own kids. Appreciate and celebrate caregivers. Seek spiritual support. Make sure you have downtime. Pastor Hurmon used the metaphor of holding a glass of water in one's outstretched hand. An effortless gesture, it becomes tiresome if sustained for hours, and unbearable if sustained for days and weeks. This is the same with caregiving.
- 5) Caring is grace-filled and empathetic. This is not the time to pay back flawed parents with willful and vindictive neglect. No one has ever expressed regret for caring too much. On the contrary, we emerge on the other side as better persons. [Isaiah 46:4](#) tells us that, as we carry others along, we too will be saved.

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Discern your heart. How do you feel about your own aging? What elders has God placed in your life to care for? How do you feel about the opportunity or responsibility to care for older loved ones?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [John 19:17-18](#) and [26-27](#). What stands out to you about how Jesus was proactive in ensuring that his mother was cared for? How is God speaking to you through this passage about those you feel a responsibility to care for? What do you find most challenging about caring well for those in need? Share what it means to care well for others and to be cared for in whatever season of life you are in: student, young adult, single, married, senior, etc. Are there ways that community and relationships make a difference in caring well for yourself and allowing you to care well for others?
- 3) **DO** - Consider ways to engage more deeply with God in the next 40 days of prayer, fasting, and consecration leading up to Easter. If God spoke to you through this message about caring well for others, whether an elder/parent or peer, consider a practical step this week to let them know you are there for them.