

Thought for the Day 25th August - John Thew

A GOOD OLD AGE

Last week my brother-in-law – marginally younger than I am – sent me a copy of a new book. Title: “A GOOD OLD AGE”. I wondered what he was trying to tell me. Should I be pleased, annoyed or overtaken by some other emotion?

Turning to “*A Suggestion to the Reader*”, I noted that ‘*this is probably not a book best read in one go.*’ Is the author afraid I might fall asleep halfway through chapter 2?

I turned to the second half of the first sentence. ‘... *read a chapter a day for one month ... [for] each chapter tries to establish a Christian imperative ... for every day of our life as an old person.*’ Well, *older*, anyway.

As I turned the page, past the *Introduction*, I found an alphabet of ‘*urgent and important priorities*’, 26 in all, that of course cannot be taken on board all at once. Not even by younger oldies!

So, in obedience, I started at A and found encouragement and delight. And I continue to work my way through the author’s helpful imperatives.

For many years author Derek Prime was senior pastor of Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh and well known as a great preacher. As well as the scriptures, he also knows something about old age. At last count he was 89.

And that was his last count, for the Lord called him Home in March of this year, 2020. But Rev. Prime is still speaking words of wisdom and encouragement through this little book. And I am enjoying it.

Back to the Introduction. I read, “While there may be bad old age, when we feel ‘*weighed down with years*’ (Jer.6.11), there is ‘*a good old age*’ (Gen. 25.8) to which we may aspire. Every period of life has its appointed benefits and excellence (Prov.20.29).

And I would add, its appointed costs and trials. Even those years of early adulthood – though most of us do not recognise this till sometime later!

The Introduction finishes with this prayer: *Heavenly Father, whatever may be happening to me because of my increasing age, help me to forget the things behind me that I ought to forget and instead strain towards what is ahead, pressing on towards the goal to win the prize for which you have called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus. For His Name’s sake. Amen.*

Moving past the Introduction, I found A is for Acceptance. Our lives are changing in ways we cannot govern. And the world is changing too, leaving ‘the good old day’ (if they ever existed) far behind. In fact, we are in the middle of a change era that has not been seen since ... since creation?

Then B. B is for Believe. Translating our faith in the Lord Jesus into daily faithfulness as we follow the Master, finds different applications as we become less agile, less mobile.

Then comes C for Contentment. And so on.

At X, the author writes, ‘I would not be surprised if, before reading our first chapter, you look up what the letter represents.’ He was right, and you may well do the same thing when you get your hands on the book.

At \$14 from Koorong, the book is a bargain that will refresh your old soul. But if you would rather borrow my copy, you are welcome, though you will have to wait two more weeks.

Then, quite by accident, so to speak, a version of 'Jesus Loves Me' appeared on facebook yesterday.

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

*Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me, for the bible tells me so.*

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song.
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won.
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.

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