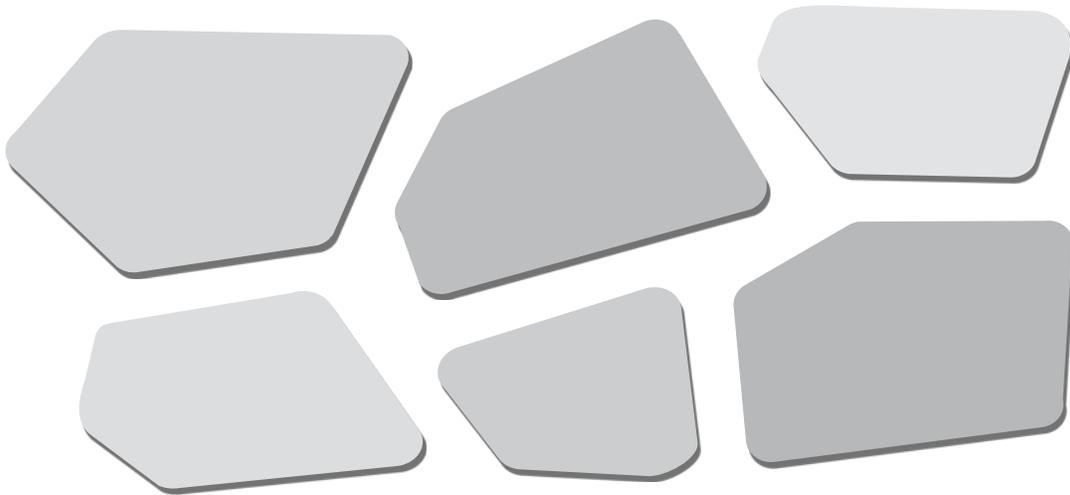


~ Aging with Grace Handout ~

CHAPTER 2: ANNA

Luke 2:25-38

1. . . . *ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls* (Jer. 6:16b).



Growing in Grace Principles from Chapter 1

- (1) God reveals Himself to us in His Word. Our flourishing happens in proportion to time spent getting to know Him through His Word. An ever-growing knowledge of God produces a more mature, God-centered perspective of our identity and purpose which are the same in every season of life.
- (2) As we move through the various seasons of life, the steady rhythm of weekly corporate worship is one way we regularly stop and unite our voices with others to give thanks to the Lord for His amazing grace. This helps to develop the grace of gratitude, which is a means and evidence of flourishing.
- (3) Our bodies change as we age, so do our spirits. We must guard against our hearts becoming brittle and bitter by praying for grace to abide in Christ and bear the fruit of steadfast love and faithfulness to others, even when it is costly.
- (4) There are many things we can no longer do as we age, but age does not keep us from fulfilling our purpose to glorify and enjoy God. An ever-growing knowledge of God's undeserved love—His grace—changes our motivation: “The love of Christ controls us”

(2 Cor. 5:14). When our prayer is that His love for us will increasingly compel us to stop living for ourselves and to live for His glory, we will age with grace.

- (5) The more we know the Triune God, the more we rejoice in our identity as His child and our purpose to glorify Him. This knowledge results in worship that is transformative. God makes us glad. God fills us with joy. And this gladness and joy, this wonder and praise, do not diminish with age; they increase until we take our place in heaven.

Sharon Betters and Susan Hunt, *Aging with Grace* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021) 33, 34, 36, 39, 40.

2. Prayer

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation;
for You I wait all the day long.
You have made known to me the paths of life;
You will make me full of gladness with Your presence*

Ps. 119:105, Ps. 25:4-5, ACTS 2:28

3. Responsive reading

And they shall be my people, and I will be their God (Jer. 32:38).

They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God (Ezek. 37:23).

But this command I gave them: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you" (Jer. 7:23).

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer. 31:33).

Let your character [your moral essence, your inner nature] be free from the love of money [shun greed—be financially ethical], being content with what you have; for He has said, "I will never [under any circumstances] desert you [nor give you up nor leave you without support, nor will I in any degree leave you helpless], nor will I forsake or let you down or relax My hold on you [assuredly not]!"
(Heb.13:5 Amplified).

4. What stepping-stones did Anna utilize in her walk of faith?

_____ As a prophetess, Anna taught God's Word, probably often to younger women.

_____ She did not depart from the temple.

_____ She worshiped with fasting and prayer.

_____ What was her first response when she saw the baby in Mary's arms?

_____ She spoke of the Messiah to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

What fruit did this produce in Anna? _____

5. Responsive Reading:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope (Rom. 15:13).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

6. Walking It Out



Older woman example: You are a widow and mostly housebound. Though your children live nearby, you rarely see them. Your grandchildren are even more distant. You were involved in your local church, but now feel forgotten since you can't go every week. You feel worthless.

Younger woman example: Your grandmother is in a nursing home and often remarks she is lonely. You have three small children and a life that is already too full. Everyone agrees you don't have time to spend with a cranky old woman, but you can't shake the guilty feeling.

How can you help each of these women think biblically?

How can the stepping-stones help each woman?

Which Growing in Grace principles apply to her situation?

What are some practical ways each woman could live covenantally?

Bonus: *Aging with Grace – Ask an Older Woman* five-minute video of storyteller Jane Patete: “How do I deal with fear as a widow?” (www.agingwithgrace.online)

Flourishing and Fruitful Women

Elisabeth Elliot

This hard place in which you perhaps find yourself is the very place in which God is giving you opportunity to look only to Him, to spend time in prayer, and to learn long-suffering, gentleness, meekness—in short to learn the depths of the love that Christ Himself has poured out on all of us.

Elisabeth Elliot. *Keep a Quiet Heart*
(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 233.