



*Rise in the presence of the aged
and show respect for the elderly and revere your God.
I am the LORD. Leviticus 19:32*

Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.
Exodus 20:12. These are two important Scriptures expressing the importance of respect and honor for the aged in our family and community. When loving and caring family and friends take time to be with their elders, they learn valuable life lessons as well as recognize the many losses they experience with age:

- They're not driving anymore, either on their own accord or they were strongly encouraged not to.
- They can't hear as clearly, especially if there is background noise in the room.
- They can't read for very long and the print seems so small in the paper and in books.
- They can't remember as well so they compensate with notes as reminders.
- They can't walk as fast and trying to keep up makes them feel guilty for slowing others down.
- They wear pads & pull-ups because they can't get to the toilet in time. Embarrassment leads to staying home.
- The bed is getting harder to make and they can't change the sheets very easily.
- The finances are more difficult to understand, and their signature isn't legible anymore.
- The floors are more difficult to vacuum due to weakness in the back and unsteadiness on their feet.
- Their trusting spirit becomes a target for scammers, so they don't answer the phone or door unless they are expecting someone, or the caller ID identifies them with a familiar name.
- They don't go out in the yard without assistance because the family fears they will fall. I remember when my grandmother lived with us, and she had gone out on the deck to take in some fresh air. When returning, she tripped over the threshold and tore up her right arm on the sliding glass door to avoid a full fall. After some wound care we suggested perhaps she not go outside unless someone was with her. I remember her gentle but firm reply as if it were yesterday, "If I can't go outside, then I might as well die." Her comment changed my perspective and approach to care for, not only my grandmother, but for the family's we serve.

The losses mentioned are HUGE, but the losses that seem to hurt the most are the loss of honor, respect, value, and purpose in life. For example, when conversations about concerns of the aging are not addressed, the senior doesn't feel heard. Even if you are working on a solution, tell your aging loved one you are doing so. Write it down. Put it on the refrigerator in case they forget.

Another example is when they don't feel included in conversations. Whether it be at their own doctor's appointment and the doctor talks to the family member instead of the senior, or if adult children are making decisions for their parent, the parent needs to be included. Perhaps you have included them, and they have forgotten or didn't hear the details due to hearing issues. It is helpful to write down those conversations on a BIG calendar or piece of paper posted on their refrigerator so they can be reminded of that shared information.

After hearing many stories and experiencing some of these aging issues myself, the Lord inspired me to write a blessing prayer-poem in honor of the aging. Receiving *the blessing* from one's father was a high honor in the Old Testament. The priestly *blessing* of Numbers 6 is still given today in many churches. May this prayer-poem bless you, the reader, to the point of reaching out to one of those aging seniors in your family, church, or neighborhood so you may receive *the blessing*. And if you are one of those aging seniors, part of your purpose is to be a mighty prayer warrior. This prayer is written for you to pray, thanking God for each person who reaches out to you, by name, and asking His blessing of favor and peace upon them.

The Blessing Prayer of the Aged

by Christine Brisco

**Lord, I know You see me. I know You care.
I know You won't give me more than I can bare.**

**Thank You for life; for each day here on earth;
For sending me help and for valuing my worth.**

**Bless those who slow down and walk my pace
Without challenging me to keep up their foottrace.**

**Bless those who write cards and pay my bills
Without shaky hands or tremors, but still.**

**Bless those who cook food from a recipe
And then pull up a chair for a meal with me.**

**Bless those who see a need to fulfill,
Like picking up groceries or delivering my pills.**

**Bless those who share a long-awaited hug;
Their touch is the finest dopamine drug.**

**Bless those who repeat their words to me
With patience and at a slower degree.**

**Bless those who know my eyes are dim
And bring large print or sing a hymn.**

**Bless those who know my mind is slow
And write things down before they go.**

**Bless those who think, but never say,
"You've told that story twice today!"**

**Bless those who make it verbally known
That I am loved, and prayed for, and never alone.**

**Bless them each, O Lord, whose hearts You've stirred
With the richest of blessings from Your Word:**

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26