

**A QUESTION FOR THE AGES**

*“Say to them, ‘Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah and all people of Judah and everyone living in Jerusalem who come through these gates.’” (Jeremiah 17:20, NIV)*

**I**F YOU’RE AN OLD GOLFER, I’ve got some good news for you even as your body (and your game) may be on the decline. More than half of holes-in-one are made by players older than 50! Hang in there, for your turn may still be coming.

Golf is a rare athletic endeavor that really does last. While Jordan Spieth and Michelle Wie may be the 20-something cover stars of the golf magazines, Miguel Angel Jimenez has gathered two-thirds of his wins since he turned 40, including his victory two Sundays ago against the young men on the European Tour. In golf, experience collects as many trophies as youthful athleticism. Maybe more. Phil Mickelson told writer Rick Reilly recently that he not only expects to yet win a U.S. Open, but he figures he’ll win two!

So if you’re kicking yourself because you’re on the down side of the hill, it could be time to stand up and get ready. Golf—and God—may have a whole lot more in store for you.

The Bible is not silent about age. It warns that old kings can grow resistant to correction (Ecclesiastes 4:13) and it offers examples of rulers, once heeding the Lord, who turned in the comforts of their aging to aimless living. The pages of Job demonstrate a cultural deference to age, but also a recognition that this deference should not be unconditionally given. And in writing to Timothy, Paul noted that older men must be treated with respect, but that they may need exhortation all the same (1 Timothy 5:1).

So if you are old, do not be discouraged. Rather, allow yourself to be recharged, driven to new work in the kingdom of God.

We might say that Jesus did his best work in his 30s, but we can also say that he did his best work in the last days of his life! Whether you “feel young” or “feel old” is of little consequence. What does matter is whether you are still considering the written words of the Lord and the Spirit’s voice in your ear. Are you still attending to what God has for you? This is a question for all ages, not only for those who are strong enough or skilled enough or even spiritual enough. It is a question for all who say they believe, that we may rightly serve the one who loves us.

**Opening questions** What are the advantages and disadvantages of youth? What is good and bad about aging? How do you “stay in the fight” when you feel like you’re losing your edge?

**READING** Matthew 13:10-17, Psalm 71:18

**Ears to hear**  
What difference does Jesus lay out in the Matthew 13 passage? What are the marks of those who follow him? How do you actually “hear” Jesus’ instruction for your life?

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**Beyond ourselves**  
How does Psalm 71:18 stir your thinking about your responsibility to those who come after you? What steps can you take to live out this verse?

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Pastor John Piper has said: “Knowing that we have an infinitely satisfying and everlasting inheritance in God just over the horizon of life makes us zealous in our few remaining years here to spend ourselves in the sacrifices of love, not the accumulation of comforts.” What are the sacrifices of love and how can you make them?

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