

God Is N.T.O. (Never Too Old)

I said something just over a week ago that really caught me by surprise.
I still can't believe I actually said it.
It wasn't something I had planned to say.
I just thoughtlessly blurted it out.
And yet this statement did not come out of the blue.

It began two years ago up in the hills behind our house.

In fact it was in one specific hill that you see on the screen.

As it zooms in you can see a spot where a rock once perched.

It was actually a piece of petrified wood.

One of the first pieces that I had seen.

Richard, our son-in-law was with me and encouraged me to take it home.

So we dislodged it from the hill and it dropped right into a wash-out.

And there it lay for several weeks.

On Richard's next visit we managed to cajole it out of the washout.

And on the next visit we nudged it a few more feet.

Every time we have gone into the hills we have moved it closer to home.

Initially we were only about 1,000 feet away from the car and trailer.

Since then we have sped toward our destination at about 30 inches per hour.

And now two years later we are still moving that rock.

Last week Richard came to visit again.

We headed out to our beloved rock.

But this time we had help.

Richard's younger brother Ricardo came for a visit.

We wanted him to see "our rock."

Actually we wanted him to help move "our rock."

So we went to work on it and moved it 40 feet in just over an hour.

I wanted you see "our rock".

But I thought you should have some perspective on its size.

I had hoped to take its picture with a dog like a St. Bernard.

So here is the rock with the closest thing I could come to a St. Bernard.

Since the St. Bernard wasn't available I had to use Jolie.

While flipping the rock with Richard and Ricardo my words slipped out.

They are probably the most honest words I have ever spoken.

In our attempt to roll the rock yet again, these words rolled off my tongue.

"I'm getting too old for this."

Well I am two years older than when I first laid a hand on that rock.

At the pace we are moving I'll be in my 90's trying to get that rock home.

Richard won't let it lie in peace.

Maybe he wants to see me lying in peace.

"I'm getting too old for this."

That expression made me start thinking about God.

Don't ask me why, it just did.

I began to wonder how often my life is like that rock.

I can be stubborn and refuse to move where God wants me to go.

Does God look at me and moan, "I'm getting too old for this?"

After all it was a long time ago when God created the heavens and the earth.

He is thousands of years older than He was "In the beginning".

This is the first story of Vacation Bible School which starts tomorrow.

God began creating and a mere six days later He created Adam.

Of course everything God created was good.

But Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in disobedience to God.

They sinned and became like our stubborn rock.

God literally had to drive them out of the Garden of Eden.

And now thousands of years later He is trying to move me.

And God is trying to move you.

He wants to restore our broken relationship.

And He moves us toward restoring relationships in our lives.

We can put up a lot of resistance.

God has put everything He has into the work of restoration.

He sent His Son Jesus, the Messiah.

God took on our flesh and became a man.

Jesus carried the weight of our sin and was nailed to a cross.

God wants to see everyone enter His Kingdom.

He has worked on every life that has ever been born.

But sin always gets to us first.

We are already stubborn and stiff-necked.

We are already resistant to His love and grace-filled prodding.

Who could blame God if He said, "I'm getting too old for this"?

And yet that is something only we will say.

We say it because of sin's devastating effects on life.

Sin has robbed us of God's goodness.

Sin introduced aging and death and weakness and brokenness.

Because of sin we work by the sweat of our brow.

Because of sin we toil and work all the days of our life.

No wonder we lament "I'm getting too old for this."

But God is "Never Too Old"!

God never wearies of loving.

"But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children" (Psalm 103:17)

God never loses hope for His creation.

"Give thanks to God—He is good and His love never quits. Say, 'Save us, Savior God, round us up and get us out of these godless places, so we can give thanks to Your holy Name, and bask in Your life of praise.' Blessed be God, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Then everybody said, 'Yes! Amen!' and 'Praise God!' (1 Chronicles 16:34-36)

God never weakens or ages.

"Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God." (Psalm 90:2)

God never sleeps or struggles with fatigue.

"He will not let you stumble; the one who watches over you will not slumber." (Psalm 121:3)

God never ignores or misses our struggles.

"That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to Him than they are? (Matthew 6:25-26)

God is never powerless to act.

"Yes, the old requirement about the priesthood was set aside because it was weak and useless. For the law never made anything perfect. But now we have confidence in a better hope, through which we draw near to God. ... But because Jesus lives forever, His priesthood lasts forever. Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through Him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf." (Hebrews 7:18-19, 24-25)

God never gives up.

"Have you ever come on anything quite like this extravagant generosity of God, this deep, deep wisdom? It's way over our heads. We'll never figure it out. Is there anyone around who can explain God? Anyone smart enough to tell him what to do? Anyone who has done him such a huge favor that God has to ask his advice? Everything comes from Him; everything happens through Him; everything ends up in Him. Always glory! Always praise! Yes. Yes. Yes." (Romans 11:33-36)

God is never weighted down with sin.

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet He did not sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

I'm so glad I will never hear God said, "I'm getting too old for this."

God is eternal so it is impossible for Him to be old, let alone be too old.

He is not like us because He is the Creator.

It is through Him that we live and move and have our being.

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything. Rather, He himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us. 'For in Him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill." (Acts 17:24-29)

What is weighing you down?

Where is life too heavy or exhausting?

What has you bogged down and immobilized?

God says, "I'm Never Too Old to work in your life.

"It doesn't matter what it is, I am the Creator and Sustainer.

"You can depend on Me.

"You can put your faith in Me.

The Psalmist hammered this point home.

He wanted the people of Israel to remember what God could do in their lives.

God was as able to work in their lives as He did in throughout their history.

I want us to close with that same reminder.

Let's read together Psalm 136 in a responsive fashion.

Let's not miss the point God wants to make through the Psalmist.

Psalm 136

How do we respond to all of this today?

God's word gives us some very clear direction

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess." (Hebrews 4:14)

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

"Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds," (Hebrews 10:23-24)

God wants to spiritually transform us.

He wants to free us from saying, "I'm too old for this."

He spurs us to help us.

We are all familiar with the spurs worn by cowboys.

The use of spurs was very common in Jesus' time as well.

Roman horsemen used spurs to give direction to a horse.

But a person had to earn their spurs.
They were earned through demonstration of faithfulness in battle.
We are told to spur one another on.
That means we have received our spurs.
We have been declared faithful.
We have received the gift of God's presence through Jesus.
We have discovered God's faithfulness and unfailing love.
And we are commissioned to share that with others.

Who do you know who is discouraged?

Or who do you know who is moving away from God?

Who do you know who has lost their purpose in life?

Is there someone you work with, or live with who you can spur on?

God wants to use you to make a difference in someone else's life.

God is Never Too Old.

And through Him we never become too old to do His work.