

## **“Not Alone: An Exhortation for the Elderly”**

by  
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**What** A funny and honest look at the challenges we’ve faced as the world around us changed in an unforgettable season, this is a reminder for the elderly among us that they are seen by God and so important to the church.

Themes: Elderly, Encouragement, Aging, Pandemic, COVID-19, Grandparents, Legacy, Support, Community, Relationships, Love

**Who** 1 Actor- male or female (18+)

**When** Present

**Costumes and Props** The actor/reader can wear glasses and a lab coat if you want to increase the comedic effect OR, they can be dressed in simple, semi-professional attire.

**Why** Psalm 71:5-8; Titus 2:1-8

**How** **If you are acting the monologue on stage**, posture yourself as someone who is confident in themselves, strong and an authority. And as you move into the exhortation, use the confidence you’ve displayed and earned to maximize the empathy.

**If you are reading for Zoom**, read it with passion and emotion, and don’t be afraid to take your time. Look in at the audience or directly into the computer camera. Ensure all your notifications are turned off and emails are closed and have the PDF on screen near the camera.

**If you read the script from the pulpit**, be familiar enough with your lines so that your head isn’t down in the script the entire time. Look audience members in the eye. Take time to pause and breathe. Embrace the moment.

**Time** Approximately 3-4 minutes

**Actor:** You probably thought you were sitting down to enjoy a church service right about now.

For those of you at home, watching on a screen, you may have even been about to turn on the kettle before the pastor launches into his sermon.

And now I assume you're asking, *who is this person?* Well, I'm glad you did.

Hi. I'm Dr. Checkinn, and this is an intervention for all the elderly members of the church. If you think you're an (*using air quotes*)"older person" or others think you're an (*using air quotes*)"older person," then this is for you.

You, of course, didn't choose to meet with me. But the staff team at your church asked me to show up right now in this service so that we could have a little chat.

Because you matter so much to the church.

Your family of believers are concerned because it's been such an unusual and challenging season, and they want you to know that you're loved. That you're seen.

And so that's why I simply want to ask you: How's *life* these days?

Stop for a moment and let the question steep. Let the flavours of what the word "life" means saturate your thoughts for a moment.

If you like to Google, you may come across this definition of "life." (And if you don't know what Google is, the youth pastor will explain it to you after the service). I got this definition of *life* from dictionary.com:

**Life:** Noun. The condition that distinguishes organisms from inorganic objects, being manifested by growth...and the power of adaptation to your environment, through changes originating internally.

Think about that last bit. Let me say it again: *The power of adaptation to your environment through changes originating internally.* What a thought!

So much about life has changed in the last year, has it not?

The world around us. The nature of the world. How we shop and communicate. How we organize and do church. How we do medicine and community. So many external things. But there's also been so many changes within *you*.

So much on the outside has been out of your control, but what changes originated internally in your life?

Your generation faced unthinkable, even unimaginable challenges before. So you have different reference points to the challenges of today. Like the marathoner who trains over a lifetime and whose endurance increases with age and time, you have a foundation of wisdom and experience. And our church wants to learn from your experience and resilience.

And yet, perhaps you couldn't have imagined that when Easter or Thanksgiving or Christmas rolled around, that you wouldn't be able to see your family. No travel to them. No travel to you. No warmth of fellowship around the table as you've done every year for as long as you can remember.

Maybe you've experienced the double-edged sword that the passing of a loved one or friend means during this season, as you couldn't properly remember or celebrate their life. Couldn't put your arms around them in their final days. Couldn't be with them to bring comfort or to show your love and care.

Perhaps nothing in life could have prepared you for some of the things you experienced in this season. And yet here you are. Doing your best to keep the faith and look to God as you walk new challenges out. Again.

Maybe you've heard the ticking of the clock too loudly, as that persistent second hand makes its circular path around each day. Where normally friends, visits, activities filled up so many moments, there's just been the tick tock, tick tock of time.

It could be that you've aged faster than before. As the limitations of lockdowns or social distancing kept you from the proven routine that's kept you feeling and looking young. Causing anxiety and even dread.

For some of you, this season may not have been that different from any other. You've walked through it with your faith and lifestyle intact. Unscathed.

Wherever you're at and whatever your needs, no matter who you are, you need a fresh supply of God's grace. You need to hear that you are loved by God. He sees you and he knows you.

Close your eyes right now, wherever you are. If you have a loved one next to you, take their hand in yours. Take a deep breath. Let it fill your lungs.

PURCHASE

The Spirit of God is *with you*. And he is your helper. An ever-present help in your current trials and challenges and in your triumphs too. God is present to comfort you and to counsel you.

Take another deep breath to just focus on the truth of that today.

*Pause.*

SCRIPT

The Psalmist writes:

"For you have been my hope, Sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth. From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you. I have become a sign to many; you are my strong refuge. My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your splendor all day long."

Dear friend, I want you to hear this today: God is **your** strong refuge and hope, no matter what you face. I pray that this truth will minister to you, internally, today. May it touch your life.

God loves you. And this church loves you. We believe in you and we're here to support you.

REMOVE

And today, before we do anything else, we want you to hear that.

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