

MAXIMIZING THE LEVERAGE OF OUR LATTER YEARS

By Jim Langley

Years ago, I began writing a series of essays I called "Fourth Quarter Strategies." The premise is that while every stage of our professional life is important, our final quarter should be our best. If we remain healthy, living to age 80 and beyond is a reasonable goal. That would mean the last 20-plus years of our lives could be the most productive of all – because of both expertise and experience.

Some time ago Alan Smith, a staff director for CBMC met with a small group of older Christian business leaders (some of them were retired). He encouraged them to recognize the incredible value they still had for the Lord as well as for younger professionals they interact with in the local marketplace.

Smith offered six Bible verses as "food for thought" that share one thing in common: All are found in the first chapter and third verse in their respective books. We believe this is not coincidental, but by design, to underscore the importance older followers of Christ have for God's purposes. Here are those verses:

There is no time limit to being fruitful. *"That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever they do prospers" (Psalm 1:3).*

Wisdom is to be passed down through the generations. *"Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation" (Joel 1:3).*

We can serve as examples for others to follow. *"We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 1:3).*

Spiritual growth never ends. *"We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing" (2 Thessalonians 1:3).*

Our prayers make an eternal impact. *"I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers" (2 Timothy 1:3).*

Wisdom, understanding and faith are to be shared. *"We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you may also have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).*

As a fellow follower of Christ, I agree with Smith's perspective on the value of our latter years. Many of us are less encumbered with work demands and more available to serve, teach, mentor and disciple others. God does not want us to sit back and put ourselves on a shelf for our remaining years on earth.

In his letter to the Church in Philippi, the Apostle Paul succinctly concluded, *"to live is Christ and to die is gain"* (Philippians 1:21). His life gives us a beautiful example of how to live our lives to the very end for the Lord Jesus. I encourage you to join me with the attitude of a distance runner determined to reach the finish line strong, focusing on the prize that lies ahead!

© 2025, all rights reserved. Jim Langley has been writing for more than 30 years while working as a life and health insurance agent. In recent years, his passion has turned to writing about his relationship with

God. His goal is to encourage others to draw near to Him as well. A long-time member of CBMC, he started writing "Fourth Quarter Strategies" in 2014.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How do you relate to the content of this Monday Manna? If you are a younger business or professional person, still building your career, have you taken advantage of the wisdom and experience of older colleagues?
If you are in your latter years, have you recognized the value you can continue to bring to the workplace – and to those you encounter each day?
2. What are obstacles that can prevent or inhibit older and younger people in the marketplace from successfully interacting and benefiting mutually from one another?
3. If you are a younger person in the marketplace, and an older person were available to meet with you to offer his or her wisdom, experience and knowledge, what things would you like to receive?
4. If you are one of the people referred to, a veteran of the workforce or retired, what things do you think you have to offer to younger people? How would you go about trying to find someone you could invest in to share experience, insights and wisdom you have gained through many years in the marketplace?

NOTE: For more about what the Bible says about this topic, consider the following passages:
Psalm 92:12-14; Philippians 1:21-26; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Hebrews 12:1-2

Challenge for This Week

Regardless of where we are in our working careers – just getting started, in the midst of our prime years, or moving toward retirement (or already there) – we have much to offer that can benefit one another. This week, try to take some time to think about how you might benefit from the synergy of older and younger people collaborating where you work.

If you recognize the benefits of spending time with another person in a different stage of his or her career, consider approaching someone to begin such a relationship. Pray that God would lead you to the right person.