

Day 5

Will you Celebrate or Tolerate your Limitations?

In one of the most profound lines in all of Scripture, the Apostle John wrote:

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us..." (John 1:14)

The Word—the uncreated Creator, the One who is and always will be God—chose to leave the glory of heaven and become fully human. He didn't just make a brief appearance as a man. He was born of the virgin Mary, and experienced every stage of human life: infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Apart from sin, our Lord Jesus Christ embraced the full reality of human limitations. He is therefore able to empathize completely with ours.

There are limitations caused by the likes of disease, disability, tragic accidents, and other forms of suffering that lie beyond the scope of these devotionals. Here we are considering the ordinary limitations that are simply part of being human.

As we seek to age well, we need to learn not merely to tolerate these bodily limitations, but to celebrate them. Our batteries do run down. God designed them that way. Like Adam and Eve before the Fall, we need sleep, nutritious food, companionship, and God's guidance. These limitations are not defects in God's design; they are part of our humanity. Aging simply makes them harder to ignore.

In Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8, the Teacher urges his readers to *"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth."* By "youth" he means all the years *before* our bodies begin to fail us. That is why this series is just as important for a thirty-year-old as it is for someone in their seventies. All of us are aging.

The repeated word *before* in Ecclesiastes 12, carries a note of urgency—not panic or despair. Before you really feel the effects of aging, prepare for them, rather than find yourself surprised by them.

What do our limitations teach us?

Limitations remind us we are creatures, not the Creator

"Remember your Creator"

Only your Creator is all-knowing, all-powerful and everywhere present. At our very best we know only a minute fraction of what is happening in the world, let alone the universe. We cannot be everywhere at once, even with all the advances in modern technology. Our strength is limited, even when our bodies are fit and healthy.

As we age, our bodies increasingly remind us that we cannot do everything we once did. That can be frustrating, but it can be wonderfully liberating as well.

Limitations invite dependence on God

Through an unnamed thorn in the flesh, Paul learned to embrace his limitations. His testimony was: *"For when I am weak, then am strong."* (2 Corinthians 12:10). Christian weakness is not passive resignation. It is active dependence. It means showing up again and again at heaven's door—asking, trusting, waiting, then asking once more.

Sometimes, as I write, the words simply tumble onto the page. But, while writing this devotional, I experienced writers' block. I went out for a walk, telling God, "This is too much for me."

I heard his whisper, "I am enough. My grace is more than enough." I realized that this sense of inadequacy was not an obstacle to God's work, it was God's invitation to depend more fully on him.

Limitations increase our longing to be in God's Presence forever

As Christ-followers we don't celebrate that our bodies are wearing out. We celebrate what our limitations teach us: this world is not our final home, and Christ is coming again to make all things new. That is why Paul could write that our *"...light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal weight of glory."* (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Limitations teach us to slow down

When Christ became flesh, he pitched his tent among us. He walked from place to place. He was never in a hurry. He showed us that love moves at the pace of the people around us.

Next time you feel the urge to rush because there is too much to do and too little time, slow down and remember what the gift of sleep has already taught you.

Every night God invites you to surrender control, and rest in his loving care. Sleep reminds us that we are limited, dependent, and deeply loved.

Come and say, with the Apostle Paul *"Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why for Christ's sake I delight in weaknesses."*

Like Paul, don't just push through your limitations, or just tolerate them. Drink from the deep well of Christ's grace and celebrate them.

In the next part of our journey, we'll consider another cell in the battery God has entrusted to us—aging well emotionally.

Reflect & Discuss

1. What are the main limitations you are facing at this stage of your life?
2. How are your present limitations reminding you that you are a creature, not the Creator?
3. Is there one practical way in which you could slow down this week so that you have more time to notice God and the people around you?

4. Instead of merely tolerating one of your limitations, how could you receive it as an opportunity to trust Christ more deeply?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for becoming fully human and sharing our weakness without sin. Teach me to accept the limits you have woven into my life with humility and gratitude. Help me to depend on your strength instead of my own, to slow down when I need to, and to remember that my true home is with you. May your grace be enough for me today, and may your power be made perfect in my weakness. Amen.

Scriptures for Further Meditation:

- John 1:10-14
- Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:1
- 2 Corinthians 4:16-18