

Old Faithful- Celebrating The Testimony Of The Good And Faithful Servant

What does it mean to be an “old faithful “servant of the Lord? Brad reflects on those brothers and sisters in Christ who have served God throughout the years.

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Old Faithful

You've probably heard of **“Old Faithful”**. It's the renowned cone geyser, in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Named in 1870 by expeditioner Henry D Washburn, it's been a treat to the eye of millions over the years, and is a bankable tourist attraction. Its name is well suited, as you can count on “Old Faithful” to erupt around the clock, shooting its fountain of hot geothermal water anywhere from 100 to 185 feet in the air. The display lasts from 2-10 minutes, and then, faithfully repeats itself every 45-125 minutes, day after day. That is dependability...you can always count on **“Old Faithful”**.

In many congregations, certainly in ours... we have had, and still have, dear brothers and sisters to whom we would lovingly apply the endearing term of “old faithful”. One brother, in particular, is in his mid 80's, and we've been blessed to fellowship with him for the past 20 years. We've seen him weather many ups and downs with his health; but he soldiers on with prayers answered, and continues to inspire all with his desire to gather in the house of the Lord, with the Lords people.

His heart is full of love for God and it pours out of him like the waters of **“Old Faithful”**. What a treasure are the elderly, that continue in strong faith, to support the Lords work on this earth. Congregations everywhere have all experienced the steady decline in attendance over the past 25 or 30 years. Many churches have closed their doors. Many others that hold onto their Sunday services, see an aging group of believers in attendance, with fewer and fewer young families ever gracing the doors, or certainly not attending with any regularity. Sadly, those in their 20's and 30's are almost non-existent and truly are a rare sight in many gatherings.

The Decline In Faith

It doesn't take much forethought to realize that if the Lord tarries another 10 or 20 years, many more gatherings may disappear when the **“old faithful”** pass on, and there are few to none, that will soldier on in their place. The decline in faith which began in the late 1950's, grew rapidly in the 60's and 70's and is now being completely realized. The younger baby boomers, the generation x'ers, and the millennials are those who represent the missing links in attendance. These in vast numbers, have refrained from or sidestepped the invitation of faith in Christ.

The Good And Faithful Servant

In **Hebrews 10:21**, we read that we are to **“hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that has promised”**. What a testimony to the faith, and to God, by those who have held, and continue to uphold their faith. Clearly, the years have pressed on, but they have been “present” through it all, **“forsaking not the assembling of themselves together with like-minded saints”**. They continue to enrich and encourage all who come behind them; demonstrating the immeasurable grace of God, poured out in lives that have undoubtedly withstood many a trial and tribulation.

It's **trials and tribulations** that will often trip up the faithful, and lead them away from God's full provision. Like the parable of the sower in the gospels, seeds of faith sewn in rocky or thorny ground either take little root or the roots are choked out by cares and concerns. The trials and tribulations of this world overcome, and we see many who have fallen away, not maturing in faith. When we are able to witness faith that has sustained and upheld lives for 60 or 70 years, it truly is a joy to behold. It brings resounding glory to God and should bring encouragement in abundance to believers who are not yet as far along in their faith journey. Truly the Lord will say to these; **“well done thou good and faithful servant”**.

God's word in both the old and new testaments gives many examples of exemplary **faith**, carried out in the lives of elderly saints. **Hebrews 11** (known as the faith chapter), speaks of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and others well on in years or at the very end of their days; yet through faith **“subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions”**.

Celebrating Their Testimony

God does not limit our power, nor our ability to be effective Christians, even though our minds and bodies grow old and weary. Our

older brother, when he raises slowly to pray; with knees feeble, voice gravelly... his prayers are so succinct, so personal, so undressed. There's no need for colorful adjectives. He draws us into the place of humble reverence and blesses his Lord, and our souls with his abounding love for God.

Let's take a moment to reflect on the **"old and faithful"** whom God has placed **in our midst**, that continue to enrich our **fellowship** gatherings. Let's recognize and appreciate the effort they put forward, even simply in being present. They are living out the words expressed by Paul; ***"Exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching"***.

We can learn so much from lives well lived, celebrating the testimony to faith in Christ that bears out in the lives of the faithful elderly. If our Lord tarries, and our days continue on, let it be so, and let it be to God's glory that we might someday be called **"Old Faithful"**.

Brad Hewey

Brad offers up practical, scriptural advice from a perspective borne out of everyday life encounters. As we live and move and have our being...it's the individual life lessons that most often present the greatest challenges, but can yield the richest blessings. We've all, as Christians had those faith-affirming moments, where we've had an overwhelming sense of God's spirit, or his very presence "at a particular but, maybe random time".

Brad was born and still resides in a small community in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia, where he and his wife Karen raised their 3 children. Brad & Karen fellowship at the Greenland Bible Chapel, where Brad serves as an elder.

Brad loves meeting and engaging with people. His background in sales has provided opportunities to travel throughout the US and Canada, networking with people from all walks of life. Brad is a singer/songwriter and has recorded 3 Christian albums. Songs from his **"Brighter Day"** release, have aired on Christian Radio stations across Canada and two of Brad's albums are on HopeStreamRadio's playlist.

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Old Faithful– R.Robinson

Cristian Newman