



Dear Friends,

If you want to learn how to pray, how would you go about it? If you are a new Christian and want to know what it looks like to follow Jesus, where would you go?

When CS Lewis wrote on prayer, his book consisted of letters from one believer to another.

When Eugene Peterson wrote a book aimed at helping a new believer live for Jesus, he composed it in the form of a series of letters from a mature Christian to a recent convert. The title of his book is, *The Wisdom of Each Other*.

What I like about these books is their conversational style. It's as though you are eavesdropping on a couple of friends chatting over coffee, even though mostly hearing from only one of them.

I also appreciate the wisdom on offer. Wisdom is applied knowledge. In these books, the correspondents share how they pray or how they live for Jesus. This isn't mere theory. They talk about struggles, doubts and questions. This is Christianity for real.

God's word is our primary source of wisdom. But it's not our only resource. God gives us each other. We learn from fellow believers. In my view, they are a much untapped resource. Numerous times, Paul says in his letters, 'be like me' (Gal 4:12); 'imitate me' (1 Cor 4:1); and 'follow my example' (1 Cor 11:1). We have biblical warrant to learn from each other.

When I recently turned 60, I chose to mine the wisdom of others. So, I asked 'older' friends for their thoughts on the best and worst things about turning 60. They ranged from the hilarious ...

You may imagine that your role will now be to serve as a fixed point on the horizon; a solid rock that serves as a point of departure for the younger ones; a guiding star to those lost souls sailing on troubled waters. But, actually you are just another old bloke who should 'get out of the way.' Mark, you are not (by definition) a 'baby boomer', but you are destined to be mistaken for one. And that is because you are, now, in the eye of the beholder, just another annoying old bloke taking up too much space.

To the more serious ...

I know I felt it the hardest of the big O's to face. But I'm not sure why. Perhaps it was the absolute certainty that my life in this world was more than half over ... So that was probably the worst thing about it. Along with that is an increase in the physical decline of age. Though I'd already started "collecting specialists" in my 40s.

The best things about turning 60 are you usually care a lot less about what other people think or say about you, whether it be positive or negative. You also have more perspective, clarity, wisdom, and confidence in your decisions because you can look back and see God's faithfulness and love through the decades.

Being a Christian completely changes aging. I think the older I get the more I enjoy my relationship with God. I'm finding more joy in His word and in just spending time with Him.... reading, meditating, thinking-praying with Him. And this stage of life means that I can choose to more easily have extended times with God much more often.

Our church family consists of babies, children, teens, young adults, middle agers and seniors. There is much to learn from each other. And it's not just a one way street where the young learn from the old. It goes both ways. I am inspired by the enthusiasm and energy of young people. I learn from the fresh ideas they bring to church, to doing ministry and to living for Jesus.

So, who at RPC could you deliberately spend more time with and learn from?

God Bless,
Mark Adams