

Clip: Married Life –Carl & Ellie <http://tinyurl.com/ydz5vh7>

Hey, before we jump into this talk, how 'bout we lighten the mood with some "Up" trivia?

1) If Carl's house was approximately 1600 square feet, and the average house weighs between 60-100 pounds per square foot, his would weigh 120,000 pounds. If the average helium balloon can carry 4.63 grams, it would take just shy of 12,700,000 balloons to lift his house off the ground.

(Spoiler alert): only 20,622 balloons appear on the house when it first lifts off.

2) The characters of Carl & Ellie are based on circles and squares, and also objects around each of them are based on their shape, like chairs and picture frames. And the villain, Charles Muntz is based on a triangle.

3) (Up is a Disney/Pixar film) The villain Charles Muntz is named after a real person, Charles Mintz, a Universal Pictures executive who in 1928 *stole* Walt Disney's production rights to his highly-successful "Oswald the Lucky Rabbit" cartoon series. (This led Walt Disney to create Mickey Mouse...)

(Special "Peter the Dog" trivia)

4) When the dogs start attacking Russell with airplanes at the end, the dogs refer to each other with "Grey leader", "Grey One", "Grey Two", etc. This is a "tip o' the hat" to the original '77 Star Wars where pilots referred to each other with Red Leader, Red One, etc., and it also jokingly refers to the fact that dogs cannot see colors, only black, white and shades of gray.

5) Carl Fredricksen's face and gruff personality are based on a combination of the great real actors Spencer Tracy and Walter Matthau.

(Leave Carl up here...)

SELAH

In the movie "Up," A young Carl Fredricksen meets a young adventure-spirited girl named Ellie. They both dream of going to Paradise Falls in South America.

70 years later, Ellie has died. Carl remembers the promise he made to her. But, when he unintentionally hurts a construction worker, he is forced to go to a retirement home.

But before they can take him, he ties thousands of balloons to his house & flies away toward Paradise Falls. (Why does he have so many balloons? He used to be a balloon salesman.)

Carl quickly finds out he has a stowaway; a fatherless 8 year old boy named Russell, who's trying to get his "Assisting the Elderly" scout badge. Together, they set out on

an adventure, where they encounter talking dogs, an evil villain and a rare bird named Kevin.

At the beginning of "Up," we see Carl Fredricksen looking the part of our culture's stereotype of an older person (pic).

- 1) Not happy (unapproachable, you don't want to talk to him unless you have to.)
- 2) Well dressed, but not fashionable
- 3) Hair well kempt. (tennis balls \$27 online...seriously)

He's lonely. He's irritable. He seems to be ready to slip into obscurity. Ready to play the part of the un-needed and irrelevant.

Everything he values is behind him and there's nothing in front of him to look forward to.

To Carl, the past is to be revered...cherished...protected; the future to be leery of, avoided and even feared.

This is the picture of the aging American that none of us aspires to become.

When we're 25 we say, "Ha! I'll NEVER be Carl Fredricksen!"

When we're 35 we say, "My dad's Carl Fredricksen."

When we're 45 we say, "I hope I don't become Carl Fredricksen."

When we're 55 we say, "I can kinda see bits & pieces of where ol Carl is coming from."

When we're 65 we say, "People just don't understand Carl."

When we're 75 we say, "KID, GET OFF MY LAWN! Carl, like to come in & have a glass of lemonade with me and talk about the good ol days?"

SELAH

But in the movie "Up" Carl did not slip into lonely obscurity. He got caught up in an adventure. His life got intertwined with a dog named Dug, a bird named Kevin and a young boy named Russell.

Carl lived a grey-haired adventure. And Carl and the young boy, Russell, became knitted together; a boy and a much-needed father figure.

And so even at his older age, Carl's future did become something he could look forward to. He could look forward to the next day because he had a new role to play.

And that, in a nutshell, is what we want to talk about today...that getting old is NOT about fading away...growing old is about burning bright and continuing to make an impact.

And we're talking about "Up" because the value and usefulness of older people is incredibly biblical!

"Stand up in the presence of the elderly, and show respect for the aged. Fear your God. I am the LORD." Leviticus 19:32 nlt

**Wisdom belongs to the aged,
and understanding to the old.** Job 12:12 nlt

And let's look at this story from 1 Kings, ch 12. (Bible, SmartPhone)

After the death of King Solomon, we will see how God provided the wise counsel of older men. But a young king, Rehoboam, ignored the older men at the expense of Israel. This story illustrates the value of input from older people.

1 Kings 12:6-16

Then King Rehoboam discussed the matter with the older men who had counseled his father, Solomon. "What is your advice?" he asked. "How should I answer these people?"

⁷ The older counselors replied, "If you are willing to be a servant to these people today and give them a favorable answer, they will always be your loyal subjects."

⁸ But Rehoboam rejected the advice of the older men and instead asked the opinion of the young men who had grown up with him and were now his advisers.

⁹ "What is your advice?" he asked them. "How should I answer these people who want me to lighten the burdens imposed by my father?"

¹⁰ The young men replied, "This is what you should tell those complainers who want a lighter burden:

'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist!
(translation: "I got swagger like my old man only dreamed about!")

¹¹ Yes, my father laid heavy burdens on you, but I'm going to make them even heavier! My father beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions!"

¹² Three days later Jeroboam and all the people returned to hear Rehoboam's decision, just as the king had ordered. ¹³ But Rehoboam spoke harshly to the people, for he rejected the advice of the older counselors ¹⁴ and followed the counsel of his younger advisers...

¹⁶ When all Israel realized that the king had refused to listen to them, they responded,

"Down with the dynasty of David!
We have no interest in the son of Jesse.
Back to your homes, O Israel!
Look out for your own house, O David!"

So the people of Israel returned home.

1 Kings 12:6-16 nlt

By not listening to the counsel that God provided through older men, Rehoboam divides the nation of Israel for CENTURIES.

A lot of present day tension in Israel and the middle east goes back to this decision to ignore the counsel of older men.

SELAH

And older people are NOT simply relegated to the role of just giving advice.

I LOVE the story of Abraham and Sarah in Genesis chapters 17 and 18. When Abe was 99...God tells him he's going to be the father of a MULTITUDE of nations.

Check out Abraham's response. It's so real, it's so 2011.

Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. "How could I become a father at the age of one hundred?" he wondered. "Besides, Sarah is ninety; how could she have a baby?"

Genesis 17:17 nlt

And Sarah's similar response: She laughs to herself and says, "How could a worn out women like me have a baby? And my husband is no spring chicken, you know!" ;-)
(Gen 18:11-12)

Their response: Laughter. "Seriously? Baby...Really?"

But look at how God responds to them.

"Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, 'Can an old woman like me have a baby?' Is anything too hard for the Lord? About a year from now, just as I told you, I will return, and Sarah will have a son." Genesis 18:13-14 nlt

Now, we make a mistake if we focus on a 90 year old giving birth—because it's so easy to dismiss that as not being applicable...*"Why would I care about giving birth at 90?"*

We need to focus on God's rhetorical question about a 90 year old giving birth: He says, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

One of the things the Bible does for us is show us the EXTREMES of God. We see the extreme gruesome death of Christ on a cross. A death so excruciating and extreme -- as to cover ANY sin.

And here, we see the EXTREME mind-stretching miracle of a 90 and 100 year old couple getting pregnant and having a baby—a baby who's genealogy will go directly to Jesus Christ and ultimately to us.

And so this extreme picture says to older people here today:

Is there anything God has put in your heart that's too hard for the Lord?

Is there an adventure God is calling you to that's too much for God to handle?

In your older age, is there any challenge you're going through that God can't handle?

We watch Carl Fredricksen tie 20,000 balloons onto his house, find adventure and a fathering relationship with an 8 year old kid.

"Ah, but it's just an animated film—fancy cartoon."

Is 20,000 balloons lifting a house that much more insane than the story of Abraham and Sarah?

As an older person, has God given up on adventure in your life?
Or have you just stopped looking for it? Praying for it?

As God told a 90 year old Sarah and in essence tells you today,
"Is ANYTHING too hard for the Lord?"

SELAH

What I love about "Up," is that when we find Carl—he's done with life. He's ready to coast.

But through the adventure, he comes back to life.
He finds purpose.
He builds relationships.
He finds excitement and rediscovers a life worth living.

Do you ever wonder if Abraham and Sarah were coasting before God dropped the bomb on them? He was rich, had lots of money and stuff...
Don't you think they were ready to fade away?

Deep down---does anyone want to just fade away?

Older people:

This church needs you.

Younger generations need you.

Your neighborhood needs you.

Your community needs you.

Your family needs you.

And God LOVES to use you.

Let me just speak to one insecurity of older people. When it comes to influencing younger people—hanging out with them...I think a common thought for older people is,

"I'm not cool enough.
I'm kinda outta touch with the stuff younger people are into.
I dress more like Carl Fredricksen than Justin Bieber." (thank God you do!)

So insecurity sometimes rears its ugly head.

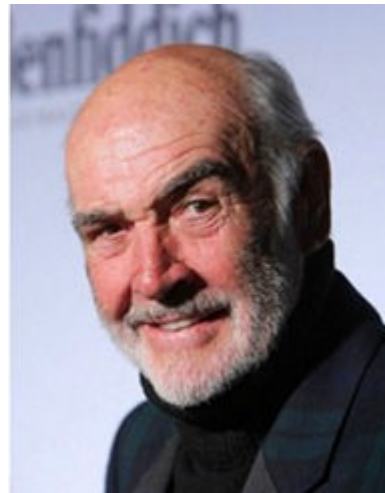
The apostle Paul is one of the most influential people in the history of the world and one of the most profoundly used-by-God people who ever walked this earth. And a great mentor to younger men.

Check out this description of Paul found in a 2nd century Apocryphal writing.

(About the Apostle Paul)

"He was a little man with crooked legs, partly bald; eyes set close together and nose somewhat crooked." -2nd century Apocryphal writing

Does that sound more like Sean Connery or Montgomery Burns?



And for the record, the only words we have about Jesus' appearance from Isaiah 53:2 say, "There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him."

So thoughts we have that we're not cool enough, or hip enough...are not biblical—they're cultural. So take those untrue cultural thoughts captive and replace them with Proverbs 16:31,

**"Grey hair is a crown of glory;
It is gained by living a Godly life."**

Proverbs 16:31 nlt

And if it helps—think of Paul looking more like Monty Burns than Sean Connery ;-)

SELAH

I want to speak into older people here who's health maybe on the decline. Maybe you are in a place where there may not be an earthly adventure on your horizon. Maybe the adventure is fighting for your health.

And to all of us, regardless of age or health, I simply soberly remind us that we are all dying. We are all born with a metaphorical count down timer.

So I share these words of hope, comfort, strength and peace.

**...I have cared for you since you were born.
Yes, I carried you before you were born.
⁴ I will be your God throughout your lifetime—
until your hair is white with age.
I made you, and I will care for you.
I will carry you along and save you.**
Isaiah 46:3-4 nlt

What profound imagery..."I will carry you along."

Much like when Carl's wife Ellie could no longer climb the hill...when we can no longer climb the hill---God will carry us along and SAVE us!

When we get so old that these bodies fail us...or when illness steals our strength from us...God says,

"I made you, and I will care for you.
I will carry you along and save you."

Do you know that no other religion's god or higher power LOVES?
That little phrase, "I will care for you" exists only in a faith rooted in Christ.

And so when these bodies disappoint, there is a loving Father God that promises to care for us...carry us along...and save us.

PRAYER:

"Father God, for those here today & those who will hear this podcast, whose health is declining or whose old age is coming to fruition...Lord, I lift them up to You. Father on their behalf I pray to you through Your words in Isaiah 46:

Thank You for caring for them since they were born.
For carrying them even before they were born.

⁴ Thank You for being their God throughout their lifetime—
until their hair is white with age or their bodies defeated with illness.
Thank You for creating them, and for Your promise to care for and love them.
Thank You for your promise to carry them and save them.

Lord, I pray your healing, peace, hope, strength, comfort and faith into their lives. Amen.”

SELAH

One of the things I absolutely love about this church is that every Sunday, in this room, there are teenagers to octogenarians—we’re 18 to 80 or 90 ;-)

I love that as this church has gotten older we haven’t split where there’s a young hipster service and an old fart service. I love that my senior citizen friends LOVE Elijah Pickett’s 19 yr old shredding electric guitar.

I love that sometimes we play old hymns and new songs in the same service.

I love that some days there are three generations of a family in this one room, engaging God together.

I love that God has led us to be a multi-generational church—and I’m thankful that you have followed God’s lead in that!

Because there may be nothing more biblical than the multi-generation church!

Now I’d like to share an old song done a new way.
This is a song protesting the way a generation is treated by society.
This is a song about a generation bucking the system.
This is an old song done a new way.

VIDEO “My Generation” by The Zimmers
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqfFrCUrEbY>

When God is talking about your generation, He has no intentions of you fading away.

God is calling us into a God-honoring kingdom-building adventure regardless of our age.

This church values and respects older people and this is a place where we want you in the game!

For this church to reach its potential we NEED older people interacting and building into younger people.

God’s talking about your generation—a generation that burns bright and doesn’t just fade away.

(Thank them...pray out)

NEXT STEPS Card:

How does God want to use you at this stage of your life?
What adventures does He have for you?
Are you open to an adventure or have you retired from that?

Do you want to fade away or find new ways of making an impact?

Talk with someone and /or journal about those questions. Pray to God about those questions.