**Looking Forward**

1 Kings 1:1

Introduction:

1. This passage takes on more and more meaning to me.

 a. Maybe it is because I applied for Medicare recently.

 b. Maybe it is because I see advancing age in your faces.

2. There is a certain seriousness that life takes on as you become more advanced in age. There are matters that need to be attended to. Plans to be made. There are things to be communicated before it is too late.

3. David is advanced in years. His time to die is drawing near. What can we learn from his experience? As we look forward, what do we need to do? How can we prepare the way for the time when we depart this life?

Discussion:

I. In light of the temporary nature of this life plans need to be made (1 Kings 1).

 A. Nothing is any more important in this life than serving the purpose of God. In Acts 13:36

 Paul said that David “served the purpose of God in his generation.”

 1. This means that David understood his life in respect to the greater plan of God.

 2. God rules in the affairs of men. He has a plan that will be accomplished. The

 question is will we serve the purpose of God or some other purpose with our life?

 3. The people of the world serve their own purpose. They pursue the things of the world:

 pleasure, power, riches, entertainment, etc. (cf. 1 Pet. 4:3). Nothing wrong with these

 things unless they become the purpose of your life.

 4. David saw himself in the greater scheme of things. He saw himself as an instrument

 that could be used by God to serve in the accomplishment of God’s plan.

 5. This needs to be the consideration at any age. The earlier and the more we

 understand His plan the greater our service to Him can be. “Remember your Creator

 in the days of your youth,” Solomon wrote (Ecc. 12:1). In whatever stage of life

 you are in begin where you are to serve the purpose of God. Do not wait! Plan to

 serve the purpose of God!

 B. Now that David is near the end of his life consideration had to be given to who was going

 to serve as the next King of Israel. We need to consider who is going to serve when we

 are no longer able to. To whom will we pass the baton?

 1. David had said before that Solomon would be king after him (13, 17, 30).

 2. This was part of the plan of God (1 Kings 2:15).

 3. We need to give consideration to the training of the next generation, especially should

 we give consideration to the training of our children. We cannot depend on someone

 else to do it. We cannot wait for the church to do it. It is our responsibility. The

 responsibility is too important for us to pass it on to someone else ourselves. We are

 concerned about their physical, mental, and social health. How much more about

 their spiritual health. Do we value sports, education, friendships, work more than

 our relationship with the Lord? We may produce sports figures, scholars,

 entertainers and workers and when it comes to passing the baton of the leadership

 of the kingdom of God they will be ill equipped for the responsibility. Where will the

 deacons, shepherds, teachers and preachers of the future come from if we do not

 teach them and prepare them for the task? Who are you mentoring???

II. There are those who would exalt themselves (1:5-10).

 A. In this text Adonijah, one of the king’s sons, sought the kingship for himself.

 1. He prepared a small military force.

 2. He was handsome.

 3. He was the fourth of David’s sons, born after Absalom.

 4. He gained support from Joab, commander of David’s army, and Abiathar, the priest.

 5. He sacrificed sheep and oxen in celebration and invited the king’s sons, all the men

 of Judah and the king’s servants, but he did not invite Nathan, the prophet, David’s

 mighty men, nor Solomon.

 6. He is working to create a following for himself and place exalt himself to the place of

 king in light of David’s advancing age.

 B. This is not an uncommon experience. As leaders age some seek to exalt themselves.

 1. They may canvas the congregation in an attempt to create support.

 2. There are two kinds of leaders in the world: those who take positions by force and

 those who are granted leadership.

 a. In the Lord’s church leadership is granted to those whose character demonstrates

 a willingness to serve the Lord and His people.

 b. When people attempt to take positions to exalt themselves it is problematic.

 There are many examples of this in Scripture. In Judges 9 Abimelech, one of the

 sons of Gideon spoke to his relatives and his clan, gained a following, killed his

 brothers the sons of Gideon, 70 men, and took the leadership.

 c. When you see people canvassing the congregation to gain a following beware.

 Division may be on the horizon.

 3. In the situation in 1 Kings Nathan, the prophet, headed this off by taking action.

III. There is wisdom in the voice of the prophet (1 Kings 1:11-37).

 A. Nathan saw what was happening and he took action.

 1. He did not sit idly and wait until war broke out.

 2. He would serve the purpose of God. Paul instructed Timothy regarding “furthering

 the administration of God” (1 Tim. 1:3-7).

 B. Nathan spoke to Bathsheba about what David had said about the future of the

 kingship.

 1. Bathsheba went to the king.

 2. Nathan followed.

 3. King David acted (1 Kings 1:28-37).

 4. The kingship would be transferred to Solomon. He would not appoint himself, but

 he would be appointed (1 Kings 1:38-40).

 C. All recognized that Solomon’s appointment was from God.

 1. The king’s servants (1:47).

 2. The king (1:48).

 3. Even Adonijah (2:15).

 D. While Adonijah was afraid, nevertheless, Solomon was gracious to him (1:49-53).

 E. We need to listen to the voice of the prophets when appointing leaders.

 1. That’s what the church in Jerusalem did in Acts 6 (note vs. 3).

 2. That’s what the church at Ephesus was to do (1 Tim. 1:3; 3:1ff).

 3. That’s what the church at Crete was to do (Titus 1:5ff).

IV. As the time to die draws near we need to instruct our children to walk in the way of the Lord (1 Kings 2:1-4).

 A. That is what David did.

 B. Let this be the priority throughout your life. Do not wait until the day you are going to

 die to start.

 C. Many of us older people have made mistakes. You with young families are going to

 make your share. Many of us older ones live with grief over the unfaithfulness of our

 children and grandchildren. I call on you to do everything within your power to help

 your children walk in the way of the Lord. You do not want this grief. You want the joy

 of seeing your children and grandchildren keeping the way of the Lord.

 1. Make whatever sacrifices are necessary. Work. Finances. Time.

 2. Do whatever it takes. You will be glad you did.

Conclusion:

1. As you are looking forward . . . are you making the appropriate plans?

2. Are you serving the purpose of God?

3. Are you doing what you need to do to pass the baton? Who are you mentoring?

4. Are you planning so that the baton can be passed to you?

5. Listen to the voice of the prophet. Follow the instruction of the Lord.

6. Charge your sons and your daughters, your grandsons and your granddaughters to walk in the way of the Lord.

7. Will it be said of you when you approach the end of this life, “He served the purpose of God in his generation?”