

A Book Review for individual and or small group reflection.

Elder's Rising: The Promise and Peril of Aging by: Roland D. Martinson

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Introduction and Session 1

We have asked you to read "*Elder's Rising, The Promise and Peril of Aging.*" We want you to read this for your own well-being, and to discuss how it pertains to Shepherding others. This book deals with aging and ministry in the church. We want it to help us serve others in our church.

Martinson begins his book introducing a sampling of the people whom he had conversations with for his emphasis and drawing conclusions. One emphasis' states that we are in an "age wave" (7); brought on by the aging of the baby boomer generation. Martinson proposes that the age wave we are experiencing is not something to fear; but something we should embrace as "elderhood" (4). This age wave and elderhood includes me, and most if not all of us at St. Peter.

After sharing a few bios of the people Martinson interviewed, he concluded that, in general, there were ten identifiable character similarities between them. These ten character similarities were (24-25),

- Significant losses
- Unsettling forces beyond their control
- Interrupted life plans
- Crushed dreams
- Multifaceted physical decline
- Cognitive impairment
- Multiple chronic diseases and illnesses
- Isolation and alienation
- Insufficient incomes
- Multiple relocations

After reading these I was amazed by the similarities not only to myself, but with many people I visit with. The introduction and first chapter devoted most of its energy to the "peril" of elderhood. I am looking forward to engaging with the "promise" aspect of elderhood. These people are 'me' and they are us.

Questions for reflection:

- 1. Do you, or do you not understand this "age wave?" Describe how you think of it.**
- 2. After reading the list of character similarities, which ones resonate with you? Talk this over with others.**
- 3. Under these character similarities, how can we empower elders?**