

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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Session 2

I started reading a book for the ministry we share here at Saint Peter. It's entitled, "*Elders Rising: The Promise and Perils of Aging*" by Roland Martinson. We shared our first thoughts about the "age wave" we are immersed in right now in our last session. Many of the conversations we have with each other are near perfect reflections of the people interviewed in this book. I found this both concerning and comforting. This book has helped me put words to feelings within myself.

As I continued reading, I heard concerns by the people in the book I have heard from friends and neighbors around here. I've read the raw emotions of what aging has done to people in both good ways and bad ways. I have also heard the ways people are proactively working towards the days which are inevitably coming. Here is an example of what Martinson has to say to us, "In baptism, God rescues, reconciles, and restores Christians and sets them free. And God calls these baptized to live so that the world God loves might thrive – elders included. Grateful for God's saving gifts, elders are called to live graciously so that they, their family and friends, their communities, their churches, and their world might thrive. Elders are to ask: How do I act so that I and those in God's world might live well?" (Martinson 48-49).

- 1. How do you understand the "age wave?"**
- 2. Have you heard these emotions within yourself; in others?**
- 3. What are some constructive ways, "tools," to react to this emotion?**

I like the way Martinson approaches the life stage of "elder." He suggests there are three distinct stages of elders that can be supported both scripturally and by Christian tradition. Martinson says this, "... based on my understanding of Scripture and the Christian tradition, I propose that the concepts of *elder* and *elderhood* are able to capture and describe the commonalities of this prolonged time of life. Further, I propose that this three-decade long life stage comprises three distinct periods: early elderhood, middle elderhood and late elderhood." (Martinson 66).

- 1. Which category do you fit into? Why does this matter?**
- 2. What are some commonalities you would attribute to this stage of elderhood?**
- 3. Discuss the positive attributes which comes with the age wave.**
- 4. What tools for our Shepherds Tool Bag are you finding?**