

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 5

As we continue working our way through "*Elders Rising: The Promise and Peril of Aging*" by Roland Martinson, we hope you are understanding why we've been recommending this book. It's good for all of us individually. It's good for us as a church. It's good for us as a community (1). Martinson constructively and proactively outlines what it is to grow older in this day and age. Today is vastly different than 50 years ago. Most of us can easily reflect on how our parents made their way through growing older. But, as Martinson states through this book, many of the services we have today in medicine, social media, economics etc., are more beneficial, more reliable today than they were 50 years ago (2).

Let's take a look at a quote from the "Exploration and Discussion" section near the back of the book. Martinson identifies seven broad categories of 'Elderhood' through his research. He says it this way on page 216.

"Elderhood is a period of ongoing change. Expecting, recognizing, and facing these changes are key factors in elder resiliency and vitality, The study identified seven broad categories of change in the lives of elders.

- Physical- Changes in strength, health, balance, illness, comfort
- Mental- Changes in short- and long term memory; cognitive operations
- Emotional- Changes in mood, anxiety, depression
- Social- Changes in family, friendships, community relationships; isolation
- Financial- Changes in income, expenses, investments
- Existential- Changes in self-worth, attitude, meaning
- Spiritual- Changes in belief, shame, guilt, hope

(*Martinson asks*) How many of these change categories are you experiencing? How are you managing the changes you've identified? What new changes taking place in your life are you discovering that you need to address? Who might be a partner in seizing opportunities to address changes you face? If you've finished this inventory and feel overwhelmed, speak with a trusted friend, pastor, or counselor about what's happening and how to respond constructively to the changes (3)." (Martinson p.216-217)

This book is a proactive voice for something that we all face, growing older. Martinson, through his research and interviews, takes a very proactive stance towards encouraging all of us **not** to be satisfied with the stereo-type label of 'elderhood.' Martinson envisions "the church" becoming even more important as our place of worship, community gathering, a place of teaching and training using our resources and life experiences to promote a better tomorrow.

1. Discuss how this book is "good for us" individually, as a church, and as a community.
2. In what ways, as you think about it, is today different than your parents days? How does understanding this help you as a Shepherd?
3. How might we "partner with" our Sisters and Brothers here at Saint Peter?