

Planning for Prime Time Day

by Derl G. Keefer



At a National Senior Adult Summit on Evangelism and Missions, Dr. Chuck Kelly, president of New Orleans Theological Seminary, stated: “Two thirds of all the people in the history of human race who have ever reached the age of 65 are alive today.

“I do not believe that is an accident of medical science. I believe it is God’s provision for His church. For God has chosen to do for this generation of older adults what He has never done before since the days of Noah. He has chosen to give this generation extended life for His purpose.” *

Some statistics estimate that by 2030, those aged 55 and over will compose thirty percent of the total population. This new generation of senior adults brings to our churches, multiple talents, experience, resources, time, and the desire to serve God. They are called the pacesetter generation and for good reason.

Nazarene churches all across the country will honor prime time adults and grandparents on the first Sunday of September. This day has been set aside as a time to express appreciation for the work, sacrifice, and ministry senior adults have offered over the years. It is also a day to recognize, honor, and observe the many spiritual gifts prime time adults bring to our congregations. And it is a day to help our churches praise and thank the Lord for the contributions of prime timers in the past and present.

THANK YOU Ideas for Prime Time Day

Your church and Sunday School can share in giving a big “thank you” to these wonderful individuals who have given their time, talent, and resources in a variety of ways. Here are some suggestions for expressing your appreciation:

- Have children’s classes “adopt” a prime timer and make a card for him/her/them.
- Take time in Sunday School and worship service to honor them publicly.
- Have an “after glow” or tea at the conclusion of either Sunday School or church service.
- Schedule some prime time adults to give testimonies, Bible readings, and prayers in the worship service.
- Honor your senior adults with a luncheon sponsored by other Sunday School classes. Have the teens work as servers. Bring in a special speaker and musicians.
- Invite prime timers to come to the altar. Invite the congregation to surround them for a special time of prayer.
- Organize a group to visit shut-ins during the week either prior to or after the first week of September. Take pictures and display them on a bulletin board.
- Arrange for a senior adult choir or ensemble to sing during the worship service.
- Sponsor a senior adult revival. Target this age group for evangelism. Let the services begin or culminate on Prime Time Day.
- Plan a week long celebration with a special emphasis or activity each day.

Don’t miss an opportunity to express appreciation to the senior adults in your congregation for their years of service to the kingdom.

Order of Worship

2004 Prime Time Day---Worship for a Lifetime

Prelude: "Glorify Thy Name"

Responsive Call to Worship: "God," no. 1

Hymn: "Glorify Thy Name," no. 4

Opening Prayer: Prime Time member

Announcements: Pastor

Hymn: "Brethren, We have Met to Worship," no. 23

Testimony: "Praise to the God We Worship for a Lifetime," Prime Time adult

Scripture Reading: Psalm 103, Prime Time adult

Hymn: "O Worship the King," no. 64

Recognition and Prayer for Prime Time Adults

Testimony: "How Worship Has Filled My Life," Prime Time leader

Scripture Reading: 2 Timothy 1:7-12, Prime Time adult

Instrumental Offertory: Prime Time adult(s)

Special Music: "How Great Thou Art," Prime Time choir

Message: "Worship for a Lifetime," Prime Time Pastor or Senior Pastor

Closing Prayer: Prime Time adult

Benediction Worship Hymn: "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow," no. 6

Postlude: "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

(Congregational songs and responsive reading are in the *Sing Unto the Lord* hymn book.)

Upcoming Prime Time Day Themes

2005	Hope for a Lifetime
2006	Service for a Lifetime
2007	Faith for a Lifetime
2008	Holiness for a Lifetime
2009	Relationships for a Lifetime
2010	Celebration for a Lifetime

Sermon Suggestion

Worshipping God in the Sanctuary

I Kings 8:22-30, 41-43

Robert Kennedy once visited the jungles along the Amazon River and talked with many of the aborigines of the area. One of the tribesmen had been a recent convert to Christianity and through a translator Kennedy asked, "What do you most like to do?" The young Kennedy expected an answer like hunting, canoeing, or fishing. He was surprised when the man answered, "Being occupied by God." Kennedy said to the translator, "Ask him again. Something may be lost in the translation." The truth was the man knew exactly what he was saying. He gave an authentic definition of true worship.¹

The Biblical setting for the text is the occasion of the completing of the Temple in Jerusalem and bringing the Ark of the Covenant into the Holy of Holies by the sacred priests of God. The Ark is set directly under the outstretched wings of the golden creatures as a special place of honor. Both the King and people of Israel make a false presupposition about this moment in their national history. They wrongly believed that this was the guarantee of God's presence with them, no matter what they would do ever again.

Walter Brueggemann in the Knox Preaching Guide discusses that this text is a long and complicated section of scripture. It is vital to our understanding that worship is not just a location of geography, but of the heart.

Solomon's prayer of dedication of the sanctuary of God offers three thoughts on the God of worship in the sanctuary.

I. **WORSHIP---THE SANCTUARY OF MEETING.** (8:1-6).

A. **Worship is the place the family of God meets.**

Robert Couchman wrote, "A true family consists of two or more people who care unconditionally for one another and share in the collective health and security of the unit as well as in supporting and helping each member to secure his/her full potential and achieve personal fulfillment"²especially in the context of spirit.

B. **Worship is a place of holiness.**

This is the place where the awe of God inspires, motivates, excites, convicts and redeems the heart of people.

¹ Roy Zuck, *The Speaker's Quote Book* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1997), 425-426.

² Albert M. Wells, Jr., Compiler, *Inspiring Quotations* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988), 69.

II. WORSHIP---THE SANCTUARY OF PROMISE. (8:22-30).

The king reminds his subjects that through the avenue of prayer the promise of unending love persists for all.

Four basic promises arise from this section of the text.

- A. God's justice and holiness---He will not deceive us.
- B. God's grace and goodness---He will not forget us.
- C. God's truth and honesty---He will not be dishonest with us.
- D. God's power and might---He will not fail us.

III. WORSHIP---THE SANCTUARY OF PRAISE. (8:41-43).

A. Praise in reverence. I am paraphrasing J. H. Morrison statement that worship is an inward reverence as the spirit bows down in the presence of a holy God, an awesome dependence on Him, in a solemn consciousness of the divine in revelation.

B. Praise in miracles. God is the God of the supernatural as well as the natural.

C. Praise in respect. God deserves our respect. Stemming from my respect is my desire to be His one hundred per cent.

An unknown author wrote:

"Almighty and eternal God, so draw my heart to You, so guide my mind, so fill my will, that I may be wholly Yours, utterly dedicated unto You; and then use me, I pray, as You will, and always to Your glory, and the welfare of Your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen."³

³ Jan Karon, *Patches of Godlight* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), no page number.